

most intrinsically interesting monumental brass to survive in England. On a window, Mary is asked to pray to her Son for Sir Hugh and his wife: 'Lady Forgete us noght'

ROBERT OMBRES OP

THEOLOGY FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW by Esther D. Reed, *Bloomsbury T&T Clark*, London and New York, 2013, pp. xi + 350, £19.99, pbk

In his introduction to a book of essays (McCormack and White (eds.), *Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth. An Unofficial Catholic Protestant Dialogue*, 2013), paraphrasing a sentence by T.S. Eliot on Dante and Shakespeare, the Dominican friar Thomas Joseph White writes that Aquinas and Barth 'are, arguably, the greatest proponents of Christian theology of a traditional form', each one being indicative of a kind of Christianity 'that can speak to the heart of the contemporary world'. If the two can be set in 'ecumenical conversation' (how fruitfully remains, though, an open question not to be addressed here), it is not surprising that the author of the book under review should select these two thinkers as her main source of intellectual inspiration. Dr. Esther Reed is a Protestant scholar and an Assistant Professor at the department of Theology and Religion at the University of Exeter. In her own website, she indicates that her current work is 'at the interface between theology and international law', with special attention to the Christian teaching on natural law.

The theme of her book should come as no surprise to international lawyers, who are well aware that the thinkers at the origins of the modern conception of international law were either theologians (such as the Catholic Francisco de Vitoria and Suarez) or jurists who also wrote on theology (such as the Protestant Grotius). Actually, in recent times, the contribution of theology to international law has been attracting renewed interest: for example, the 2014 tenth anniversary conference of the European Society of International Law hosted an *agora* on this very topic among those addressing the relations between international law and other disciplines.

The aim of her book, as articulated by Reed, is 'to move issues of international law higher up the agenda of Christian theology, ethics and moral reasoning' (p.1). Hence the book is intended to be as much a reflection on the contribution of international law to theology as the other way around. Chapters 1 and 2 set the stage. It is here that Reed explains what she means by her perspective of 'Protestant Thomism', which takes from Barth 'a central emphasis on the dynamic of the Word of God that speaks and is answerable in human affairs' and from Aquinas 'an emphasis on common good and the relation within divine providence

of the one to the many' (p.18 and restated at p.64). In embracing this approach, she stresses the need to fight on several fronts, not only against those Protestants who neglect natural law and the 'rich seams of biblical and traditional teaching' (p.34), but also against all those 'who suppose that there is only one tradition of natural law/natural reasoning rather than many' (p.32). To this last observation one may object that it is certainly true that there is more than one tradition of natural law thinking; yet, are all these different traditions equally compatible with a coherent Christological approach, or does not instead the classic Aristotelian-Thomistic teaching stand out as unique precisely on account of its firm metaphysical foundation?

The subsequent chapters consider practical issues of international law, set against a theological context: the prohibition of torture, also in relation to *jus cogens* (chapter 3), just war, self-defence and international security (chapter 4), the responsibility to protect and the use of force (chapter 5), humanity's division into nation-states delimited by borders (chapter 6), and human rights and ideological conflict (chapter 7). It is in chapter 7 that Reed discusses freedom of religion (pp.271-277), a timely topic indeed if one considers the persecutions inflicted today, with tragic virulence, especially on the followers of Christ. One would search in vain in this book, though, for any discussion of other fundamental human rights having their origins in natural law, which mobilize committed Christians worldwide while being all too often ignored in the international legal literature: from the right to life of the unborn to the right of every child to be born naturally to a family based on marriage between father and mother, to the parents' right to procreate and educate their children without dictatorial and immoral interference by governments or international agencies, to the right of conscientious objection, the importance of which increases with the parallel increasing inability of contemporary society to distinguish right from wrong.

In the final chapter 8, Reed draws her conclusions in the form of eleven main findings of her research. Some findings, such as the first one, are unlikely to raise objections among Christians, whether Catholics, Orthodox or Protestants: '[t]he dogmatic location of questions about all human law, including international law, is in the saving economy of the triune God' (p.299); others, such as the second one, remain highly questionable: '[t]here is no ontological connection between the eternal law, the divine law, natural law and the human law' (p.300).

In addition to three separate indexes for biblical references, names and subjects, the book provides an almost 30-page long bibliography, which, together with the rich apparatus of footnotes, attests to the width of Reed's research.

In conclusion, even when maintaining reservations on the overall theological approach reflected in the book, and the author's judgments on specific points, readers may easily acknowledge that Reed has had the courage to address such a difficult theme as the mutual enrichment of

theology and international law and shown how complex this interaction has been through the ages and is still today.

MAURIZIO RAGAZZI

DYNAMICS OF DIFFERENCE: CHRISTIANITY AND ALTERITY. A FESTSCHRIFT FOR WERNER G. JEANROND edited by Ulrich Schmiedel and James M. Matarazzo Jr., *Bloomsbury T&T Clark*, London, 2015, pp. xv + 310, £80.00, hbk

Students of modern continental philosophy might wonder whether anything new can be said about alterity. This collection of engaging and lively essays, edited and collected by Schmiedel and Matarazzo as a *festschrift* for their *Doktorvater* Professor Werner Jeanrond, however, inverts the question: how can theologians *not* say something new about alterity? For, as the essays collectively and individually manifest, to say anything theological at all is, implicitly or explicitly, to invoke otherness. In a world seemingly marked by increasing sociocultural fragmentation, theological and philosophical reflection on alterity is demanded both morally and pragmatically. It is not, however, an opportunistic embrace of the *Zeitgeist* that leads this volume's contributors to embrace these *dynamics of difference*, but a recognition that a theological embrace of alterity governs and vitally animates the theological dynamic itself: locating alterity within theology *per se* reflects the radical alterity of theology's object (*kataphysic* theology, as Torrance would have it), simultaneously preventing both a lapse into pagan monism and the splitting of moral injunction from a theological ontology of the person.

Reflecting Jeanrond's preference for 'short and succinct studies' (p. x), the volume comprises an unusually large number of contributions: thirty-two essays, including Schmiedel's own incisive '(Instead of the) Introduction' (pp. 1–14), which offers a lucid and penetrating account of the development of Jeanrond's hermeneutical theology. Schmiedel's essay will be of particular value to those hitherto unfamiliar with Jeanrond's thought and primary writings, but also provides a context for the broader *festschrift*, drawing attention to themes that are developed in the subsequent essays. The contributions are notably interdisciplinary—philosopher Brian Klug's account of Moses as the 'significant other' makes a contribution to biblical studies, for example—and are marked by a strongly international flavour, reflecting Jeanrond's influence in Britain, Scandinavia and amongst German-speaking theologians, as well as his institutional affiliations at Dublin, Lund, Glasgow and Oxford.

The first five essays are clustered around the theme of 'biblical others'. Reflection on the three characters of Moses, Joseph in Egypt and the