

approved by the Church. Hebrew and Greek ceased to be taught until the second half of the 18th century, except by the Jesuits at Braunsberg on the Prussian border. This claustrophobic culture encouraged the revival of medieval anti-Semitic myths of ritual murder and desecration of the Host. Despite this regressive bigotry, not all Catholics were bent upon promoting hatred of the Jews. Like the nobles, clergy also had good reason often to employ Jewish businessmen. Teter tells of a Jewish wine merchant who stored his wine in a Carmelite monastery cellar while he and his partner lived on the premises. The papal encyclical: *A Quo Primum* (1751) expresses deep concern over Jewish/Catholic interdependency.

This fascinating book provides detailed evidence of a fearful, anxious and embattled Church usually content to live alongside Jews as long as other threats to hegemony did not pose serious challenges. When that happened, polemics against Jews were ratcheted up and adapted to attack other minorities. The Jews had stubbornly resisted conversion down the centuries – a perpetual challenge to the ideals of Christendom. ‘Oh, rabid and cruel Jewish Synagogue, you lashed your God and mine...you wanted to beat, cudgel and lash my Saviour’ – a rabble-raising denunciation by an 18th century Dominican preacher. Magda Teter helps us to understand that this was far from being the attitude of all Polish Catholics in this period and that the so-called ‘Triumph of the Counter Reformation’ was not only to a considerable extent illusory, but the fearfulness of the Church continually demonstrated that it was indeed so.

TONY CROSS

GRACE AND NECESSITY: REFLECTIONS ON ART AND LOVE by Rowan Williams, *Morehouse*, Harrisburg, 2005, Pp. 224, £10.70 hbk.

When I was an undergraduate, my fellow English students and I all imagined that we would become world-renowned novelists or poets. One of them, in discussions about life, the universe and everything, once commented that he would probably become a Christian at some stage in his life, but that he wanted to write his great novels first. He seems to have believed that Christian faith is in some sense inimical to the creative enterprise. The old ‘Christianity is incompatible with science’ assumption had largely retreated and been replaced with a ‘Christianity is incompatible with art’ assumption. *Grace and Necessity* addresses precisely that assumption.

This is a book *about* art, but it is a book *of* theology – or, at least, the out-working of a theological conviction, namely that the Trinitarian God we meet in Christ is one who enables art to be itself. Belief in him, therefore, does not require us to turn art into something else, such as catechesis or apologetics or ethical admonition.

This book is really an application to art of its author’s great dictum that ‘God does not compete with us for space’. Just as, within God himself, the Father enables the Son to be other than himself and the Spirit to be other than either Father or Son; and just as, in the Incarnation, the divinity of Jesus does not squeeze out or misshape his humanity; and just as in our own experience of God, the more we engage with the divine, the *more* human we become, not less; so in art, Christian conviction does not squeeze art into anything other than its own proper shape and character.

And what is its own proper shape and character? It is an intense, honest and perceptive engagement with the world as it is, and a reshaping of elements of that world in a different medium, so that some new facet of their significance is revealed. Things are more than they are, says Maritain, and art shows us something of that ‘more’.

So God allows art to be itself. The artist allows the world to be itself – and not what she or her audience might like it to be. So divine creativity and human creativity are alike in that they are both activities of love – a love that attends to what the other is, and allows it to be itself, and reveals its true self to it, and helps it to be itself. In other words, this book could be seen as an application to art of N.T. Wright's plea for an 'epistemology of love'. It has the feel of a cross-section – a salami-slice – of a monumental conception of Reality, with love at its heart. It made this reader drool at the prospect of the Archbishop's promised work on the Trinity.

As befits such a view of art being allowed to be itself, Rowan Williams attends to what artists and writers have actually said about what they do. In Chapter One, the Archbishop expounds Jacques Maritain's writings on aesthetics, and the following chapters show how various Catholic artists and writers were influenced by his thinking, and indeed developed it in fresh ways. Chapter Two looks at Eric Gill and, more extensively, David Jones. It is fair to say that the first two chapters do not make easy reading, but perseverance will be richly rewarded. Chapter Three focuses on the work and reflections of Flannery O'Connor, and Chapter Four engages theologically with what has been learned in dialogue with these artists.

This beautifully-produced book is a book of theology, with an indirect apologetic intent: 'I don't intend to argue that only Christian theology can make sense of art; but the tradition I have been examining would claim that theology has, as we might put it, a story to tell about artistic labour which provides a ground for certain features of it and challenges it to be faithful to certain canons of disinterest and integrity. That this helps to foster art which is intensely serious, unconsoling, and unafraid of the complexity of a world that the secularist too can recognize might persuade us to give a little more intellectual house-room to the underlying theology than we might at first be inclined to offer.'

I have a question to ask of this stimulating and engaging work. Flannery O'Connor is expounded (approvingly?) as believing that 'the artist takes the risk of uncovering the world within the world of visible things . . . confident because of her commitment that what is uncovered will be the 'reason' in things, . . . a coherence and connectedness always more than can be seen or expressed.' But does this take the brokenness (i.e. fallenness) of our world seriously enough? Is it not the case that, even below the level of the visible, there is a profound and tragic incoherence and disconnectedness to our world? Are meaning and harmony there already, but just deeper than we usually reach and waiting for the artist to reveal them? Or are they yet to be? Are they only to be had at the renewal of all things? Aren't meaning and harmony not a matter of depth but of time? Are they not so much ontological as eschatological?

If the quality of a book is to be assessed by the questions that it induces in the reader, then this is a very fine book, which will repay the sort of careful attention and engagement that artists (and the Artist) give the world.

MICHAEL LLOYD

THEOLOGY IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE: CHURCH, ACADEMY AND NATION by Gavin D'Costa, *Blackwell, Oxford, 2005, Pp. 264, £22.99 pbk.*

University theology has been taken into a Babylonian captivity by modern determinations of knowledge, its ecclesial nature crushed by the ideological authoritarianism of a sloppy liberalism. We must pray for release and, when and where possible, reconstruct an academic environment which proudly re-establishes theology as 'queen of the sciences'. This is the core of D'Costa's fiery contribution to