

Schall's book may aid many in adopting a proper interest in the message delivered by Pope Benedict XVI in Regensburg, and allow the speech to be explained outside the controversies with which it was greeted. The essential points of the Lecture that Schall highlights are important issues for all those engaged in academic theology or a Christian approach to philosophy. They are also relevant to Christians wishing to engage in other disciplines within the University. Yet Benedict's lecture is not the last word, and its precepts ought to be implemented, rather than admired, by those who agree with them. Schall's book is surely a good introduction to this effort.

DAVID EDWARD ROCKS OP

AN INTRODUCTION TO TORRANCE THEOLOGY: DISCOVERING THE INCARNATE SAVIOUR edited by Gerrit Scott Dawson, *T&T Clark*, 2007, £19.99 pbk

This book is a collection of essays by academics and pastors who have been students of the three Torrance brothers, Tom, James and David. They were originally papers given at a conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 2006. There is a preface by David W. Torrance, and to his very great credit, he explains that the Torrances themselves make no claim that there is such a thing as 'Torrance Theology.' This label is one used by their fans and critics, and by the publishers of the book. Broadly, it indicates the doctrinal character of the work of the Torrance brothers, and their clear devotion to Calvin, Barth and the Reformed dogmatic tradition. All three brothers are eminent pastors and scholars in the Church of Scotland, but whose work has been much loved and influential world-wide, especially in Presbyterian circles in the USA.

The first three essays, by Andrew Purves, Elmer M. Colyer and Gerrit Dawson are Christological, examining the person and work of Christ according to the Torrances. Essay 4, by Douglas F. Kelly looks at the philosophical underpinning of Tom Torrance's work ('The Realist Epistemology of Thomas F. Torrance') and essay 5, by Alan J. Torrance, examines the Bible as the ground of the work of James B. Torrance. The next three essays focus on pastoral and liturgical implications of the Torrance influence, while the last essay by C. Baxter Kruger, ('The Hermeneutical Nightmare and the Reconciling work of Jesus Christ') is much more like a sermon, although the author points out that it is a summary of his recent book. Clearly, this collection would be of great interest to all devotees of the Torrances, or anyone studying their work. The essays are formal analyses of the Torrances' teaching and preaching, but are suffused with the warmth and gratitude that the trio have inspired in their pupils and colleagues over the years. It could also be read with profit by anyone wishing to take soundings in the current state of Presbyterian theology in this particular doctrinal tradition. It might also be salutary for Catholics who seek in ecumenism a sort of escape from doctrine and dogma which they perceive as a negative factor in their own Church, to see that issues of classical Christology, soteriology and Trinitarian theology are still taken very seriously by mainstream groups in the Reformed tradition.

Space precludes commenting on all of the essays; generally, it is most interesting to see what the Torrances have retained from classical Calvinism, according to these essays, and what they have modified. For example, in the Introduction, David W. Torrance briefly refers to the fact that his brothers Tom and James, *pace* their evangelical critics, do not believe in universal salvation. Throughout the essays, the authors frequently refer to the primacy of grace, Sacred Scripture, justification by faith alone and other classic Calvinist themes in the Torrance

corpus. However, other classic *topoi* seem to have been altered in a way that Calvin himself would presumably think of as papist backsliding. On p. 12 James B. Torrance is described as rejecting the doctrine of reprobation, on pages 4 and 6, D.W. Torrance states that we can accept or reject God's grace (perfectly in line with the teaching of Trent), and on p. 53 we learn that T.F. Torrance rejects 'any and every idea' of limited atonement; thus at least three petals of the TULIP have wilted away. Presumably, this has serious consequences for the remaining two. One might begin to ask if this really is theology in a genuinely Calvinist key.

In the essay, 'Far as the Curse is Found: The Significance of Christ's Assuming a *Fallen* Nature in the Torrance Theology', G.S. Dawson makes an attempt to examine Christ's human nature via Torrance theology. From a Catholic point of view this produces some curiosities. Astonishingly, there is the conclusion that Jesus had the ability to sin (p. 66). According to Dawson, 'Our salvation required the assumption of our full humanity. As the Torrances read the ancient Fathers, this meant the very humanity we are in our sin-prone condition. Christ took up a fallen human nature but did not sin in it' (p. 70, see also pp. 39–41). This is a serious departure from the deposit of faith. Throughout the Christological essays there seems to be a muddle between 'fallen' humanity and 'full' humanity. Thus, while T. Torrance is described as rejecting nominalism (p. 96–99), a nominalist view of Christ's free will seems to be, unwittingly, operative throughout. Compounded by the fact that nominalism is the intellectual parent of Protestantism, i.e., the reason that 'Torrance theology' exists at all, this is all rather puzzling.

The overall impression is that both 'Torrance theology' and the essayists themselves might benefit from a serious re-reading of St Thomas Aquinas. A major failure of the whole project is the dismissal of genuine scholasticism, and a bizarre unwillingness to even admit the existence of the Middle Ages (although a single axiom of scholastic theology is acknowledged very briefly on p. 76). In Torrance-land one leaps from Athanasius to John Calvin: how extraordinary. Other parts simply jar: on p. 10 Tom Torrance is quoted to the effect that John Knox paid particular attention to the Ascension of Christ. One is tempted to ask *-so what?* - that is, after asking the more obvious question, *who's John Knox?* It is simply fraudulent to present John Knox as a theologian of any stature, let alone the stature of St. Athanasius, or even Jean Cauvin. Presumably Knox got his appreciation of the Ascension, not only from his mother and his priestly studies, but mainly from the elaborate and joyful celebrations of this feast in the life of the late-medieval Church in Scotland; which culture he and his pro-English chums fanatically did their best to destroy. The Scotch reformers achieved the first, and most successful, selling-out of Scotland's national identity and religious culture.

Graham Redding's liturgical essay ('Calvin and the Café Church: Reflections at the Interface Between Reformed Theology and Current Trends in Worship') which regrets the increasingly consumer-driven nature of Presbyterian worship, will find a sympathetic hearing from many Catholics, as parallel changes have taken place in the Catholic Church over recent decades. The link between the *lex orandi* and the *lex credendi* is seen to be truly organic. But again, could this be partly why the Torrances themselves, according to these essays, seem to have strayed so far from Calvin and Knox? Perhaps the Reformers were responsible for the first, and tragically crude, assault on the *lex orandi*, in the lands where the secular powers, the rulers of their particular earthly cities, graciously granted them permission? 16th century liturgical reform by vote, in the town council (Zurich, Strasbourg, Geneva), has now been replaced, fairly enough, by votes in the Presbyterian parish councils and liturgy commissions: *lex eligendi-lex credendi*, is one of the crucial legacies of the Reformation, and one which the Catholic Church has adopted with some zeal.

While perplexing and frustrating at times, this is an interesting set of essays, where many good things can be found. It suffers, as most Reformed theology and Catholic Modernism does, from an extremely partial reading of the history of theology, and an ironic voluntarism which is *so* deeply embedded in the Reformed psyche as to go unnoticed. With these North American essayists one also wonders if a sort of theological ‘Greyfriars Bobby-ism’ (Disney version) isn’t operating at some level: a nostalgia for a couthy, doughty, yet never-existent, Calvinist Scotland. This perhaps helps to explain the picking and choosing from Calvinist orthodoxy that the essays display: a sort of tourist, ‘Scotch’, Calvinism-Lite.

NEIL FERGUSON OP

AFTER WITTGENSTEIN, ST. THOMAS by Roger Pouivet, translated and introduced by Michael S. Sherwin OP, *St. Augustine’s Press* South Bend, Indiana 2008, pp xiv + 138, \$24.00 hbk.

In 1957, after a few weeks, Cornelius Ernst concluded that the only way to make Thomas Aquinas’s writings on the soul intelligible to his first-year class of Dominican friars was to re-read them in the light of the later Wittgenstein’s recently published *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). He had himself heard Wittgenstein lecture at Cambridge ten years previously.

Since the early ‘fifties the Dominicans had hosted an annual conference at Spode House, bringing together teachers of neoscholastic philosophy in seminaries and other Catholic institutions with the young Catholics (often converts) with posts in British universities, trained in what would eventually become known as analytical philosophy, much influenced at that date by Wittgenstein’s *Investigations*. The encounter, on the neoscholastic side, bore little lasting fruit apart from reviews and articles by the future Cardinal Cahal B. Daly. The most substantial interaction with neoscholastic epistemology from a late-Wittgensteinian standpoint is to be found in *Mental Acts*, brought out in 1957 by Peter T. Geach. Having studied in Rome at the Gregorian University and then at Oxford with G.E.M. Anscombe, Anthony Kenny brought both Aquinas and Wittgenstein together in a series of studies, beginning in 1963 with *Action, Emotion and Will*.

Roger Pouivet, born in 1958, teaches philosophy at the University of Nancy. His interests range widely from Polish research in logic to Nelson Goodman’s aesthetics. He belongs to the generation of French philosophers drawn to Wittgenstein, rather than to Heidegger and Derrida. Indeed, by the end of the book, Pouivet insists that Wittgenstein was ‘a far more traditional philosopher’ than he perhaps thought — more so, anyway, than Husserl, Heidegger, or those ‘who reduce all philosophy to expressions of power or resentment’, in a post-Nietzschean manner, such as Deleuze and Derrida. He acknowledges a debt to Jacques Bouveresse, whose book *Le mythe de l’intériorité* (1976), as the title suggests, expounds and endorses Wittgenstein’s famous discussion of the very idea of a ‘private language’: a language for one’s sensations that no one else could understand.

In *Après Wittgenstein, Saint Thomas*, published in 1997, Pouivet introduced the French philosophical public to the approach to Aquinas exemplified in work by Geach, Anscombe and Kenny, in connection with some of the main issues in philosophy: mind, cognition and value. Michael Sherwin, who teaches at the University of Fribourg, has translated Pouivet’s survey very readably, to direct attention to these post-Wittgensteinian students of Aquinas. While well known and respected by their peers, their distinctive approach to Aquinas has not been widely appreciated or imitated, even by committed Thomist philosophers in the English-speaking world. Only since John Haldane (of the University of St Andrews) launched what he called ‘analytical Thomism’, a decade or so ago, has interest