

Book Reviews

Thomas Aquinas: Teacher and Scholar. The Aquinas Lectures at Maynooth, volume 2: 2002–2010. Edited by James McEvoy, Michael W. Dunne, and Julia Hynes (*Portland, OR: Four Courts Press, 2012*), 258 pp.

THIS VOLUME collects eight of the annual Maynooth Aquinas Lectures, a lecture series founded in 1995 by James McEvoy and the Faculty of Philosophy at the Pontifical University at St. Patrick's in Maynooth, Ireland. The volume also has three essays by younger scholars who were students of James McEvoy, as well as an essay by Thomas A. F. Kelly, a scholar who managed the lecture series in 2004–5 and passed away in 2008. The twofold purpose of the Maynooth Lectures is to present the benefits of the study of Aquinas to the public, and to recognize major scholars whose work is defined by the study of Aquinas. The lecture series has something of a philosophical bent, owing to its origin in a Faculty of Philosophy. Yet one finds many significant theologians as well as philosophers in this volume and the previously published lectures. *Thomas Aquinas: Approaches to Truth* (Portland, OR: Four Courts Press, 2002), the previous volume of Maynooth Aquinas lectures, featured essays by James McEvoy himself, Leonard Boyle, Servais Pinckaers, John Haldane, Brendan Purcell, John Wippel, and Alasdair MacIntyre. Fergus Kerr's 2005 Maynooth lecture (not included in this volume) later became the roots of his significant book *Twentieth-century Catholic Theologians*. One might describe these lectures as something analogous to the Gifford Lectures for Thomists, that is, as a showcase for major figures to present their cutting-edge work before a public audience. While this book contains lectures on Aquinas from scholars of various nationalities and disciplines, the origin of the lecture series, and the publishing venture of the volume, comes from the context of Irish philosophical interest in Aquinas. Along with its valuable essays, this volume offers a subtle demonstration of some of the emphases and concerns of Irish Thomism.

The first two essays in the volume are on theological topics. Liam Walsh, a liturgical theologian also involved in ecumenical dialogue, offers an ecumenically minded reading of Aquinas on the Eucharist. He says that ecumenical progress in Protestant-Catholic debates over the Eucharist can be made by working to locate the Eucharist in the larger context of the God-World relationship and God's economy of salvation in Jesus Christ, as Aquinas does in the *Summa theologiae*. Walsh offers a brief description of Reformation-era debates on the Eucharist, pointing to technical discussions of efficient causality and different construals of the sacramental distinction between "sign" and "thing" as the root cause of differences between Protestant and Catholic Eucharistic theologies. Walsh ends by suggesting theologians, both Catholic and Protestant, reflect more on the key term "substance" in sacramental theology, a term, he notes, not essential to sacramental theology but hard to avoid.

William Desmond, a major philosopher, writes on a topic usually discussed by theologians rather than philosophers: Aquinas on the Beatitudes. Desmond is particularly drawn to the element of the mysterious or sublime in the Beatitudes, pointing to "something more that resists encapsulation" that strikes the reader of the Sermon on the Mount. Starting with Kant, Desmond notes that philosophical ethics in modernity rarely deals with holy persons, rather being satisfied to define a general morality based on rational, autonomous principles free from religious influence. In response, Desmond sees Aquinas on the Beatitudes as a useful way to think about bringing back to ethics a "porosity" to the divine.

Philip Rosemann and John Boyle bring a historical approach to the volume in the next two essays. Rosemann argues that the shift in genre from Peter Lombard's *Sentences* to Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* testifies to a larger change in theological reflection that still affects academic theology today. Peter's text is more transparent, written as a web of allusions to biblical and patristic texts. This is transposed into a more logical and abstract framework in Thomas Aquinas's commentary on the *Sentences*. In Aquinas's work, theology is no longer Peter Lombard's *sacra pagina*, but *scientia divina* or *sacra doctrina*. On the basis of this comparison, Rosemann says that Aquinas is a forerunner of Martin Heidegger's notion of science as "research," or inquiry into nature defined by rigorous procedure and careful initial planning, as defined in Heidegger's "The Age of the World Picture." Rosemann says that Aquinas's *scientia divina* has certain benefits, but he also worries that Aquinas's *scientia divina* risks losing something of the rich story of the Christian faith in its "rigorously articulated system."

John Boyle offers a "historical detective story" on the "Roman commentary" of Aquinas on the *Sentences*, which was recently discovered

by Leonard Boyle. Aquinas began lecturing on the *Sentences* a second time when he went to Rome to set up a program of theological study for Dominican students, separate from a larger university like the University of Paris. Aquinas's newer "Roman commentary" is characterized by a simplicity and precision not present in the older version. Boyle wonders if the changes are not due to pedagogical reflection on the part of Aquinas. Boyle finds the Roman commentary fascinating, because in it we seem to have a snapshot of Aquinas the theology professor, taking special care to define terms and to help students understand theological propositions. For instance, Aquinas explores the *uti/frui* distinction that gives Peter Lombard's *Sentences* its structure in several articles that offer a very basic rather than speculative definition of these terms from Augustine. Boyle suggests that Aquinas's Roman commentary is a "how-to" guide for learning theology, wherein Aquinas shows his students how to think about propositions and how to incorporate philosophical sources into theological thought.

The next two lectures in the volume address philosophical issues. Sarah Borden Sharkey offers an essay that compares Aquinas and Edith Stein on being. Stein was trained as a philosopher in several strains of phenomenology, being influenced by Edmund Husserl, Max Scheler, and Martin Heidegger. After her conversion, she added to her philosophical background study of the Catholic tradition, including Thomas Aquinas. Stein's philosophical work is characterized by an important distinction between actual being and "essential being" or "substantial being." Actual being describes a being that is in act, and has the ability to effect change. Essential being, however, relates to a thing's intelligibility. Essential being has Heideggerian as well as Thomist undertones. Since essential being relates to a thing's inner intelligibility, Stein often refers to a thing's essential being as the "meaning" of the object, or the meaning of a thing's being. Stein differs from Aquinas in that she affirmed that essential being was real being, despite not necessarily including actuality, while Aquinas says that a thing has being only inasmuch as it is in act. "Essence" in Aquinas is a limiting potency that individuates and particularizes the act of being in various things. Aquinas does not have a type of being that involves the intelligibility or "meaning" of an object, but rather all intelligibility comes from perceiving a thing's being in act. Sharkey says that Stein the modern philosopher ends up sounding oddly enough much more like a Platonist (things have an inner "essential being" beneath whatever their actual being and history brings about), while Aquinas's account of being sounds more "existentialist" in his emphasis on how a thing's being in act takes precedent over its essence.

Eleonore Stump offers a Thomist approach to a perennial question in philosophy of religion: the problem of suffering. She presents Aquinas as “a representative medieval account of God’s reasons for allowing suffering,” and seeks to show the reasonableness of this account. Aquinas’s theodicy, Stump notes, is in continuity with a line of thinking going back to Augustine and Gregory the Great. Stump begins by analyzing a basic syllogism that has been used to argue that suffering is incompatible with the existence of God. According to Stump, the problem of suffering as such runs on three premises: that there is suffering in the world, that there is an omnipotent, good God, and—here is the key premise, Stump adds, saying it is implicit in this typical argument—that there is no “morally sufficient” reason for this good God to allow suffering. The key question that arises, Stump says, is whether suffering might allow one to best achieve the desires of her heart or to be what she ought to be. Aquinas comes in at this point. Aquinas says that the greatest good of human beings is union with God, and the worst thing for human beings would be for them to lack this good. The question now becomes whether God would allow suffering for the end of bringing people closer to God, and the further question of whether it is immoral to treat suffering as the means to an end. Stump finishes by discussing research in trauma theory and adversarial growth for thinking about how suffering and human flourishing might not be totally incompatible.

The next two essays, by Vivian Boland and Denys Turner, deal with theological issues. Boland’s essay asks, “Does God think?” Boland answers “No,” if by thinking we mean something analogous to the process of human cognition in time. However, Boland uses this question to point to a rich tradition of theological reflection on the divine mind and the existence of “ideas” in God. Boland suggests that studying Aquinas’s negotiation of the question “Does God think?” is more valuable for what Aquinas teaches us about how to do theology—and more specifically how theology and philosophical speculation are related—than Aquinas’s actual statements on the matter.

Denys Turner discusses the theological meaning of Aquinas’s pedagogy. Turner finds it remarkable that the presence of Aquinas’s personality in his writings is largely transparent. Turner reflects on how the Dominicans were drawn to the theology of the schools because it was a “portable” theology, focused on making the wide breadth of what was known of the Catholic tradition organized, teachable, and plain to students. No longer was theology the long, personality-soaked labor of contemplative monks, but it was now a way to train preachers and confessors to go out into urban settings and do the work of preaching the Gospel faithfully. Turner

describes the *Summa theologiae*'s pedagogical purpose, especially the way it connects moral and doctrinal theology, as an instantiation of a particularly "Dominican" holiness in the sense that it is meant to be handed on to others in mendicant preaching. Turner ends his essay with a reflection on the much-discussed "silence" at the end of Aquinas's life, arguing that Aquinas's teaching not only ended in silence but, from the start, emerged out of silence, a holy silence that seeks to be transparent to the truths taught to human beings by the Triune God.

The volume also collects four extra essays on various Thomist topics which were not part of the lecture series. Declan Lawell offers an essay that traces how different scholastic figures received the works of Dionysius, who was a popular subject for study at the University of Paris. Different types of scholastic reception of Dionysius emphasize either affect or intellect in reception of mystical revelation from God. Yet Lawell points out that even those most strongly focused on the intellect in mystical revelation, like Aquinas and Albert the Great, feature affect in their accounts of the mystical life as well. However, he points to the Franciscan Thomas Gallus as marking off a new direction for interpretation of Dionysius that had a genetic influence on later, more anti-intellectual mysticism. Julia Hynes offers a Thomist voice in the context of bioethics, advancing a reading of Aquinas's account of the virtues as an alternative to consequentialism and deontology in medical ethics. Hynes offers a helpful summary of the basic claims of virtue ethics and her essay presents an up-to-date account of its major voices. Gavin Kerr discusses the impact of the turn to the subject, largely through a reading of Immanuel Kant, on the Thomist tradition. Kerr's presentation would be useful to one seeking resources for defending a form of realism based on Aquinas's philosophy in the present context. The final essay by Thomas Kelly is a critical reading of Heidegger's lectures on Thomas Aquinas. Kelly uses what he sees as errors in Heidegger's reading of Aquinas to point to some fundamental limitations of Heidegger's philosophy as such.

This volume has a good variety of perspectives on Aquinas, from ecumenical theologians to analytic philosophers. The volume also has a fairly wide range of subject matter: essay topics range from the Eucharist to the problem of suffering, from the Beatitudes to medieval pedagogy. These essays show that close study of Aquinas continues to be fruitful for scholars in a wide variety of disciplines. There are, however, a few intellectual threads and common emphases that run throughout the essays in the volume. The essays of Rosemann, Sharkey, Kerr, and Kelly address the relationship between the thought of Aquinas and twentieth-century continental philosophy, particularly philosophical perspectives influenced

by Martin Heidegger. These essays would be useful reading for those who compare Aquinas's thought with Heidegger-influenced philosophical perspectives. Another thread through the volume involves attention to Aquinas's pedagogy. I suspect this is reflected in the decision by the editors for the volume's subtitle: "*teacher and scholar*." The offerings by Walsh, Rosemann, Boyle, and Turner show interest in Aquinas's method of presenting Christian doctrine as much as in his actual teachings. Their essays together call for more explicit reflection on the formal elements of Aquinas's writings, particularly how his carefully planned teaching of *sacra doctrina* in the *Summa theologiae* helps students learn in a way different from previous texts like Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. *Aquinas: Teacher and Scholar* shows that Aquinas was not an academic separated from the everyday concerns and needs of students. A glance through this volume reminds Aquinas's readers that his works actively participate in overarching discussions of how best to teach Christian doctrine at medieval universities and in the fledgling mendicant orders. Not confined merely to historical analysis of Aquinas's work of *sacra doctrina*, the essays in this volume also provide a wealth of reflection on how Aquinas can help guide contemporary teachers and scholars in theological and philosophical fields today. N V

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Metaphysics: The Creation of Hierarchy by Adrian Pabst (*Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012*), xi + 521 pp.

ADRIAN PABST'S book *Metaphysics: The Creation of Hierarchy* is a revised and expanded version of his Cambridge dissertation, and the improved work emerges with a high pedigree, including a foreword by John Milbank. Pabst's project is an ambitious one, as he places in his sights not only the history of metaphysics in the Christian tradition, but also the interpretation of that history in political terms. The keyword here is *individuation*; that is, the key concept of the book centers on the fact—or perhaps mystery—that there are specific, unique beings that we can differentiate from one another. The question that drives the book is, how does one go about explaining such differentiation? For Pabst, the success or failure of the answer revolves around how one explains the relation of individuated substances among each other, and especially to God. So the second keyword is *relation*. Since the basic question of the text involves both the "individual" and the relations of individuals, the question is

simultaneously metaphysical and political (cf. Milbank's foreword). In attempting to answer the problem of individuation, Pabst is determined to show the brilliance of the Christian metaphysical tradition. Or, in his own words: "Under the 'meta-form' or 'meta-category' of relation, it will be argued that the Christian Neo-Platonic theology of creation *ex nihilo* and the Trinity offers an account of individuation that avoids both Aristotle's theo-ontology and the idolatry of onto-theology inaugurated by John Duns Scotus" (xxix). With the twin pillars of individuation and relation, Pabst sets out to reveal how the Christian tradition has made sense of itself using Greek metaphysics, and how this complex metaphysical tradition retains both relevance and insight in the modern age.

Metaphysics is a demanding book, requiring the reader to follow Pabst through a dense review of classical metaphysics and into a challenging array of Christian and post-Christian philosophical inquiries. Pabst displays easy familiarity with everyone from Aristotle and Plato to Augustine and Thomas Aquinas to Spinoza and Kant. This is by no means a book for neophytes in the metaphysical and ontological battles of philosophy and theology. All the same, Pabst remedies a difficult topic with a clear writing style marked by well-defined summaries of his work and transparent lines of argumentation. He always signals what he has argued, what he will argue, and what he anticipates objections will be. This makes his writing eminently clear, though at times repetitious, and he understands his topic in such robust detail that he threatens to lose novices entirely. Pabst is out to reinvigorate and reinforce the Platonic reading of metaphysics in Christianity, so the advanced nature of the work is both necessary and appropriate.

Plato is where Pabst turns much of his argument; or rather, the Christian reading of Plato is essential to his argument. Because Plato makes the Good central to the understanding of being, Pabst claims that Plato's metaphysic is thus fundamentally relational, since the Good always involves the ordering of things according to their participation in the Good. What we have here is a metaphysic that is always open to theology because it is a metaphysic of relation. This is Plato's genius, and it is the insight that Christians adopt and expand in order to help explain their faith. Yet this insight always threatens to be lost. Aristotle's metaphysic, though helpful with respect to his appropriation of matter, harries metaphysics with a constant shadow. Whereas "Aristotle's ontology entails a division of essence and existence within composites and a separation of the first mover's actuality from the being of beings" (16), Plato's metaphysics of the Good is "relational vis-à-vis other forms and things in the sense that it is present in them, so that they may participate in it" (17). In

other words, for Pabst, Aristotle continually threatens to defeat the metaphysical tradition with an insufficient description of individuation, one in which individuation is derived by principle from the individual (21). Aristotle gives substance undue superiority over relation, which for Pabst cuts off the individual from its originating source, the Good, and results in a Prime Mover both disinterested and uninvolved in that which it moves (21–24). Plato, on the other hand, gives relation priority over substance because all things are ordered by the Good. The individuated is thus always already relational: “all particulars are relational because they depend for their essence, their existence, and their continuous being on the Good” (47). For Pabst, Plato’s philosophical decisions are superior because of his ability to describe why being individuates and his ability to place that individuation in the context of a more comprehensive politic. Being individuates because it is good, and the Good is ecstatically self-diffusive; saying that being is good also always places it in relation to the Good that orders it, thus giving politics meaning and direction (cf. 52–53).

Pabst’s evaluation of Plato and Aristotle forms the foundation of his subsequent reflections on the Christian appropriation of Greek metaphysics and on modern philosophy. The linchpin of Pabst’s book is Plato’s conception of the Good, a concept that Christians adopt in order to describe the uniqueness of creation and the relation between creation and the Creator. Pabst reviews a number of early Christian interlocutors who play important roles in nascent Christianity’s interaction with Greek metaphysics, including Clement of Alexandria, Justin Martyr, Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa. Three key figures in this movement are Augustine, Boethius, and Pseudo-Dionysius, and the weight of Pabst’s study of early Christianity rests on Augustine. Pabst argues that Augustine’s “synthesis of Neo-Platonist metaphysics and the biblical doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*” fulfills philosophy, helps us to understand the content of Scripture, and helps us to describe the relation of individuated being to its primary Source (57–58; see also 77–78, 81–82). This argument moves Pabst into a lengthy and complex discussion of Augustine’s theology, a discussion bent toward showing how Augustine’s original synthesis of Christian concerns and Greek philosophy assists us in explaining the intimacy of creation’s relationship to its Creator. “The cause is always already more than itself. It is ecstatic creativity which is manifest in all that is created: to discern being itself which is ‘to be,’ the mind comes to have a glimpse of the utter transcendence and plenitude of the creating cause” (111). Creation *ex nihilo* describes individuation in a superior manner because it makes created being utterly reliant on its divine source. So to the elements “individuation” and “relation” in Pabst’s set of consistent concerns,

we may add creation *ex nihilo*. Boethius contributes to Augustine's work by intensifying the intellect's relationship to faith, since in knowing all being the intellect also knows that in which being participates, which is God (cf. 118–19). Dionysius the Areopagite plays a key role in this locus of ideas because his explicit ordering of theosis and the cosmos in his celestial hierarchy allows us to grasp how the ordering of beings to the Good (in hierarchy) lends to being not only a political ordering but also a theological one. The upshot is that "[t]he mystery of divine Creation and Incarnation is not confined to the sacramental rites within the ecclesial hierarchy but extends to the entire cosmos" (149). Thus with Benedict XVI, Pabst considers the Christian encounter with Greek metaphysics to be not only historically the case, but theologically necessary (see 55–56, 112, 153, *et passim*).

Pabst takes his three concerns—individuation, relation, and creation *ex nihilo*—into the Middle Ages, where Christian metaphysics reaches a high tide in the thought of Thomas Aquinas. For Aquinas, "individuation in the created order mirrors divine singularity within the Trinitarian Godhead." Thus, "To be individuated is to preserve and perfect God's image and likeness" (214). Aquinas's metaphysical-theological efforts manage in this way to allow Pabst to reinforce his own most central concerns, and to show how an authentic metaphysic of individuation returns Christian thought to the Trinity rather than serving as a distraction from it. Pabst's in-depth study of Aquinas strives to show us how the relationality of individual beings among themselves is ultimately a reflection of the unique relationality of the Triune God (cf. 269, 271). This is where Pabst's governing thesis is at its most compelling, and in many ways the Medieval high point is also the high point of the book.

Subsequent to Aquinas's beautiful synthesis of metaphysics and theology, Western thought breaks down into a series of bifurcated polarities: between immanence and transcendence, between the individual and God, between politics and theology (305–7; cf. 271). With the advent of Nominalism in John Duns Scotus and Ockham, the negative tendencies present in Aristotle's philosophy achieve an iron grip on Western philosophical and theological reflection. Rather than relating all the causes of being to their ultimate Cause in the self-diffusive Good, modern thought tends to view the causes and powers of individuated being as purely immanent to individuals, thus divorcing being from its Source (307). Another way to understand this development in Western thought is as the loss of relationality and the ascendance of the atomic individual; in short, as the advent of modernity. Here Francisco Suárez and Baruch Spinoza receive Pabst's attention. Suarez effects a form of secularism in making the principle of individuation immanent

rather than transcendent (see esp. 340), and Spinoza completes this move by eschewing the idea of creation *ex nihilo* entirely (see esp. 381).

After his exhaustive review of theology and philosophy, Pabst concludes his work by showing how relationality is a more thorough, fertile source for theological and philosophical reflection than the modern fixation with “abstract individuality” (448). He desires that both political and theological-philosophical thought expand their resources into the past, to retrieve what he has retrieved: a rich account of created being that has its Source in the self-diffusive Good. What Pabst wants his reader to have understood is not only the historical verity of his interpretation, but also the immense wisdom of the Platonic-Christian ideal of relation. Rather than threatening the individual or the particular, or violating the divine, relation permits us to defend what is unique according to its relation to its originating cause. In this final connection, the reader is able to discern with clarity the meaning of Pabst’s subtitle: “the creation of hierarchy.” For him, hierarchy is positive, inasmuch as it must always presume a relation of particulars to the one Good. Without hierarchy—that is, with a metaphysical “flattening” of the world—the individuated becomes incomprehensible. Pabst’s attempts to reestablish the relevance of ancient metaphysical principles here operate at their most inverse and counter-intuitive, as modern thought tends to eschew hierarchy in its entirety for the sake of what is individual or particular.

The ambition of Pabst’s *Metaphysics* is admirable. He intends to leave no stone unturned in the debate over Plato and Christianity, and in his efforts one is able to see the fascinating force of a line of thought loosely associated with the Radical Orthodoxy movement, though not exclusive to it. His reflections are often gripping, especially when he works hard to show how authentic metaphysics reinforces a certain openness or amicability to theology, and how this same metaphysical relation to the theological defends a richer conception of the political individual as also open to God (and the Good). One must yet wonder whether Pabst’s genealogy of modern ills is overworked, as it seems that, from the beginning of Western thought, the threat of the hermetically sealed individual and other modern problems looms in Aristotle’s substance metaphysics. This argument lends to the history of Western thought the tinge of an almost fatalistic submission to a perpetual (Aristotelian) temptation. At its most facile interpretation, the genealogy of ideas presented in *Metaphysics* is too simple and too accusatory. Pabst of course intends more than this, but one must still puzzle over the shadow of Aristotle presented in the book.

It is also possible to wonder whether Pabst’s arguments render him blind to critiques such as Karl Barth’s—or, for that matter, Tertullian’s—in

which biblical revelation is defended for its uniqueness, and philosophy or natural theology is suspect. In other words, the Christian appropriation of Plato, even at its most positive, also heavily modifies Plato even as it adopts him. In Pabst, the friendship between Plato and Christianity threatens to be so intimate as to permit confusion of the two. Pabst speaks of the “blending” of biblical revelation and Plato (cf. 107), or the “fusion” of ancient philosophy and biblical revelation (cf. 58). Have we here a sort of monophysitism, a confusion of what is distinctive? Or is it rather that Pabst wishes to show how the Christian tradition has so brilliantly transfigured Plato that modern thought cannot be without him—nor without the Christian tradition? This possibility, embedded in the history of Western and Christian thought, is one of the main conflicts operating within the book, and in many ways Pabst increases its urgency rather than resolving it. Whether a reader takes Pabst’s side or not, the book is helpful because it brings again to the surface many longstanding questions about the Christian tradition’s interpretation of its own theological-philosophical past, and the role of that past in the present. N.V

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The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity, edited by Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011*), xiv + 632 pp.

MANY THEOLOGIANS and scholars working in religious studies find the Oxford Handbook series very helpful as reliable introductions to the current scholarship on various topics and issues. When one considers the remarkable resurgence of interest in the doctrine of the Trinity over the last few decades, it is not surprising that a volume on the Trinity would join this distinguished series. And when one considers the massive scholarly output on the doctrine, it is not surprising that such a volume would be of high quality. But this volume, put together under the editorial direction of Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering, surely meets and surpasses the highest goals for such Handbooks. In a word, it is *excellent*.

A helpful introduction by the editors is followed by Part I, “The Trinity in Scripture.” Here we find a discussion by Khaled Anatolios of the complex relation of the process of canonization (of Scripture) to the development of Trinitarian theology, and a helpful treatment of the Trinity in the Old Testament by Christopher Seitz. C. Kavin Rowe reflects upon the Trinity in Pauline theology (and Hebrews); Simon Gathercole examines the roots of the doctrine in the Matthew, Mark, and Luke-Acts;

Ben Witherington III looks at the Johannine contributions to the doctrine; and Mark Edwards reflects upon the role of theological exegesis in early formulations of the doctrine.

Historical development of the doctrine is treated in the next three Parts. Steven M. Hildebrand provides an overview of the development of the doctrine in some important Ante-Nicene theologians; J. Warren Smith gives us a particularly lucid snapshot of the important fourth-century debates; Lewis Ayres offers a discussion of Augustine's account of the doctrine; and Andrew Louth continues with a look at later Eastern patristic developments. Lauge O. Nielson and Dominique Poirel provide chapters that examine earlier (Latin) medieval theology; Joseph Wawrykow compares the "Dominican" and "Franciscan" accounts of Bonaventure and Aquinas; Russell L. Friedman looks at later medieval theology in the West; and Karl Christian Felmy discusses the developments in medieval Byzantine theology. Scott R. Swain picks up the narrative with an overview of the fortunes of Trinitarian theology in the Reformers, and Ulrich Lehner discusses the oft-overlooked debates within post-Reformation scholasticism and the early modern era (within both Catholicism and Protestantism). Cyril O'Regan provides a masterful summary of doctrine in Kant, Hegel, and Schelling. Samuel M. Powell summarizes the complexities of nineteenth-century Protestant doctrines, and Aidan Nichols performs a similar task with respect to Catholic theology. George Hunsinger summarizes Karl Barth's treatment of the doctrine (in his *Church Dogmatics*); Vincent Holzer looks at the influence of Karl Rahner and Hans Urs von Balthasar; Aristotle Papanikolaou gives an overview of recent and contemporary Orthodox discussions; and Fergus Kerr looks at the relation of the doctrine to analytic philosophy.

The volume next turns from biblical and historical to dogmatic, moral, and pastoral theology. Kathryn Tanner sets up this further discussion with an essay on the Trinity as distinctly Christian teaching; Rudi A. te Velde explores issues related to religious language and Trinitarian theology (particularly with respect to "person"); Emmanuel Durand, Thomas G. Weinandy, and Bruce D. Marshall make contributions to Patrology, Christology, and Pneumatology (respectively). Risto Saarinen looks at the links between Trinitarian theology and Christian anthropology. Charles Morerod furthers discussion of Trinitarian accounts of ecclesiology (particularly with respect to the sacraments); and Daniel A. Keating develops themes related to an adequately Trinitarian soteriology.

Geoffrey Wainwright opens the Part "The Trinity and Christian Life" with his discussion of the Trinity in liturgy and proclamation; François Boespflug points us to some important expressions in art and iconogra-

phy; Romanus Cessario, O.P., explores implications for ethics, and Amy Laura Hall puts forward an interesting discussion of how implications for the Christian moral life were seen in Julian of Norwich. Francesca Aran Murphy looks at the life of prayer within the context of Trinitarian theology; Nonna Verna Harrison explores links between the doctrine of the Trinity and feminism; and Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt reflects on the Trinity and politics.

The volume also helpfully includes discussions of current dialogues between Trinitarian theology and other major world religions. Here David Fergusson offers an orienting discussion of the place and importance of the doctrine in ecumenical discussions; Ellen Charry provides stimulating and sensitive insights into the doctrine of God in Jewish-Christian dialogue; Gavin D'Costa discusses the role of the Trinity in interreligious dialogues; and Tracey Rowland takes a forward look at issues related to globalization and its relation to the doctrine of the Trinity.

This book should serve as a model for future Handbooks. The topics and issues are well chosen and well organized; they address the most important issues in biblical, historical, and contemporary constructive theology. The contributors are expertly selected—indeed, it is hard to think of better potential contributors for the vast majority of these topics. The essays are based upon recent and rigorous scholarship, they are well structured and readable, and it is not too much to say that they are almost uniformly of the highest quality. One could quibble with various features: some of the essays are translated into English and occasionally leave the impression that something (stylistic) might have been lost in translation; we might reasonably wish for more than a few paragraphs on John of Damascus and on the early Christian encounter with Islam; Latin patristic theology (other than Augustine) gets little attention; and more sustained discussion of the meaning of “monotheism” (especially as it relates to the Old Testament) would be welcome. But these really would be quibbles, and they should not detract in the slightest from the great value of this book. The only really substantive complaint concerns Fergus Kerr's essay, “Trinitarian Theology in Light of Analytic Philosophy.” Kerr seems to be working with a rather antiquated understanding of analytic philosophy; he characterizes it as philosophy that takes “Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, and suchlike” as paradigmatic (339). Although this is not entirely mistaken, surely there is much more to analytic philosophy than the background in the early twentieth century, and a great deal of what takes place in analytic philosophy today is quite opposed to the methods and conclusions of Russell, Wittgenstein, and Co. (witness the revival of metaphysics). More importantly, however, Kerr offers precious little

engagement with (and, indeed, little awareness of) the actual work being done by analytic philosophers of religion and analytic theologians on the doctrine itself. But let me be clear: in light of the book as a whole, this is a very minor problem, and it should not at all detract from the sterling quality of the volume.

In its overall structure and balance, as well as in the consistently high quality of the essays, the *Oxford Handbook of the Trinity* is truly excellent. It is hard to say enough good about it, and I gladly commend it to all students and scholars who are interested in the doctrine of the Trinity. N V

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Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind by Mark A. Noll (*Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011*), xii + 180 pp.

NEARLY twenty years after his publication of *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, Mark Noll offers a “sequel” of sorts in *Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind*, where he levels many of the same critiques against serious deficiencies in the intellectual habits of evangelical Christians in North America. However, Noll’s purpose here is not to chide but to encourage, in hopes of effecting change. He announced at the finale of this book that his primary goal is to “urge others into action.” Though sober and cautionary in tone, Noll is hopeful about the state of the evangelical life of the mind and offers guidelines that encourage Christian learners of all types to explore their fields with academic rigor while remaining committed to Christ and the authority of the Bible.

Noll is an evangelical and an expert in the historical development of Christianity, particularly in America. His close familiarity with the broad, amorphous evangelical world coupled with his scholarly expertise lends strong credibility to his voice. At the same time, his target audience is by no means limited to evangelicals. It has potential fruitfulness for Christians of all traditions, as well as for non-Christians who are interested in Christian engagement with academic and intellectual culture.

The book is clearly written and well organized. The first three chapters provide a framework for Christ-centered learning, while chapters four through seven describe ways that Christology can ground and inform study in the areas of history, science, and biblical interpretation. In the eighth and final chapter, Noll encourages Christian scholars to make contributions to the wider intellectual culture while he reminds them that the requirements for genuine Christian scholarship grow from

a Christ-centered faith and a view of the world informed by Christology. A postscript rounds out the book as Noll gives ten hopeful signs that the intellectual life among evangelicals is improving.

From the beginning of the book to its end, Noll's thesis is clear and consistent: the ground and motivation of meaningful Christian intellectual prowess is Jesus Christ. Those who worship Jesus should aspire to engage the world and study its parts because of who he is and what he has done. Not only was the world created by and through Christ, but in the Incarnation he entered that which he created for the purpose of redemption. Thus, anyone who claims him as Lord has an obligation to study what he created and came to save. In this way, the *totus Christus* serves as the primary motive for Christian intellectual activity. The problem, Noll laments, is that evangelical theology has long emphasized redemption without paying heed to creation. Reclaiming a robust orthodox Christology is crucial to reversing this trend.

Because Christology lies at the heart of Noll's way forward for Christian thinking, he highlights the historic creeds of the Church and pays particular attention to Chalcedon. The doctrine of the Incarnation teaches us that God became an intimate actor in history through Christ and thereby bestowed dignity on creation. Moreover, God has manifested his glory in creation and chosen human history as the venue for his saving activity. God's "yes" to the world in Christ should motivate Christians to undertake serious investigation of creation and its historical processes, in which Christ himself became a participant.

Pragmatic discussions of some ways in which orthodox Christology undergirds intellectual curiosity and engagement with the world form the core of Noll's book. His first example is the Atonement and how appropriating this important doctrine assists in learning. Noll teases out fundamental ideas implicit in atonement: substitution, human sinfulness, the divine initiative in salvation, the narrative structure of salvation, and the complexity of salvation. Next, he suggests parallels between the realities of the Atonement and what is learned about the world through observation. I found this section of the book helpful but perhaps one-sided in its view of atonement. Explicitly owning his lack of professional training in this area of theology, Noll relies almost solely on the work of John Stott. He does acknowledge other classic theories of atonement, but he does not incorporate them into his argument. As a result, Noll restricts his concept of the Atonement to an "objective," penal-substitution model. I believe this move limits his argument. Many scholars affirm the many-sided nature of the Atonement, and Noll's treatment might have benefited from this perspective and expanded the ways atonement helps us make sense of the world.

Noll's subsequent discussions of how Christology can instruct the fields of history, science, and biblical interpretation are, in my mind, the most informative and compelling. Concerning the study of history, a thoroughly Christian approach represents the *via media* between the opposing epistemologies of postmodern pessimism and modern objectivism. From the Incarnation we can deduce a positive epistemology tempered with humility. Christ assumed full humanity, which included the noetic processes of the human mind. But humanity is nonetheless fallen, and sin continues to have a distorting effect on one's objectivity and reasoning faculties when viewing the past. More importantly, the very duality of the Incarnation (divine and human) serves as the model for historical knowledge. The fact that the Incarnation occurred in a *particular* time, place, and culture suggests the partial, limited character of what can be known of history. At the same time, the Incarnation—even in its particularity—has profound universal implications. The Christian can have confidence in the reality of universal truths while retaining humility about what can be known concerning cultural-historical particularities. In addition to this, a compelling reason for Christian humility and confidence regarding historical knowledge is the belief in God's providence. The Christian historian knows that the Lord guides human events, though the historian admittedly does not know all the historical details, their meaning, and where history is going based on observation alone. He can know something of what God is doing in history, although he is not given the whole picture.

Noll's chapter on the study of science is the most fascinating, though it is likely that some evangelicals will feel consternation upon reading it. He acknowledges the long-standing divide between religion and science, particularly the debates over creation and evolution. For some time, the common tactic for conservative Christians wishing to protect biblical integrity has been to claim certain hermeneutics and theological epistemologies while distrusting science or avoiding it altogether. Noll cautions that neglecting to observe what God has made is not an acceptable Christian response. Here again, a Christ-centered approach is instructive. If Christ is the unifying principle of Scripture, then Christ should guide our understanding of what is revealed in Scripture, and this includes nature.

The history of the divide between science and religion is complex, but Noll traces the beginning of this phenomenon to the dueling ontologies espoused by Aquinas and Scotus. Ultimately, it was Scotus's view—that God and creatures share the same essence of being—that played the largest role in shaping Western thought. This development gave rise to assumptions of univocity between the Bible and nature: what is observed

in Scripture must be harmonized with what is observed in nature. After the Reformation, when “literal” interpretations of Scripture became more normative, Christians assumed that there was no antithesis between what God revealed in Scripture and what was learned from nature. (The concept of univocity would later result in natural theology—the idea that we can know what God’s purposes were in creating various parts of the natural world.) When the assumptions of univocity and harmonization were augmented by Ockham’s razor, the idea arose that if an event could be explained by a natural cause, supernatural causes or supernatural beings would be rendered unnecessary. Things began to come to a head at the beginning of the seventeenth century when science grew rapidly. Observers of nature claimed that belief in God was unnecessary for understanding nature, while those who believed in God were forced to prove either that new discoveries did indeed reveal something about God’s purposes in creation or they were false discoveries.

There is more to this historical development, but Noll’s point is that evangelical Christians have followed this trajectory. Those who object to modern science often do so on the basis of assumptions. So the question remains: how can Christians who believe the Bible avoid harmful assumptions and take sufficient heed of scientific observation? The answer, Noll suggests, is to be found in the recovery of a full appreciation of the person and work of Christ. As a case study, he looks to B. B. Warfield, who simultaneously affirmed a high view of Scripture and a view of evolution. According to Warfield, God created primordial matter *ex nihilo* but infused in matter forces necessary for development. Taking a cue from Christology, Warfield’s idea of *concursus*—the coexistence of two contrary realities—upheld his view of evolution where creation developed through natural means (except for original matter and the human soul). Noll’s purpose in turning to Warfield is to demonstrate how the Chalcedonian perspective aids the study of nature. Christology helped Warfield understand the divine and natural forces of creation, and enabled him to believe the testimony of Scripture *and* the testimony of nature. For God has revealed himself in “two books”—the Bible and creation. Noll calls on evangelicals to continue valuing the one while not neglecting the other.

Noll’s attention to the study of biblical interpretation turns on the recent work of Peter Enns. One of Enns’s projects is to challenge modernist assumptions embedded in evangelical hermeneutics in order to reclaim a hermeneutic from the Bible itself. One must read the text while trying to think as the authors thought. Enns is a controversial figure in the evangelical world, but it is not Noll’s objective to make judgments on particular conclusions. Instead, he attempts to consider Enns’s view

that every part of the Bible relates to the narrative of Christ and that there is an “incarnational parallel” between Christ and Scripture. In order to read and appreciate the Bible in its true transformative character, one must stress the full divinity, and full humanity, of revelation. Like history and science, the study and practice of biblical interpretation must be grounded in a Christological framework.

The fact that *Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind* aims to help Christians love and worship God more fully should interest anyone in the evangelical world. In all, Noll has succeeded in making a convincing case that loving and glorifying God involves the mind. The way forward for evangelicals in loving God with the mind is to recover a robust, orthodox Christology. True Christo-centrism confesses Jesus as creator and Incarnate savior. Therefore, Christians have an obligation to study and learn about the world Christ made and came to redeem. Noll has provided a wonderful service for evangelical Christians. Time will tell whether they will follow his lead. N.V.

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Ascension Theology by Douglas Farrow (*London: T & T Clark, 2011*), xiv + 177 pp.

THE ARGUMENT of this book is that unless one's theology is committed to the proposition that Jesus Christ “ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father,” one's idea of the divinity of Christ will leak into one's idea of humanity as a whole, and one will end up elevating and deifying humanity as a whole. Without adherence to the Ascension of the divinized humanity of Christ to the right hand of the Father, whence it causes our deification, theology inevitably and necessarily tends to exhort humanity to self-deification. It will do so necessarily and inevitably, according to Farrow, because, he claims, the physical humanity of Jesus is the anchor of its externality from and objectivity to ourselves. Without an anchor in that physical humanity, ascended to the right hand of the Father, our own subjective sense of the meaning and value of our humanity becomes prone to infinite self-inflation. The book gives a captivating explanation of the missteps by which the current political and theological situation was reached. It is captivating because it is theological (based on the Ascension), and, at the same time, it is concrete (based in the humanity of Christ). It is simple in the best possible way, gathering many things (ecclesiology, eucharistic theory, twenti-

eth- and twenty-first-century politics) around a single insight, the importance of the risen and ascended humanity of Christ. A particular strength of the book is the way it is able to illuminate the principle that the more Christ is preached and known, throughout history, the more he and his followers are hated. Opposition to Christianity is sown and flourishes in specifically Christian soil.

As with Douglas Farrow's previous book, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, the negative side is his "heroes and villains" style of theological historiography. Origen and Augustine are both disparaged, on the grounds that, because the spiritual and moral aspects of the Ascension mattered more to them than its literal and physical aspects, they therefore promoted its subjectivization and internalization. The problem is that Farrow's lens doesn't exactly apply to them: neither Origen nor Augustine would have located the objective reality of Christ in his physical human nature. For Augustine or Origen, the objectivity and externality of Christ are located not in his physical body but in his soul. Their anthropology doesn't fit into Farrow's "demythologization: bad," "Ascension realism: good" mold. Farrow's high evaluation of the concrete, historical humanity of Jesus could not have been articulated in those terms in pre-modern times. The language which pre-moderns had for talking about human nature, including the humanity of Christ, takes that nature to be a specification of a more general type, Humanity. That's why, for instance, as Charles De Koninck showed against Jacques Maritain, Thomas Aquinas rates the common good above that of the individual. Farrow's way of reading the history of theology, and the high evaluation he sets upon the risen and ascended humanity of Jesus Christ, tacitly assume a high evaluation of individual, historical personality, about which philosophy and theology had very little to say before modern times and before modern authors such as Kant (who is one of Farrow's villains).

It could be argued that there is a kind of toe-hold for the modern, Kierkegaardian (anti-Hegelian) Christian attachment to the particular body in the ancient veneration of relics (and one has not one but two Compostellas to show that that veneration persists into modern times). Farrow alludes to this, tangentially, when he refers half-jokingly to the footpad on the Mount of Olives whence Jesus is supposed to have launched himself into his Ascension. But would the ancients have cut the saints' bodies and their clothes into hundreds and thousands of pieces if they, like us modern Kierkegaardians, believed in the sanctity of the particular, individual, body of the saint? Isn't there a real difference between the treatment of the body of Thomas Aquinas by his contemporaries, and the treatment of the body of Thérèse of Lisieux by twentieth- and twenty-first-century

Christians? The latter understand the historical particularity of the individual in the same “personalist” way as Farrow does, and hence his argument about the Ascension makes sense to them in a way it would not have done for Augustine, or Origen, or Bernard of Clairvaux.

So *Ascension Theology* is an object lesson in the dangers of using history as a means through which to practice theology. As Gilson said to Fernand van Steenberghen in a short-lived moment of contrition, “Not a single ‘ism’ fits all of the facts. Irenicism is the only one with which we should concern ourselves.” But in the end, Farrow’s book must be commended, above all for its courage in stating clearly that Christianity and Christians are endangered by the modern state and its shibboleths, such as human rights. *Ascension Theology* is simple and therefore absolutely memorable. There are few better achievements for a theologian. N V

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Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering
by Eleonore Stump (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), xx + 668 pp.

ON SEVERAL counts, *Wandering in Darkness* is an important addition to the contemporary literature on the problem of evil. Eleonore Stump provides a masterful Christian account of suffering’s possible defeat that brings together the intellectual and the affective, propositions and narrative. Further, her philosophical approach makes the work accessible to the broader university culture. And she shows great psychological insight in her re-interpretation of well-known Biblical stories of suffering. Stump, a senior professor of philosophy at St. Louis University, has spent decades reflecting on these issues and incorporating feedback from dozens of other eminent scholars, students, and friends. This is a text that philosophers of religion must engage and that theologians can utilize to explain traditional Christian concepts to contemporary minds.

In *Wandering in Darkness*, Stump argues that suffering cannot be properly understood apart from the stories of our lives. She provides a broad, theoretical account of how God might redeem suffering. At the same time, she reminds readers that the specific shape of this redemption depends irreducibly on the particularities of the human persons involved. Stump argues, moreover, that any assessment of the rational compatibility of suffering with the existence of the Christian God must first offer a robust account of the Christian vision of God and what makes for “the good life” in earthly and eschatological perspective. Her book does

exactly this, spending the first twelve of fifteen total chapters setting the stage for her possible-world theodicy.

The author clearly aims to reach as many people as possible with their varied concerns and backgrounds, both personal and academic. She critiques, yet reaches out to, those trained to accept the assumptions of historical-critical biblical exegesis, the evidentiary mindset of the natural sciences, and so on. In addition, Stump relies on language and modes of argumentation accepted beyond Christian circles so as to avoid the resistance that specifically theological terms, phraseology, and logical moves can sometimes trigger. While some theologians may categorically disapprove of such an approach, Stump proceeds in a faithful way that encourages one to look at the integrated *ratio* of God's creation.

The book has four sections. Part 1 sets up the project, which takes as its bases (1) Aquinas *qua* explicator of the pre-modern Christian tradition, and (2) contemporary cross-disciplinary insights. Stump then argues that lived knowledge of other persons and their stories cannot be translated without remainder into propositional form. Hence, responsible philosophical reflection must allow for types of knowledge other than "knowledge that," lest it ignore an important slice of reality for simplicity's sake. The author challenges the standard form of analytic philosophy through her own use of narrative and poetry—seeking to convince her philosophical colleagues of the indispensability of non-propositional knowledge, especially in dealing with issues such as suffering that intimately concern the human person *qua* person.

Furthermore, Stump pushes back against two-dimensional examples about "Smith and Jones" whose construction eschews as much particularity and complexity as possible. If the details of people's lives matter for "answering" evil, such examples will be of little help in addressing the academic quandaries involved or providing the affective, holistic satisfaction often sought in these discussions.

In Part 2, after demonstrating the inadequacy of various contemporary proposals on the nature of love, Stump presents a Thomistic vision of love as (1) desiring the good for the beloved and (2) desiring union with the beloved. To this end, Stump explores what it means to be in union with, close to, and present to another—including the requirement of *mutual* openness. (This last point proves important in Stump's account of "willed loneliness.") In the case of union between human persons and God, Stump makes use of the distinction between God's antecedent and consequent will. This is the first of several double-layered principles in the book.

The second is this: A person can have a second-order (higher level) desire to be integrated around the good but still have conflicting first-order

desires that infect the everyday decisions that make up a life. Stump emphasizes that true flourishing requires that the first-order desires align with the second-order ones, which must in turn center on the highest, objective goods for human persons. At the same time she contends that God, who first placed particularized desires in each human heart, cares about their fulfillment. Here we encounter the third double-layered principle: the importance of both the objective good and subjective desires.

Part 3 presents and creatively elaborates upon the stories of Job, Samson, Abraham, and Mary of Bethany with deep psychological insight and finesse. Through these four characters, Stump explores various types of unwilling suffering, including (1) the suffering of the pious innocent, (2) “self-destroying evil,” (3) broken “desires of the heart,” and (4) “heart-brokenness and shame.” There are disputable points in each interpretation—her reading of Abraham’s story perhaps goes the farthest out on a limb—but each of these explorations is well worth meditating on for its own sake (especially the reflections on Job and Mary of Bethany).

Stump explicitly resists treating these stories as proof-texts with one point each. Rather, through the enhanced Biblical narratives, she establishes with her readers a reservoir of psychologically intimate, “shared experiences” of specific life stories. These chapters demonstrate that first-hand experience of people’s stories is irreplaceable in shedding light on their particular situations of suffering.

In her exploration of Job’s story, which is especially rich, Stump presents another layering concept of great import for the rest of her book: that of nested stories. She draws an analogy between mathematical fractals and God’s providence to demonstrate how God can work for one person’s good while simultaneously providing for the betterment of others and the world at large.

Part 4 presents the final argument for a possible world much like ours in which God (as Christianly understood) and suffering could coexist in a rationally coherent way. Unchosen suffering, says Stump, can assist in reordering one’s life and loves to match the truth that union with God (and with others through that love of God) is the ultimate good around which all other goods are hierarchically ordered. This joyful union that is the core of human flourishing may begin now, but it comes to fruition in the eschaton. Even then it can be more or less rich depending on the depth of a person’s love for God (which love may be deepened by an experience of suffering that is unforeseeably but gloriously redeemed).

To what she takes to be Aquinas’s theodicy, Stump adds a second component that reveals the importance for these discussions of an intimate knowledge of people’s personalities and life stories: God can redeem

the “desires of the heart” lost in suffering. By virtue of our individuation we have certain particularities through which we experience and live into our most central, shared purposes as human creatures. God has not graced us with certain good (if imperfect) loves and gifts only in order to shoot them down and mold us into submission. Thus, while always remaining open to God’s detours for our higher good, we can maintain trust that God will somehow give the ends of those good desires back to us. In some cases, the lost desiderata may require transfiguration—being “refolded” into our earthly or eternal lives in ways that are better integrated into the hierarchy of goods. Furthermore, Stump suggests, God is powerful enough to coordinate all our interwoven life-stories, only allowing what suffering furthers every person’s good (or keeps each from something worse).

Among the many valuable aspects of this four-part work is the way that it clears away certain oft-encountered obstacles by articulating a properly Christian vision of the good (and its lack) through illustration of the multi-layered character of reality in general, our interior selves, and God’s interactions with both. The book’s language is relatively accessible to non-specialists, and the style motivating. What is more, *Wandering in Darkness* may be able to play a more pastoral role in the academic community than some other available volumes on the problem of evil because of its consistent attention to affective concerns. Stump continually reminds the reader that “explaining” suffering ought not be taken as “explaining it away” or in any way attempting to lessen the horror of what people have endured. And readers who are already immersed in the Christian spiritual life may find that the book’s careful treatment helps give voice to a rich, pastorally sensitive vision of flourishing and suffering that they have long felt intuitively to be the case but were previously hesitant or unable to verbalize.

Here is the crux of Stump’s analysis, as this reader sees it: Our analytic philosophical attempts—humanly limited and abstract—to tackle the problem of evil *head-on* can go only so far. This, however, is for philosophically understandable reasons. First, the level of orchestration required to deal with the number and complexity of real and conceivable suffering-situations is beyond our ability even to fathom. However, we can see that a Christianly conceived God might indeed be able to orchestrate reality towards suffering’s defeat for each and all, and Stump provides models towards that understanding. Second, the “answer” to an individual’s suffering will necessarily hinge on the details of that person’s being, life, eternal destiny, and unique desires of the heart. Thus no blanket solution is to be found, but suffering can become less philosophically intractable when we

cease to treat it via thought-experiments and generalizations that cannot capture the particular, unfolding life-narratives of those involved—narratives whose resolutions may at present be hidden from our view.

In a book of this breadth, there will inevitably be points about which different segments of the readership will have lingering concerns. Some Thomists, for instance, will wish to modify Stump's interpretation of Aquinas on the dynamics between God and human beings (i.e., when she discusses the detailed mechanics of justification, sanctification, and free will in Chapter 8). At the least, a few points in these sections might be helpfully reworded to speak of our cooperation with God rather than God's cooperation with us. Stump's position on foreknowledge, which comes up in various places, also remains a bit unclear. Interestingly, however, the project as a whole does not seem to stand or fall on the knotty intricacies of the underlying, enduring intra-Catholic debates, important as they are.

Second, the nature of the project requires that Stump spend the bulk of her book setting up her case; consequently, she is able to deal with certain rebuttals of the arguments only in brief, and additional reflection thereupon would make for profitable future projects. To take one example, Stump prudently restricts herself to the problem of non-chosen suffering as experienced by "mentally fully functional adult human beings" (5). Further study might test how well the approach can extend to children and the mentally disabled—both to ensure their inclusion in this vision and because we all in fact fall along a continuum of maturity, dependency, and mental abilities. An even more comprehensive account would also grapple with chosen suffering and animal pain.

Lastly, the book's form, arising in part from separate lectures honed over the years, includes a fair amount of repetition and independent sections of qualification interspersed throughout the exposition. The book, moreover, is journey-like; taking quotations out of context could easily lead to misunderstanding, because Stump often presents a theological idea in casual terms that are sufficiently qualified only later in the book. However, given the length of the work and its sensitive topic, the circling patterns of reinforcement and clarification may help readers to digest the book in more manageable portions.

Careful readers will appreciate the rich, creative synthesis that Stump achieves as well as her diligence in nuancing the book's normative claims. Stump follows Aquinas in realizing that exemplary work often begins with listening to the voices of diverse others and distilling the best of their wisdom. Furthermore, the book overflows with suggestive gems of insight that merit further academic consideration and can help guide a life. It

seems to this reader that *Wandering in Darkness* is a “must” for contemporary scholars treating the problem of evil in the context of philosophy of religion or theology. It is truly a work of the mind and the heart. 

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