

man, taking his body from the Virgin while simultaneously substituting his own essence for the human soul'.

The Christological debates of the fifth century are sufficiently complicated as they are. Only books likely to shed some genuine light upon them are deserving of welcome.

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FAITH AND REASON: FRIENDS OR FOES IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM?

Edited by Anthony Fisher OP and Hayden Ramsay, ATF Press, Adelaide, 2004, pp. xxiv + 384, \$32 pbk.

The publication in 1998 of the Encyclical Letter of John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, inspired a number of international symposia, seminars and publications in response to its challenging questions and wide-ranging topics. One of the central thrusts of the Letter was to call for new consideration of the nature of theology and of philosophy, a call that was received not only as a scholarly encouragement to reflect on the traditional and current character of their relationship, but also as a stimulus to evangelical efforts in the contemporary context. That these activities might themselves renew an ancient dialogue of these disciplines to their mutual illumination and enhancement is one of the profound and stirring appeals of the Letter. This volume takes up the Pope's challenge in order to consider particularly what the relationship of faith and reason is to be in the new millennium.

The papers in it arise from a conference under this same title held in Adelaide in 2002, by all accounts a well-attended and lively event. Nineteen papers are included, only five of which had previously been published in some form elsewhere and several of which are written in response to others in the volume as a way of opening up the debates for readers. It is expected that this will be the first book in a new series from the Australian Catholic University in collaboration with the Australian Theological Forum, a series that intends to engage from a Catholic perspective with issues of the day and promote forms of cultural dialogue.

In the blurb for this volume, the editors draw attention to two questions which they understand to recur in the dialogue of faith and reason: What is the value of human intelligence? And what is the distinctive intelligence of faith? If the first proposes the need for an assessment of reason, and exactly how and by what measures that is to be carried out will differ in each of the papers here, the second looks to an analysis of the particular nature of reason as it is known in and exercised by faith. But one is prompted to ask, why and how is it that these questions in particular arise? They are distinctly modern and seem distinctly too to speak from out of an Anglo-American analytic tradition of philosophy, which indeed primarily characterises philosophy in Australia. However, the editors believe that these questions ultimately take us back to 'the synthesis of reason and faith arguably achieved in the high Middle Ages' (p. xv) and the 'subsequent drama of separation' about which John Paul II himself speaks, and further that they point us to the need both to evaluate that synthesis from our contemporary perspective and then make a decision about where to go from here. Again one asks, why are we directed in this way? And why are these the tasks before us?

These editorial claims suggest that the collection as a whole is both shaped and disturbed by a sense of nostalgia, by a sense that things once taken for granted are no longer with us and thus remain present to us and determinative of us in their very absence, and furthermore by the belief that with modernity both reason and faith have been set free in such a way that everything now depends upon individual choices about what to think and how to live. In that sense, the decision as to which paper should appear first in the collection is most fitting. For Marilyn

McCord Adams's paper on 'Sceptical Realism' is both a celebration of the potential of individuals to produce a rich diversity of meanings and forms of life by means of reasoning, and at the same time is a moral exhortation concerning 'the horrendous', the evil that would ruin us without reason to which humanity is always and everywhere in thrall. This seems also to be the human situation to which Ralph McInerny is responding in his paper on 'The Scandal of Philosophy', which basically argues that what he calls 'the implicit philosophy' of Thomas Aquinas is the common ground upon which a plurality of philosophical positions can be 'dealt with', which I take to mean disciplined, and without which there 'would otherwise be nothing but an intellectual scandal' (p. 36). The sense here that humanity is endangered by that against which Leibniz also strove, namely '*Nichts ohne Grund*', is profound, and leaves one with the realisation that in consequence of *this* kind of faith in reason, the problem of evil, or the so-called question of theodicy, is the stumbling block at which both faith and reason will of necessity trip over.

It is, however, Nietzsche who most illuminates this situation, for this is surely to be described not only in historical terms as 'modern', but philosophically as of the essence of nihilism. It is nihilism which drives an endless reassessment of things as the uppermost values devalue themselves, which means, as that against which anything could be measured and so valued has entirely collapsed to be upheld only by the power of will. There is little enough real and sustained attention to nihilism in this collection, except as something that one is to stand against or as a foil for games of 'let's pretend (suppose, imagine) otherwise', with the result that many of the papers are less self-aware and self-critical than one might have hoped, and the collection as a whole risks leaving the reader adrift on the waves.

Among the other papers by John Hilary Martin, Gregory Moses, Peter Coghlan, Winifred Wing Han Lamb, Raymond Gaita, Hayden Ramsay, Michael Levine, Graham Oppy, John Ozolins, John Michael McDermott, Gerald Gleeson, Anthony Fisher, Tony Kelly, John Quilter and Tracey Rowland, two more could especially be mentioned. John Haldane gave his paper having heard within hours of his arrival in Australia of the death of his mother, and it is the only paper in the collection to turn the tables on the editors' questions and take up instead the question of the faith of reason. His search for a spirituality of philosophy is not only a response to the Pope's call for a 'recovery of the sapiential dimension' (*Fides et ratio*, §§81–83), but in breaking open a discussion of Foucault's 'practices of the self', and even though Haldane continues to speak of this as an opening onto 'the idea of spiritual values' (p. 126), he nonetheless points out a way in which analytic philosophers might engage with nihilism. Kevin Hart's paper, '*Fides et Ratio et . . .*' is the only paper that attends to the astonishing claim of the Encyclical that the reach of faith and philosophy is broken up, not by the problem of evil but by the Paschal mystery, and this happens just as what lies beyond this mystery, namely the infinite horizon of truth, is opened up as a place where they may yet come together (*Fides et ratio*, §23). This mystery celebrated in the Eucharist is the other 'and' which faith and reason always presume, an 'and' that 'bespeaks love and sacrament, hope and exegesis, imagination and testimony' (p. 269). Thus faith and reason are turned outward to the 'beyond which', as they also are turned into the tradition through which both are formed and upheld.

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GOD'S ADVOCATES: CHRISTIAN THINKERS IN CONVERSATION by Rupert Shortt, *Darton, Longman & Todd*, London, 2005, Pp. xii + 284, £12.95 pbk.

Rupert Shortt is the religion editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*, which puts him in the ideal position to conduct these fourteen interviews with leading