

Book Reviews

John Henry Newman and the Development of Doctrine: Encountering Change, Looking for Continuity by Stephen Morgan. Foreword by Ian Ker (*Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2021*), xvi + 315 pp.

ST. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN was controversial during much of his lifetime—as an Anglican as well as a Catholic. Nothing has changed since. There has been an eagerness to silence his voice, and with it the challenge of his theological insights then, and there is such an eagerness to do so also now—in ways more or less subtle. There are historians whose chosen object of study happens to be the Victorian Newman in the Victorian age and who take the immanent frame they tacitly presuppose as normative horizon and their assumed attitude of scientific detachment as indispensable precondition for historical objectivity, and who dismiss all interpretations of Newman that happen to display signs of substantive agreement with his insights and tenets as “Newman hagiographies” lacking the allegedly requisite scientific distance from their object of investigation. This principle of critical detachment would, of course, entail that Platonists are disqualified from investigating reliably Plato’s thought, and the same would obtain presumably for Aristotelians regarding Aristotle, for Thomists regarding Thomas Aquinas, for Marxists regarding Karl Marx, for Foucaultians regarding Foucault, and so on and so forth—and last but not least, for historians committed to the immanent frame and historicist tenets regarding their interpretations of Troeltsch and Mannheim. Such an assumption, when consistently applied, carries itself, of course, sooner or later *ad absurdum*, but the derogatory denomination “Newman hagiography” survives and is conveniently attachable to whatever interpretation one likes to disqualify as scholarly serious and academically reputable work on Newman. Next to the “unmaskers” of “Newman hagiographies” there are those Newman scholars of a primarily evangelical and Anglican provenance eager to demonstrate that Newman’s self-characterization, primarily

in his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, is at best an *ex post facto* retro-projection, and hence an inherently unreliable, if not an intentional, re-composition of his intellectual past meant to be deceptive and hence bordering on the mendacious—in short, a renewal of Kingsley's charge. Things are not necessarily better on the Catholic side—since Orestes Brownson's attack, there continue notions, popular among Catholic traditionalists as well as Lefebvrists, that Newman's theory of the development of doctrine, if not outright modernist, is at best crypto-modernist, a view sadly encouraged by Catholic neo-modernists who instrumentalize Newman's account as a justification for interpreting "change" as an interminable but allegedly unavoidable sequence of ruptures and "development" as the intentional activity of progressive developers of doctrine establishing an ongoing praxis of pre-projected desired transmutations of faith, doctrine, and practice.

It takes so-called "Newman hagiographers" to set the record straight and to save Newman's ongoingly pertinent and indeed salutary insights from multiple distortions and instrumentalizations, let alone attempts of effectively silencing Newman by way of a more or less subtle character assassination. It requires painstaking archival work and a close, careful, and comprehensive reading of Newman's published letters, diary entries, and works (in their original unrevised versions) as well as letters and works of his interlocutors and collaborators in the Oxford Movement to set the record straight, to unearth Newman's authentic voice, and first and foremost, to acquit him of the charge of systematic disingenuity, if not duplicity, in putting together his own account of the development of his religious opinions.

John Henry Newman and the Development of Doctrine comprises, next to an introduction and a conclusion, four substantive chapters of about equal length: the first covering the years up to 1833, with a focus on Newman's first monograph, *The Arians of the Fourth Century*; the second considering the period from 1833 to 1838, with a focus on the Oxford Movement, the *Tracts for the Times*, and the *Via Media*; the third covering the period from 1839 to 1842, with a focus on Tract 90 and its aftermath; the fourth and final chapter advancing close readings of the last Oxford University Sermon, "The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine," and the *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, with a close eye upon Newman's correspondence during these years. Stephen Morgan makes a persuasive cumulative case that in the *Essay* Newman addressed at length a question that had posed for him a considerable difficulty and for which he offered various hypotheses over the course of time until his fully fleshed-out account from 1845 provided a solution that entailed

momentous consequences for Newman. Furthermore, Morgan establishes beyond reasonable doubt Newman's reliability as a source of the development of his own theological opinions.

All in all, Morgan, a permanent deacon of the Diocese of Portsmouth, England, and now rector of the University of St. Joseph in Macao, India, turns out to be a more rigorous historian and a more perceptive and nuanced reader of the textual evidence than the despisers of the alleged "Newman hagiographers." At the same time, Morgan has produced an eminently readable book—which is in and of itself a commendable achievement. Morgan's monograph, the revised version of a doctoral dissertation completed at the University of Oxford, is an important contribution to what is now called "Newman Studies." His reconstruction of Newman's intellectual and theological path as an Anglican toward the first full book-length articulation of his theory of doctrinal development in the 1845 version of his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* is not only an indispensable study of the Anglican Newman, but according to the judgment of this reader, a definitive one. Its careful and rigorous archival and documentary work and the astute dialectical engagement of alternative interpretations (persuasively identified as misinterpretations) sets a very high bar for successful future counter positions. Morgan advances a reading of Newman's own development of thought (largely consistent with Newman's own recollection) that will be hard, if not impossible, to unsaddle on the basis of what would have to amount to a superior textual evidence and a more comprehensive and consistent interpretation than the one executed by Morgan.

Yet it is, however, precisely Morgan's successful historical and hermeneutical work that raises the larger question—*e poi?* The problem is the following: There simply does not exist a gradual transition from a historical reconstruction of Newman's thought to a contemporary constructive theological deployment of Newman's theory of the development of doctrine. The latter, the theological deployment of Newman's theory, rather requires from the beginning an approach categorically different from the historical reconstruction and interpretation of Newman's own thought—a conceptual, normative approach *in* the very interpretation of history that antecedently transcends historicist suppositions, in short, an approach identical with or analogous to the one Newman himself employed. Dogmatic or systematic theologians as well as Catholic philosophers who were influenced by Newman—Blondel, Marin-Sola, Przywara, Congar, Rahner, Ratzinger, and Lonergan, to name the most obvious ones—knew this very well. While historical "Newman Studies" help us to

understand Newman ever better in his theological, intellectual, historical, and socio-cultural context, they are methodologically unfit to address, let alone answer, the question—*e poi?* For the strict historicists among Newman scholars, this is not a problem at all, but rather a sign that they remain on the high and dry path of rigorous historical scholarship. Yet, for alleged “Newman hagiographers” who are not just interested in an interminable Newman archaeology, but rather in a Newman *ressourcement*, the matter presents itself differently. Morgan puts the finger on the problem when, in his conclusion, he raises weighty contemporary theological issues that open the question of the authentic development of doctrine versus the corruption of doctrine, issues that quite directly suggest that: “What is certain is that the church urgently needs a theology of development that commands widespread agreement: one which does not rely entirely on an overblown, creeping extension of the dogma of papal infallibility. To settle for such an argument from authority would, indeed, be the ‘nothing else than shooting Niagara’ that Newman so feared would follow the definition of that dogma at Vatican I” (275). There obtains a categorical difference between *appealing* to Newman’s theory of development and *advancing* “a theology of development that commands widespread agreement” (presumably as influenced by Newman or in the spirit of Newman’s own theory). This is the interior limit any Newman *ressourcement* faces. The contemporary, heavily historically bent, if not outright historicist commitment of much of “Newman Studies” might (at best) help prepare the former, the *appeal* to Newman’s own account, yet arguably blocks the way to the latter, the advancement, because the methodological commitments of much of “Newman Studies” implies an allegedly insurmountable historicist horizon. Theologically normative questions fall outside of this horizon. Yet, notably, Newman himself was passionately interested in theologically normative and conceptually relevant issues, in strategies of persuasive argumentation that arise from a non-historicist interpretation of historical facts; he was, in short, interested ultimately in that kind of discursive work that is intrinsic to any dogmatic theology (executed with an apologetic and controversialist temper) in general and to a theology of the development of doctrine in particular. To put it bluntly: Newman himself would never have been interested in much of contemporary “Newman Studies.” Yet to be also very clear: this is not Morgan’s problem. Rather, the very achievement of his book and the astute formulation of his conclusion forces the question—*e poi?*—and thereby brings the *aporia* of much of contemporary “Newman Studies” (with the possible exception of

the so-called a-historical “Newman hagiographers” focused on a Newman ressourcement) to the fore.

Morgan establishes a definitive reading of Newman’s Anglican path to his 1845 theory of development—and for that, a brilliantly written one—that this reviewer regards as a “must-read” for everyone who is seriously interested in Newman’s theology in general, and especially in the emergence of the theory of development of doctrine during his Anglican period. His conclusion states a normative task that Newman would have been able to address, but that the methodological strictures of much of contemporary Newman Studies make proponents of the latter in principle unprepared to tackle. Would that students of Newman begin to pay attention to this very problem. If “Newman Studies” continue to ignore this problem, they will become, unwittingly, the undertakers of Newman’s living theological voice, turning him into an ever more excellently prepared mummy that is granted a privileged place in the ever-growing post-Christian museum of Christian artifacts from a bygone age.

It is precisely the contrast between the historical excellence of Morgan’s book and the normative nature of its conclusion that raises the question in all desirable sharpness. We are indebted to Morgan not only for the remarkable achievement of his book but rather also for confronting us so clearly with the question—*e poi?* Newman did indeed have an answer, but what about those ensconced in historical Newman Studies? NEV

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John Henry Newman’s Theology of History: Historical Consciousness, Theological “Imaginations”, and the Development of Tradition by Christopher Cimorelli (*Leuven: Peeters, 2017*), xii + 356.

THERE IS NO END OF BOOKS on John Henry Newman, and this is a good thing, because Newman’s importance is not waning, but—arguably—increasing. Christopher Cimorelli’s study, the adapted version of a doctoral dissertation completed at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, under the directorship of the noted Newman scholar Terrence Merrigan, appeared in print in 2017. This book is of ongoing relevance, for at least three reasons. (1) No other work since then has replaced or improved upon Cimorelli’s close reading and exacting interpretation of Newman’s first

monograph, *The Arians of the Fourth Century*. (2) There exists no other study on Newman's theology of history in correlation to his development of doctrine of similar depth. (3) Cimorelli has recently become director of the National Institute for Newman Studies (NINS) in Pittsburgh. It is to be expected that the programmatic thrust of this work will inform to some degree the research agenda and the overall theological approach taken at the NINS under his leadership.

Cimorelli's book does two things in one: it fills an urgent need in Newman studies, and based on Newman's thought about history, it makes an important—albeit not unproblematic—contribution to the ongoing discussion regarding the development of doctrine by advancing a new theory of the development of tradition. This makes the book fall into two parts of unequal length, the second shorter constructive part being conjoined to the first longer interpretive part, an investigation of Newman's view of history as a whole, ecclesiastical history, the nature of historical research, and its significance for theology.

In the first chapter, Cimorelli treats lucidly and briefly the religious and socio-political context within which the Oxford Movement arose and in which Newman's self-perception as a historian developed. The central topic of the chapter is a succinct analysis of the religious epistemology of the Oxford Movement, based on the connection between ethos and religious knowledge taken to be embodied in the life and teaching of the early Church, the normative instantiation of orthodoxy and moral temper, and thus a model for the intended reform of the Church of England. Cimorelli argues persuasively that "the Tractarian ethos was . . . a way of life, a way of seeing the fallen world, and it directly involved the exercise of the human will in the maintenance of the moral disposition from which one views and judges the world" (37). This religious epistemology informed Newman's *Parochial and Plain Sermons* and became increasingly articulated in an explicit way in his *Oxford University Sermons*.

In the second chapter, Cimorelli reconstructs Newman's self-perception as an ecclesial historian and the theological and theoretical method Newman develops, in which historical inquiry has a particular nature that is characterized by the dynamic confluence of three constitutive elements: evidence, antecedent probabilities, and antecedent considerations. The judgments the historian has inevitably to make regarding the method and the resources of a particular historical inquiry are irreducibly personal, because the antecedent considerations that guide these judgments will vary from historian to historian. Because historical evidence is imperfect, such considerations are valid and indeed indispensable. Cimorelli's analysis is

perceptive and valuable; regrettably, too few contemporary Church historians reflect on these epistemological and hermeneutical matters pertaining to historiography in general and Church history in particular with sufficient depth and rigor. The central insights of Newman's view are still pertinent. His hermeneutical considerations are truly critical because they do justice to the specific nature of historical investigation. Compared to Newman's hermeneutics, the use by many ecclesial historians of the historical-critical method comes across as theologically quite uncritical and unreflective. To put it differently: Cimorelli's able analysis makes Newman a strikingly relevant interlocutor in a contemporary discussion about the nature of an ecclesiastical history and a history of doctrine and dogma that is fully appropriate for and non-reductive to its subject matter.

Chapter 3, the interpretive core of the book, comprises a close reading and critical analysis of Newman's first monograph in which his historical method is showcased, *The Arians of the Fourth Century*. Cimorelli identifies three historical theories Newman employs and astutely analyzes the way these theories inform Newman's presuppositions on the basis of which, in turn, he forms historical judgments. There is, first, the *disciplina arcani*, an early catechetical model based on stages of disclosure of the received mysteries. There is, second, the principle of the Economy with the Incarnation itself as the prime and paradigmatic instantiation of this principle that, in light of human finitude, fragility, and sin, names the pervasive divine pedagogy according to which salvation history unfolds. There is, third, the theory of Alexandrian orthodoxy versus Antiochene heterodoxy that serves as a hermeneutic of heresy. This chapter is an astute and instructive interpretation of *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, a "first" in the sprawling corpus of Newman studies and a "must read" for every serious student of Newman's first monograph. Despite Cimorelli's tendency to mitigate the radical implications of Newman's *Arians* for understanding the nature of a properly theologically informed historiography of dogma and heresy, his analysis lays bare the ongoing relevance of Newman's thought for any theologically critical historiography that does not antecedently capitulate to the allegedly scientific norms of historicism.

The fourth chapter serves as a "bridge" chapter in preparation of the constructive capstone, the fifth chapter. The strategic move of the fourth chapter is the deployment of Charles Taylor's concept of "social imaginaries:" "Imaginaries are dynamic aspects of human consciousness, constituted by theory and practice, and are constantly developing" (175). Cimorelli then adumbrates Newman's imaginary of the "historical church" which was provisional, a work-in-progress. Cimorelli argues

that Newman “was in search of the ‘real’ church, both in antiquity and in nineteenth-century England, and the historical record was to have a normative say in this regard. Newman did not realize how dangerous were the waters in which he swam” (183). The search for the “real church” had momentous consequences for Newman. What follows is a close study of the development of this imaginary on Newman’s way to Catholicism. The early theories (*disciplina arcani*, the Economy, the hermeneutics of heresy based on the Alexandrian orthodoxy versus the Antiochene heterodoxy) are step-by-step left behind. The theory of the *Via Media* replaces them only to come itself to naught eventually in the context of Newman’s closer study of monophysitism—this is a story familiar to readers of Newman’s *Apologia*, but it is a story accurately narrated and astutely analyzed by Cimorelli based on a close reading of key-texts from this period. The attack on Roman infallibility in Newman’s *On the Prophetic Office of the Church* and especially the concluding reflection on the indispensable constructive role of prejudice for action in the present as well as for the interpretation of historical events in his astute discussion of Newman’s *The Miracles of Scripture* are the highlights of this chapter. Cimorelli demonstrates persuasively that Newman’s critical engagement of skeptical historiography, and especially the latter’s hidden and philosophically unwarranted presuppositions, is still highly relevant. Overall, the chapter’s strength rests in Cimorelli’s keen display of what for Newman Church history and historical theology are and what they are able to achieve on the other side of simply submitting to the normative prejudices of epistemic skepticism and historicism. However, while the concept of “social imaginary” helps explain much, at the same time it also “tames” Newman considerably by putting a critical distance between his normative claims and the heuristic grid—the concept of the “imaginary”—of the interpreter. This way the power of Newman’s approach in going against the grain of what twentieth-century historicist historiography simply presumes as “givens” becomes in a very subtle way mitigated and toned down. Sometimes one wonders whether Cimorelli is not at points hesitant to draw out, let alone endorse, the full implications of some of Newman’s positions and their critical import for what has become a rather uncritical contemporary embrace of the tacit suppositions of historical criticism. Despite this reservation regarding the domesticating effect of the deployment of the “imaginary,” this is a rich chapter narrating crisply what the Newman of the Oxford Movement discarded eventually and what continued to be of ongoing relevance for the Catholic Newman and even for contemporary Catholic historical theology.

With the end of the fourth chapter also ends Cimorelli’s close interpretive

reading of Newman's works. It is at this point that a notable development of the nature of Cimorelli's study itself becomes explicit: it develops from an investigation of *Arians* in its religious, socio-cultural, and ecclesial context to an interpretation of the epistemological, hermeneutical, and theological principles that inform *Arians* and develops further as Newman moves deeper and wider in his study of patristic theology and history. With his fifth chapter, Cimorelli's approach (as explicitly announced, and hence transparently owned) turns from an exercise in historical theology into an exercise in systematic theology—that is, in light of the antecedents of his study, into a constructive Catholic theological reception and transposition of Newman's account of the development of doctrine. This is the most ambitious chapter of the book in which the constructive thrust dominates with the historical flanks left wide open. Cimorelli intends the chapter to be “an original theological contribution to Newman studies, as well as to Roman Catholic dogmatic theology” (242).

The fifth chapter falls accordingly into three parts: (1) a narrative account of the Roman Catholic Church's embrace of historical consciousness, (2) a focused reading of Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, and (3) the construction of a relational-developmental model of tradition, intended as a contribution in an ongoing post-Vatican II discussion over the nature of doctrine and its development. The narrative account of the Roman Catholic Church's embrace of historical consciousness and the move from an allegedly exclusively propositional to a propositional-historical model of doctrinal development with Vatican II, when compared with the nuanced and careful interpretation and analysis of Newman's Anglican period, lacks noticeably in hermeneutical sophistication, first-hand knowledge and command of the subject-matter, and discursive suppleness. Cimorelli relies for his narrative account on three theological authorities from the 1970s and 1980s: Avery Dulles's *Models of Revelation*, Gerald McCool's monograph on nineteenth-century Scholasticism, and Mark Schoof's overview of Catholic theology from 1800 to 1970. The presentations, evaluations, and criticisms of these works are not argued, and thereby established, but simply antecedently assumed as descriptively and normatively correct. Nowhere in these pages does Cimorelli betray any first-hand knowledge of those theologians who held, interpreted, and defended the position under critique, often with remarkable sophistication and often by learning from and drawing upon Newman in one or the other way. One misses any encounter with Ambroise Gardeil, Léonce de Grandmaison, Francisco Marin-Sola, or Yves Congar, to mention just a few. The Church's new historical awareness that is posited is, in the quotation

from Schoof, that “revelation is really determined by history” (254). What Cimorelli means by “revelation determined by history” he states at a much later point clearly: “As historians attempt to shed more light on events from the past, they come across new evidence, which may prompt the revision of existing theories and hypotheses, and perhaps even one’s antecedent considerations. The very movement of history itself facilitates a shift in the constellation of Christian self-understanding. The study of the past, in particular, examines remote periods from new vantage points, and thus must be said to play a particularly strong role in ‘developing’ Christianity” (310). To say the least, a full unfolding of the implications of this claim means the reception and transposition of Newman’s theology of history within a normative framework of an encompassing historicity that is virtually impossible to differentiate from historicist historicity. The constant displacement of vantage points that were once upon a time new with presently new vantage points (to be replaced by future ones) leads in the context of a consciousness of encompassing historicity to an interminable process of re-interpreting the received history guided by the ever-new self-understanding of Christianity in light of ever newly emerging vantage points—hence: revelation determined by history.

“Revelation being determined by history” becomes the interpretive axiom in light of which Cimorelli reads a particular hotly debated sentence from *Dei Verbum* §8: “This tradition which comes from the Apostles develop in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. For there is a growth in the understanding of the realities and the words which have been handed down. This happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, who treasure these things in their hearts (see Luke, 2:19, 51) through a penetrating understanding of the spiritual realities which they experience.” This sentence interpreted in light of the axiom of the newly gained historical consciousness, “revelation being determined by history,” becomes the normative framework that, according to Cimorelli, draws its inspiration from Newman’s *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* and that has its warrant in a reading of the *Essay* that is already guided by the antecedent assumption that revelation is determined by history. This reconstruction of Newman’s *Essay* forms in turn the basis for a critical reading of the post-conciliar interpretation of doctrine advanced by the encyclical *Fides et Ratio* and in two other key documents, one from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (*Mysterium Ecclesiae*) and the other from the International Theological Commission (*The Interpretation of Dogma*). Instead of reading these magisterial and quasi-magisterial statements as the beginning clarifications of, and hence as contributions to, the

development of Tradition, Cimorelli, based on his normative framework, reads them as largely failing in doing full justice to the above section from *Dei Verbum* as interpreted by Schoof.

What is notably absent from Cimorelli's interpretation of Newman's *Essay* is the kind of careful, close, and nuanced reading that characterizes his interpretation of *Arians*. What is also missing is a reading of the *Essay* in light of the *Grammar of Assent*. It is in the latter where Newman shows that every act of assent occurs in some relationship to a proposition. If receiving divine revelation entails assent to it, then propositions are indispensable for the assent to occur. Yet such a realization would have created a substantial problem for the relational-developmental model of Tradition that Cimorelli proposes, a proposal that Cimorelli clearly states as being inspired by Newman's reflections on the subject of doctrinal development, but not explicitly held by Newman. His construal is based on three premises: first, the fact that Vatican II endorsed the ecclesial hypothesis articulated by Newman, namely that the ongoing development of Tradition is safeguarded by the infallible teaching authority; second, the need to embrace the full implications of this view, namely the participative, relational, and narrative dimensions of the development of tradition; third, the existence of untapped resources in Newman's thought to draw out these underemphasized elements. Cimorelli's central claim is that "Newman's method requires the willingness to keep historical, ecclesial hypotheses 'open' to challenges from history itself" (242).

Cimorelli's reading of the *Essay*, guided by this claim, becomes his *discrimen* to contrast, on the one hand, a "propositional-historical model" of revelation and development that focuses on the propositions of the Church and the magisterium's leading, if not exclusive, role in maintaining a dynamic Tradition with, on the other, what he regards as a superior model that he sometimes claims as complementary, yet at other times as a substitution. This is a relational-developmental model according to which truth is co-constituted by the active participation of the faithful in the present context. (Here the largely subterranean influence of Lieven Boeve's *Interrupting Tradition* becomes visible.) Cimorelli conceives of doctrines as "narrative-linguistic icons" that are fundamentally relational and have their authentic *Sitz im Leben* in the liturgy, paradigmatically in the doxology of the Creed. Instead of a linear development of doctrine, which Cimorelli sees at work in the propositional-historical model, he proposes a much more complex interactive model (informed by George Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic model of doctrine and Nicholas Lash's apophatic reservation regarding doctrinal statements) in which the faithful

(and this means primarily the laity), not just as active liturgical participants but as agents of interpretation and re-interpretation of the faith (now in light of a new determinative historical consciousness), play a crucial role as possibly the decisive motor of development. Hence, the central issue that drives Cimorelli's model is the active participation of the laity, not only in the liturgy, but consequently, based on the Schoofian reading of *Dei Verbum* §8, in their active role in the development of tradition—in marked contrast with a dynamic of Tradition in which the magisterium is seen not only as the arbiter but also as the dominant, if not the sole, motor of the development of doctrine.

Cimorelli's model is well worth serious consideration and scrutinization. The issue that seems most obviously to remain open for discussion is a claim drawn from Newman and submitted to a post-modernizing transposition in the spirit of Lieven Boeve. What in Newman is the "risk of corruption from intercourse with the world around," becomes in Cimorelli a "participation in the present, undetermined, and ultimately 'open' moment" that "necessitates a risk on the part of the Christians, a risk that must be boldly 'encountered' if the Christian idea is to remain in continuity [not identity!] with itself, by developing when it must" (292). This is a puzzling claim, especially when one takes into consideration the liturgical habituation of the faithful constantly informed by the "narrative-linguistic icons" that stands at the heart of Cimorelli's model, for in such a scenario the present moment is never undetermined and "ultimately open," but always already profoundly illuminated and thus qualified by the distinct explication of the Christian idea along the lines Newman conceived. The risk of corruption conceived by Newman is something completely different from the risk that is purportedly given with and in the radical openness and indetermination of the present moment. The former is the exclusively negative risk of discontinuity, of betrayal, of abandonment, the latter is the purported ongoing positive risk and the entailed mandate of an ever-new constitution of Christianity, at least co-constituted by a laity that is informed by the liturgy and at the same time, as it seems, increasingly by the new historical consciousness. The decisive motor, that develops Tradition, according to this model, seems to be the laity that continuously lives in the undetermined openness of the present moment yet is simultaneously informed by the liturgy and the "narrative-relational icons" of the developing Tradition. In the creative encounter between the latter and the present moment in which history presents unpredictable new vantage points, the faithful co-constitute truth; that is, they develop a new understanding of the Christian idea (the other part of the co-constitution being presumably

the informing liturgy with its “narrative-relational icons”) in light of which the earlier history of Christianity will need to be re-interpreted. This is, of course, an ongoing dynamic of interminable co-constitution and reinterpretation. One wonders to what degree “rupture” is unavoidably an inbuilt component of this understanding of the development of Tradition. Just considering these seemingly inescapable entailments of the proposed model, the least one has to observe is that they can be sustained only on a maximalist reading of *Dei Verbum* §8 that has at best tenuous grounds in Newman’s *Essay*, that can be reconciled with Newman’s *Grammar of Assent* only if the model is understood to complement and not to replace the propositional-historical model of development, and that seems to stand in considerable tension with Newman’s *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*, a text conspicuously absent from this book (a work that, presumably after *Dei Verbum* §8, is of merely historical interest).

Cimorelli’s important book deserves ongoing attention: its first major part as an excellent study of Newman’s theology of history with a focus on *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, and its second shorter part precisely because of its controversial constructive claims inspired by a reading of Newman’s *Essay* (as well as his “Letter to Flanagan”) that gives rise to serious questions. Only a deeper engagement of the second part by way of a dialectical testing of the proposed model of the development of tradition will eventually show whether it turns out to be a position that will stand its ground or a counter-position that will not carry through. For posing this challenge so clearly, we stand in Cimorelli’s debt. N.V

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Did Jesus Rise from the Dead? Historical and Theological Reflections
by Matthew Levering (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019*), 272 pp.

IN HIS BOOK *Did Jesus Rise from the Dead? Historical and Theological Reflections*, Matthew Levering writes “to make the case” that there is “good reason” to believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus (1). In this self-described work of “theological apologetics” (211), Levering argues from a threefold foundation for the credibility of Jesus’s resurrection: (1) “the New Testament evidence,” considered from the perspective of historical investigation; (2) the “sheer strangeness” of the apostolic claim that

Jesus was “resurrected” and not just resuscitated or exalted into heaven as an immortal soul; (3) and the intrinsic credibility of the “supreme love” revealed through his death and resurrection (2–4). As this threefold foundation makes clear, Levering draws together *both* “historical and theological reasons for believing that Jesus’ Resurrection happened” (4).

In chapter 1, Levering contends that, while “faith does not stand or fall upon the results of historical research, those who insist that the truth of Jesus’ Resurrection has *nothing* to do with the domain of historical investigation are mistaken” (30). To this end, he offers a survey of three figures: (1) the Belgian Dominican theologian Edward Schillebeeckx; (2) the American Protestant biblical scholar Dale C. Allison Jr.; and (3) the Anglican bishop and biblical theologian N. T. Wright. Levering exposes the serious flaws of contemporary attempts to reduce the resurrection claims of early Christians to hallucinations or visions of someone who has recently died. In particular, Levering finds compelling Wright’s argument that the bodily resurrection of Jesus provides “the best historical explanation” of the early Christian claim that what first-century Jews expected to happen to *everyone* at the *end* of time had in fact happened to only *one person*—Jesus of Nazareth—in the *middle* of time. From a strictly historical point of view, claims that the disciples were merely moved by grace to a new experience Jesus being “alive” or that they simply experienced hallucinatory visions of Jesus after his death fail to explain the “radical change of eschatology” that took place in the early Church (56).

In chapter 2, Levering explores the question of whether “the Church’s mediation is truly effective in enabling us to share in the apostolic communion with the risen Jesus” (63). He first offers a sympathetic overview of the Protestant biblical scholar Richard Bauckham’s book *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (2003; 2nd ed., 2017), in which he claims that the Gospels rest largely on “eyewitness testimony” (87–88). According to Levering, Bauckham’s historical arguments show that “the ongoing presence of eyewitnesses provides a reason for not being skeptical about the major events of Jesus’ life as reported by the Gospels, including his Resurrection” (89). At the same time, Levering insists that eyewitness memory is only one “mode of historical remembrance” utilized by the Church; in addition, Jesus also “willed that the historical remembrance of his Resurrection be an ecclesial reality” (90)—that is, a liturgical act of “remembrance” that takes place above all in the Eucharistic liturgy.

In chapter 3, Levering aims to shed light on “the role of the Old Testament in aiding the discernment of the historical credibility of Jesus’s Resurrection” (91). This chapter presents a stark contrast to contemporary

studies of the resurrection that begin (and end) with the New Testament data. In it, Levering surveys the work of three contemporary scholars—Dale Allison, N. T. Wright, and the Jewish scholar Jon Levenson—and puts them in conversation with Thomas Aquinas's thirteenth-century commentary on the account of Jesus's resurrection in John 20–21. As this chapter amply demonstrates, it is “precisely in the scriptural history that the Creator God has guided, that we come to know that given such a God and such a history, Jesus' Resurrection is believable” (112). According to Levering, “the entire Old Testament” (113) is a necessary prolegomenon for understanding what it even means to say that Jesus has been raised in the first place, much less why such a thing might be true.

In chapter 4, Levering makes the remarkable claim that “it is significant, for the credibility of the Resurrection, that the authors of the New Testament insisted upon the strangest and least likely claim, namely, Jesus' bodily Resurrection to glorious life” (114). To this end, he presents an informative survey of contemporary “spiritualizations of Jesus' risen body” by theologians such as Peter Carnley (Anglican) and biblical scholars such as John Barclay (Protestant), Gerhard Lohfink (Catholic), Gerd Lüdemann (atheist), and Geza Vermes (Jewish). Levering argues that such attempts to spiritualize the risen body of Jesus fail to do justice to the New Testament claim that bodily resurrection of Jesus was *unique*. As Levering puts it: “According to the New Testament, something happened to the dead Jesus that had never happened to anyone else and that could not be expected to happen to Jesus' followers prior to the final judgment” (124). That is why Paul's proclamation of resurrection in Athens was explicitly described as “strange” (Greek *xenos*; see Acts 17:20) and led Paul to be regarded by some as “mad” (26:24). Levering shows how both Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century and John of Damascus in the eighth century recognized the uniqueness of Jesus's resurrection and argued against similar attempts in their own time to negate this strangeness by spiritualizing the risen body of Jesus.

In chapter 5, Levering surveys the role of reason and faith in accepting the truth of the resurrection in the works of three twentieth-century Catholic writers: (1) the American priest theologian Joseph C. Fenton; (2) the French Jesuit Pierre Rousselot; and (3) the Canadian Jesuit philosopher Bernard Lonergan. In the course of his chapter, Levering points out the weaknesses of both an overemphasis on the power of human reason to demonstrate the truth of the resurrection as well as tendency to minimize the role of historical reasoning in showing the overall credibility of faith. To help resolve the quandary of the relationship between the roles

of human reason and supernatural faith, Levering points to Rousselot's insistence that, "in intellectual acts, there is more of a place for love" than is often assumed by both advocates and critics of apologetic argumentation (153). As Rousselot puts it: "In the act of faith love needs knowledge as knowledge needs love. Love, the free homage to the supreme Good, gives us new eyes" (154). In light of this insight, Levering contends that both the "cumulative probabilities" of historical reasoning and a focus on "how love colors our outlook" regarding judgments of truth play important roles in "an apologetic defense of Christian truth" (163).

In chapter 6, one of the most significant in the book, Levering argues that "a contemplative attitude toward Scripture's portraits of Jesus" can help one appreciate the credibility of the resurrection claim (166). In contrast to the reductive approaches of contemporary resurrection skeptics such as Reza Aslan (Muslim) and Bart Ehrman (atheist), Levering briefly surveys the thoughts of Thomas Aquinas, Joseph Ratzinger, and Hans Urs von Balthasar regarding what he calls "The Apologetics of Love" (177). Taking as axiomatic von Balthasar's declaration that "Love alone is credible" (181), Levering contends that any contemporary case for the credibility of the resurrection needs to recognize that "the truth of Christian claims will only be perceived when one contemplates in its wholeness the radical divine Love that is revealed in Christ" (170). In other words, it is not enough to show that the resurrection happened; one must show *why* it happened and *how* it reveals the infinite, saving love of the Creator God for humanity.

In chapter 7, Levering takes up the "pressing question" of why, if Jesus was really raised from the dead, he did not remain on earth and "manifest his risen flesh to each generation," so that everyone might believe (184)? Drawing on the writings of theologians and biblical scholars such as Douglas Farrow, Michael Morales, and Brant Pitre, Levering provides biblically based answers for why it is that "the risen Jesus does not remain on earth" (205). In particular, he shows that if the risen Jesus had stayed on earth with human beings, "his presence could only have confused us, because our final destiny is not the present world but the new creation" (208).

Taken as a whole, Levering's book manifests a number of noteworthy strengths. First and foremost, his survey of interlocutors is sympathetic wherever possible and critical wherever necessary. He never caricatures or mischaracterizes the views he is summarizing and critiquing. If anything, he seems to go out of his way to highlight the reasonableness of the questions being raised by those viewpoints to which he seems least sympathetic. In other words, Levering is consistently both charitable and critical. As

such, the book presents a model of scholarly discourse—especially on so neuralgic and controversial a question as the credibility of the resurrection.

Moreover, Levering's contribution is far above boiler-plate apologetics. Indeed, he makes several fresh contributions to the debate over Jesus's resurrection. In particular, Levering argument from the "strangeness" of Jesus's resurrection is distinctive and compelling. He argues convincingly that, "when efforts are made to reduce the strangeness of the risen Jesus"—as has been done, in ancient, medieval, and modern times—"it turns out that strangeness stands at the very core of the proclamation" (138). After reading Levering, one wonders if contemporary Christian efforts at evangelization have placed enough emphasis on this "troubling strangeness" of the good news of the resurrection as a "crucial sign of its credibility" (138–39). Indeed, Levering's study suggests that we must not let the desire to inculturate the Gospel do away with this intrinsic strangeness—a strangeness for which the apostles and martyrs bled and died. Likewise, Levering's startling contention that "love"—and not just reason and faith—plays a key role in rendering the resurrection believable is a major contribution to the conversation about the credibility of the resurrection and is arguably (in this author's view) the pearl of great price buried in the field of this book.

Finally, in terms of its overall objective, the book achieves the end its sets for itself: to show that there is "good reason" to believe in the resurrection of Jesus (1). In particular, Levering does an excellent job of steering a path between the Scylla of unhistorical fideism and the Charybdis of rationalistic historicism. Levering makes a compelling case for a *via media*: "Only by faith can a person know fully or properly what Jesus' Resurrection is (namely, the resurrection of the incarnate Son and Savior); but I think that reason, even outside of faith, can arrive at the rational judgment that Jesus rose from the dead" (155). Indeed, one who reads this book with an open mind (and heart) should walk away empowered to see that "faith in Jesus' Resurrection is not a blind leap"; rather, when we take seriously the arguments from history and see them within "the broader horizon of love, these cumulative probabilities suffice for us to be able prudently to make the supernatural assent of faith" (165).

With that said, the study does have some weaknesses. For one thing, if the voices that Levering so deftly brings into conversation with one another regarding the credibility of the resurrection are notably ecumenical, they are also overwhelmingly modern: Edward Schillebeeckx (Catholic), Dale Allison (Protestant), N. T. Wright (Anglican), Richard Bauckham (Evangelical), Joseph Ratzinger (Catholic), Jon Levenson (Jewish). Indeed, it

was precisely when Levering brings Byzantine figures like John of Damascus and medieval figures like Thomas Aquinas into the conversation that the reader experiences something of a widening of purview that makes it clear—and this is important—that the question of the credibility of the resurrection is *not* a peculiarly modern problem. As Levering himself recognizes, it is not only in modern times that “an actual resurrection of a bodily corpse struck many people as not credible” (136). Of course, Levering is well aware of the fact that challenges to the credibility of the resurrection reach back into ancient times with the works of Celsus and Origen of Alexandria (e.g., 9). However, Levering never really brings these ancient voices into the conversation. One cannot help but wonder what they might have contributed. This is especially true of Origen, whose work *Against Celsus* remains one of the most extensive and systematic response to questions regarding the credibility and truth of the resurrection ever penned.

In addition, although Levering recognizes the central role that “the fulfillment of Jewish Scripture” played as motive of credibility in early Christian proclamation of the truth of Jesus’s resurrection (9), he does not devote much time to showing exactly which Old Testament passages are most credibly interpreted as prefiguring or prophesying that Jesus would be “raised on the third day *in accordance with the Scriptures*” (see 1 Cor 15:4). This leaves the overall case for credibility considerably weakened, and somewhat out of step with how the living Tradition of the Church has addressed it over the centuries. For example, although Levering’s discussion of Aquinas’s commentary on John 20–21 clearly shows that the resurrection is, in general, the kind of thing the God of the Old Testament would be expected to do (see 92), it does not quite arrive at showing that the resurrection of Jesus *in particular* is something that God *did* in fact do. This might have been achieved, however, by a discussion of how Aquinas interprets the witness of the Old Testament in his discussion of the resurrection of Christ in *Summa theologiae* III, questions. 53–55. There Aquinas asks and answers some of the very eschatological questions raised by Levering, such as: why Christ does not manifest his resurrection to all human beings (q. 55, a. 1); why he does not continue to live with his disciples after the resurrection (a. 3); whether “proofs” of the resurrection are necessary in a matter of faith (a. 5), and whether these proofs of his resurrection are manifested sufficiently (a. 6). In a work of theological apologetics, these classic answers of Aquinas to perennial questions might have been more appropriate and illuminating than a survey of his catena of Old Testament texts in his commentary on the Gospel of John.

Nevertheless, despite these gaps, Levering has given us an up-to-date,

remarkably learned, and rigorously argued monograph that impressively achieves its aim of presenting a reasonable and *beautiful* case for the historical and theological truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. N.V.

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The Apocalypse of Wisdom: Louis Bouyer's Theological Recovery of the Cosmos by Keith Lemna (*Brooklyn, NY: Angelico, 2019*), xxx + 488 pp.

KEITH LEMNA HAS DONE THE THEOLOGICAL WORLD a great service. In *The Apocalypse of Wisdom: Louis Bouyer's Theological Recovery of the Cosmos*, he offers the English-speaking world for the first time a monograph on the thought of the Oratorian Louis Bouyer. Bouyer is undoubtedly one of the theological giants of the twentieth century. Born in Paris in 1913, he was ordained a Lutheran pastor in 1936. After only three years as a Lutheran clergyman, he was received into the Catholic Church at the Benedictine Abbey of Saint Wandrille. Then ordained as an Oratorian priest in 1944, he taught from 1946 to 1962 at the Institut Catholique de Paris and abroad for the three decades following.¹ He is most well-known for his work on the liturgy both before and after the Second Vatican Council. With fifty books to his name, including a nine-part synthesis on Christian doctrine, the breadth of his theological vision and work is astounding. In France he is considered one of the four preeminent theologians of the post-World War II era, and his theological contemporaries in Europe, such as Hans Urs von Balthasar and Joseph Ratzinger / Benedict XVI, always held the Oratorian in high regard.² Yet, in the English-speaking world, much of his work has gone without comment.³ Thankfully, into the void steps this excellent work by Lemna.

¹ For autobiographical details of Bouyer's life and a who's who history of twentieth-century Catholicism, especially French Catholicism, see Louis Bouyer, *The Memoirs of Louis Bouyer*, trans. John Pepino (Kettering, OH: Angelico, 2015).

² Jean-Robert Armogathe, "Obituary for Louis Bouyer," trans. Adrian Walker, *Communio* 31 (2004): 688–89; Rodney Howsare, *Balthasar: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 33; Joseph Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs 1927–1977*, trans. Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press), 143.

³ In his forward to Bouyer's autobiography, Peter Kwasniewski writes: "Considering

Anyone familiar with the Bouyerian corpus knows the challenge of approaching it. With its vast array of subject matter, ranging from biblical to liturgical to historical to spiritual to speculative theology, one wonders whether there is any one thread woven throughout the varied strands, a single theme around which the whole sprawling corpus can be understood. In fact, there is, and Lemna has deftly identified it. For Bouyer, the fundamental question of theology is the world's relation to God.⁴ The structure of the first six books of his nine-part treatise on systematic theology attest to the priority of the question with the first three works addressing the question of the world, or the economy of creation and salvation, and the latter three works addressing the question of God, or theology properly speaking: the doctrine of the Trinitarian God. Interestingly, though Bouyer's work on theological cosmology, *Cosmos*, is the third book in the series, it was, in fact, the last of the six to be written. In this sense, as Lemna points out, "*Cosmos* is a capstone monograph . . . summarizing in important ways the decisive first six volumes" (xiv). Theological cosmology fully illuminates the God-world relation as Bouyer sees it, and since this relation sits at the heart of his thought, *Cosmos* is for Bouyer both his "most personal, as well as most speculative work" and indeed, "opens up the meaning of his other writings" beyond the dogmatic sphere (25). One could, then, scarcely choose a better entry point into the wide theological world of this "mind with a very special character," as Joseph Ratzinger saw him.⁵

The Apocalypse of Wisdom is an expansive commentary on Bouyer's cosmology at the heart of which is a liturgical, even nuptial, vision of the whole of creation known and loved in the mind of God from all eternity, as the uncreated Wisdom of God. In creation God freely gives existence to the world *ex nihilo*, so that it might return to him in a liturgical song of praise and thanksgiving, as the Bride of his eternal Son, the eschatological and cosmic Church, created wisdom now made glorious and radiant through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. As Lemna puts it, "Bouyer shows that cosmology should be a pursuit of wisdom, but that Wisdom is ultimately a gift revealed or uncovered by means of *apokalypsis* in the re-creative interventions of the divine Word and Holy Spirit in history" (xvii). The wisdom of man seeking a unified vision of the whole of reality

that he was a highly influential theologian, a scholar of great stature, and a friend of other famous theologians in the Church of the twentieth century, it is strange how little attention has been paid in recent years to Fr. Louis Bouyer (1913–2004)" (in *Memoirs*, 1).

⁴ Louis Bouyer, *Le métier de théologien* (Geneva: Ad Solem, 2005), 210.

⁵ Ratzinger, *Milestones*, 143; quoted by Lemna, *Apocalypse of Wisdom*, 5.

through poetic imagination and philosophical reflection naturally opens up and necessarily gives way to the Wisdom of God revealed in Jesus Christ, who redeems, fulfills, and unites the mythical and sapiential, the spiritual and the material in the Incarnation of the eternal Word.

Like *Cosmos* itself, *The Apocalypse of Wisdom* is split into two parts. Part 1, "Cosmology in History," follows the first seventeen chapters of Bouyer's work laying out a genealogical phenomenology and positive theology of creation, a theological reading of the development of cosmology from ancient mythology to modern science all under the light of revelation. Part 2, "Exitus–Reditus," traces the final five chapters of *Cosmos*, explicating in a sophiological key the Oratorian's metaphysical and theological vision. Where the phenomenological portion provides a sketch of the history of cosmology in Western civilization, the speculative reflections or retrospections, as Bouyer puts it, provide a specifically philosophical–theological synthesis. It should be noted, as can be seen from chapter count alone, that the phenomenological portion of *Cosmos* is significantly longer than the speculative, but Lemna, for his part, gives equal attention to both with each taking up essentially half of the commentary. This move is to be appreciated for a couple reasons.

First, Bouyer has at times been accused of being insufficiently metaphysical. Whether this assessment is correct or not—and it is clear Lemna does not think it is so—any sympathetic commentator must draw out in detail the assumptions and implications of the Oratorian's philosophical theology, at least if its metaphysical depth is to be seen. Second, this depth is reached in so few pages within *Cosmos* itself that there is the real need to carefully explicate its vision, which Lemna does by calling upon Bouyer's other writings, secondary sources, and central interlocutors, such as Thomas Aquinas, John Henry Newman, and Sergei Bulgakov. Also, rather than opposing them to each other, Lemna joins, on the one hand, Bouyer's concern for the uniquely creative event of divine revelation in history and the subsequent development of that history under the light of revelation with, on the other, a clear insistence on the intimate presence of creation in the Wisdom of God from all eternity, as articulated in the doctrine of analogy and the divine ideas. What has appeared to some as an anti-rational biblicism or patristicism in the Oratorian, refusing in-depth philosophical reflection, is nothing of the sort. The unifying bridge, according to Lemna, is Bouyer's truly Catholic sophiology, which he draws from Scripture and Tradition, as well as sources patristic, medieval, and modern, and even mythopoetic and scientific. Placed in this light, the Bouyerian cosmivision becomes a significant contribution to the recovery and development of a

biblical-liturgical cosmology and participatory metaphysics or what Hans Boersma has called a sacramental ontology of creation.

In the commentary's introduction, Lemna uses two terms—"theandric humanism," coming from the Christology of Dionysius the Areopagite, and the rather clunky "theoanthropocosmic synthesis," borrowed from Philip Sherrard—to describe the way in which the Oratorian's cosmology is also a meta-anthropology. Here man is a microcosm, or better yet, a macrocosm of the world finding its origin and end in Christ. In his eternal Wisdom, God ordained the human person and gave him the vocation of joining all things together in himself, uniting visible and invisible, matter and spirit, in a single chorus of praise to God. The incarnate Son and Immolated Lamb is the principle of creation, who fulfills the human vocation and unifies the created order in his very self, deifying man and in so doing gathering up created being into his body, the Church, who is destined to return to God, not to be absorbed by him, but to be in nuptial communion with him, as the bride to bridegroom. What this means is that the "theoanthropocosmic synthesis" of man, the macrocosm of the world, unifying the cosmos in the resurrected Christ, is also a Marian and sophiological vision of nuptial union able to maintain the distinction of creature and Creator by way of nuptial analogy. Of course, retaining such a distinction, which does not collapse God into the world or the world into God, while also refusing to posit a third thing alongside God and the world, an eternal uncreated feminine Sophia, let us say, has always been the challenge of any sophiology properly so called. The question, then, is whether a truly Catholic sophiology is possible. Bouyer most definitely believed so, and we have no better interpreter of his thought than Lemna.

Part 1 of the commentary consists of seven chapters with the first, "Imagination and Wisdom," providing the central sources for Bouyer's cosmology. Beginning with the Oratorian's own experience of the divine presence in creation, Lemna sheds light on Bouyer's mythopoetic vision of creation formed by the work of John Henry Newman, his friendship with J. R. R. Tolkien, and his affection for the English Platonic tradition, found in Woodsworth, Coleridge, and the Inklings. What Lemna reveals here is a world where visible and invisible realities exist within a unified cosmos, where the material world is like the fringe of the garment of the spiritual world, which communicates through visible signs and symbols, thus giving the imagination perennial significance. Bouyer's interest in the Catholic sapiential tradition and Russian sophiology is to be understood within this vision of a unified symbolic cosmos. Chapters 2–4 deepen the unity of imagination and wisdom by turning to the place of myth in our knowledge

of the world (chapter 2), the transformation of myth by divine revelation in the Old Testament (chapter 3), and the transformation of myth by philosophy (chapter 4). One of the most unique but challenging aspects of Bouyer's systematic works is understanding the place he gives to the "naturally" sacred in pagan rites and myths. As Lemna puts it, "the sacred [for Bouyer] is not an addition to nature, whether cosmic or human, but an indicator of its deepest reality, a demarcated entryway into living relation with reality as it should be, in peaceable communion with the divine" (68). The Christian transformation of the sacred under the reign of sin, death, and the devil is not a demythologization of man's mythopoetic knowledge and experience of the world, as our secular age would have it, but the transfiguration and fulfillment of it in Jesus Christ and the Church (chapter 5). Christ is the one true king in whom all royal myths find completion, and he is the final or eschatological man, who humanizes and divinizes creation in union with the eternal Word. This theoanthropocosmic synthesis is lost to our secular age, or rather is turned into an idolatrous humanism and materialism (chapter 6), and therefore stands in need of a recovery of a poetic wisdom and an alternative modernity, a cosmology reuniting spirit and nature (chapter 7).

Chapters 8–12 make up the second part of the book, commenting upon Bouyer's theological synthesis of creation, or "Retrospections," as the Oratorian puts it: Trinitarian Wisdom (chapter 8), the angels and the cosmic liturgy (chapter 9), human corporeity and the Mystical Body (chapter 10), the eschatological and nuptial cosmos (chapter 11), and the return of the King (chapter 12). Lemna points out that "the ordering of themes parallels that of Aquinas in *Summa Theologiae*. Like Aquinas, Bouyer begins by showing that all cosmic being is brought into being in and through the eternal triune God, and ends, as Aquinas intended to do, at the end of history, with the Second Coming of Christ and the general resurrection" (267). The range covered in these chapters is astounding: from the sophiological challenge of distinguishing between uncreated and created Wisdom, to the retrieval of the divine ideas and their relation to the angels and the angels' place in the cosmic hierarchy and liturgy, to the human person in his materiality redeemed and incorporated into the body of Christ, the Church, in whom the whole of creation is eschatologically contained, and finally coming to the cosmic Wedding Supper of the Lamb. Lemna is to be commended for elucidating areas of controversy in these Bouyerian speculations and clarifying both their faithfulness to and creativity within the Tradition. In the final chapter he offers his own proposal for how the Oratorian's cosmology contributes to current debates surrounding

participatory or metaxological metaphysics, ultimately concluding that “the metaphysical dimension in Louis Bouyer’s book on cosmology, as in all his work, serves a larger purpose to inspire the reader to live liturgically, in rigorous, hopeful expectation, enlivened by charity, for the victorious return of the Risen King, who is our Creator and Redeemer” (425).

If there is one response we might offer to this truly generous work, it is not in terms of disagreement, but rather of a desire for more to be said regarding what are arguably the most prescient chapters in *Cosmos*: “The Decline of Religious Vision” and “From Technological Magic to Cosmic Mysticism.” Lemna insightfully connects these two chapters, showing that, when taken together, they offer a genealogy of cultural and spiritual decline from the money-lending bankers of the late Middle Ages, a kind of pre-bourgeois class of practical materialists focused on the accumulation of capital, to the nominalist philosophy of William of Occam, whose denial of the divine ideas and the analogy of being laid the groundwork for the philosophical materialism of the modern age. The combination of this practical materialism, on the one hand, and philosophical materialism, on the other, gives rise to modern technology, or more specifically, technocracy, which is not accidental to the methodology of the empirical sciences under the direction of early modern philosophy, but its final cause, and therefore intrinsic to its very nature. Though such early modern philosophers as Francis Bacon and René Descartes appeal the importance of religion, the latter even giving proofs for divine existence, “both of them are, [Bouyer] argues, proponents of the technocratic ideal, of the reduction of science and the exploration of the cosmos to its use-value for human self-gratification” (220).

All of this Lemna summarizes with deep penetration, not least of all Bouyer’s unique reading of nominalism as the philosophical justification for the idolatry of mammon and practical materialism more generally. However, it is here that we wish our astute author would have said more. As Bouyer makes clear, the modern enslavement to technocracy, tied as it is to the god of mammon, is not simply a slavery to and worship of man-made objects, but of spiritual beings who seek the destruction of souls. Or to put it another way, the slavery of modern man to instruments of his own creation reveals more than the ontological non-neutrality of those instruments. It reveals, as Bouyer says, “a slavery that is ultimately demonic.”⁶ What is this relationship between technocracy and the spiritual world? As

⁶ Louis Bouyer, *Cosmos*, trans. Pierre de Fontnouvelle (Petersham, MA: St. Bede’s Publications, 1988), 154.

our lives, our education, and even our worship are ever more mediated by technological devices, this question takes on a greater importance, a weight mixed with terror, if we follow Bouyer's prophetic reading. Additionally, could more be said about the roots of modern technology residing in the devolution of religion into magic, into man's ritual and cultic manipulation of nature for sensual and materialistic ends? Here we are dealing not only with secular liturgies, but with principalities and powers standing behind those liturgies, rites, and rituals that call down powers greater than we know. We only have to think of St. Paul's warning to the Corinthians (1 Cor 1:19–20) to see how thoroughly biblical Bouyer's vision is. Saying as much is not a critique of Lemna's exegesis, but an invitation to disclose more of the sophianic vision of Bouyer and its relevance for our technological age.

It has been said of Bouyer that he was one of the most creative and original theologians of his time, while at the same time being one of the most faithful to the Tradition. Always plumbing the depths of revelation, both natural and supernatural, while taking into account developments in modern science, psychology, and the history of religions, he came to conclusions that were nothing other than what the Church had always believed, though now articulated and organically developed in a new key. If this is true of Bouyer, it is also true of his commentator and disciple, Keith Lemna, who takes us to the edges of the Oratorian's most speculative thought, while never leaving the heart of the Church or the Seat of Wisdom. N.V.

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