

seems to be proposing that if we really want to make the world a better place we need to build a coalition. This will mean going beyond conversations with people that we already agree with to find common ground with those whose vision of life may well be very different but with whom perhaps we can find common goals and ideals. Against this backdrop, Fitzgerald's choice of Abraham Joshua Heschel and St. John Paul II becomes more interesting.

Both Heschel and St. John Paul II were deeply rooted in the Scriptures and in their respective religious traditions and yet both were convinced that their ideas had profound implications for the public sphere. For Heschel, this conviction led him to march with Dr. King at Selma and to campaign against the Vietnam war. For St. John Paul II this conviction led to the famous sermons in communist Poland and his vigorous promotion of the Gospel of life. Both, then, represent a model of the kind of interdisciplinary and interworldview dialogue advocated by Fitzgerald: Heschel and St. John Paul II were able to imprint their ideas on history precisely because they were willing to reach out beyond their respective traditions and engage with men and women of good will.

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GOD AND CREATION IN THE THEOLOGY OF THOMAS AQUINAS AND KARL BARTH by Tyler R. Wittman, *Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2019*, pp. xiv + 315, £75.00, hbk

When Pius XII promulgated *Humani Generis* in 1950, Karl Barth shared with the dominant voices of the Thomistic tradition a trajectory away from Catholic modernism and Liberal Protestantism. It is less clear, however, whether the growing number of Thomistically-inspired-Barthians and the smaller cluster of Barth-inspired-Thomists share anything like an isomorphic orientation to postmodernity's deconstruction of meta-narrative. At stake are divergent accounts of creatureliness and—more foundationally—the relationship of created intelligence to the uncreated divine action that grounds it, whether understood primarily as divine self-determination or creative intellection. For this reason, Tyler Wittman's magisterial study of Aquinas and Barth on the coherence of the creator-creature relationship with divine self-consistency is an outstanding and timely contribution to a most important theological discourse. Wittman's work will serve as a landmark for other emerging scholars who find in the creative conjunction of Barth and Aquinas a promising seam that is yet to be fully mined of its theological ore. A modified version of a doctoral thesis written under the late John Webster's supervision, Wittman's book exhibits all the hallmarks of Websterian 'theological theology':

unashamed dogmatics, rigorous argumentation, conjunction of analytical and synthetic skill, and pellucid prose.

Wittman argues that theology's confessional task of weaning God-talk off residual idolatries requires attentiveness to the relationship between the contingency of creation (including language) and the eternal coherence of God's own identity. According to Wittman, Barth and Aquinas both narrate the infinite qualitative distinction between God and creation by an affirmation of God's self-correspondence in God's immanent and economic action. Whereas Aquinas tends to affirm a correspondence between God's external act and God's immanent being, Barthian actualism affirms correspondence between two acts: God's economic acts correspond to God's immanent acts. Although Aquinas posits nothing more primordial in God than the trinity of relations (something Wittman could more adequately stress), divine being logically precedes divine action, whereas for Barth the inverse is true: divine being is a function of God's self-determination. According to Wittman's reading, the actualism of Barth's theological ontology primarily serves to safeguard God's self-consistency across the immanent and economic trinity; disputes concerning the relationship between act and being (or, say, trinity and election) are derivative and subordinate considerations. Nonetheless, Wittman reads Barth (*pace* Hunsinger) as developing actualism into an ontological principle, albeit more moderately than McCormack and Jenson propose: immanent divine action (God's dispositive act of self-qualification), precisely as *dispositive*, finds no intrinsically necessary *telos* in anything not immanent to Godself. This safeguards God's transcendence of any determination *ad extra* as well as the integrity of creation as an act of infinite freedom (rather than as a necessary constituent of divine identity).

A significant question remains, however: no metaphysics of correspondence (*Entsprechung*) is proposed, such that the term risks devolving into a remainder concept. Used here to capture God's 'enacted simplicity' (or God's faithfulness to Godself), Barth elsewhere describes the relationship of creaturely to divine action in the same way. A fundamental divergence of intellectualist and voluntarist forms of 'correspondence' is likely to emerge here. Indeed, by formulating the argument in terms of *self*-correspondence, Wittman is able to avoid tackling controversial readings of Barth's protology. In identifying a correspondence between the act of creation and immanent action, Wittman avoids the vexatious question of the *analogia entis*, which concerns correspondence at the level of being, between created reality in its *ipseity* and the actuality of God's immanent life. By limiting himself to an account of the act of creation rather than its effects, and notwithstanding the lengthy consideration of the asymmetrical relation of creation to God, Wittman falls short of articulating a robust account of the metaphysics of creatureliness. Likewise, by assessing the correspondence of economic act to immanent act, the thesis opposes readings of Barth that argue for a

vector of correspondence in the reverse direction, of immanent being conforming itself to external act. Wittman therefore asserts (controversially for Barthians if not for Thomists) the antecedence of the Godhead over divine action *pro nobis*, but only glances the surface of the dispute concerning whether the Christocentric account of election developed in and after *CD II/2* is constitutive or expressive of triunity. Does Wittman admit a *logos asarkos*? Whilst this is a notable lacuna, it must be admitted that many Barth scholars will appreciate not hearing more.

Insufficient engagement with Bruce McCormack is also notable when it comes to the historical evolution of Barth's thought. Wittman attributes great significance to Barth's book on Anselm (133-141), where he locates 'key convictions [that Barth] employs throughout his doctrine of God' and, in particular, the category of necessity. Whilst this does justice to Barth's own reflections on the evolution of his thought, it has been challenged by McCormack, Beintker, and others. Indeed, Wittman seems to have more sympathy with Balthasar's periodisation of Barth's thought than many contemporary Barthians would, but this recourse to *Fides Quaerens Intellectum* worthily draws attention to a text that has sometimes been neglected. Overall, Wittman seems more at home in the English-language tradition of reading Barth, represented by Torrance, Webster and Hunsinger, than he does in the more Hegelian household of the German tradition of Jüngel, mediated to Anglophone theology by Robert Jenson *inter alios*.

The Karl Barth-Archiv in Basel is unmentioned in the acknowledgments, and it is unclear what the treasures of Bruderholzallee 26 might contribute. What significance are we to attribute to the excisions that Barth made from *CD III*, now available in volume fifty of the *Gesamtausgabe*? In some of these texts Barth ruminates on the connection between the threat of 'nothingness' and the spectre of idolatry in ways that intersect with Wittman's thesis. Indeed, Wittman does not really engage with *CD III* §50 (Barth's somewhat notorious account of the always already defeated threat of nothingness): squaring this with the moderated form of actualism that Wittman proposes would not be entirely unproblematic. And the transcripts of Przywara's visits to Barth's seminar would surely shed more light on a metaphysics of creatureliness (and, perhaps, the precise nature of the curious category of 'correspondence').

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WILLIAM DESMOND'S PHILOSOPHY BETWEEN METAPHYSICS, RELIGION, ETHICS, AND AESTHETICS edited by Dennis Vanden Auweele, *Palgrave Macmillan*, Cham, pp. xix+343, £89.99, hbk

William Desmond agrees with the ancients that philosophy begins in wonder. His own 'metaxological' philosophy, which he has elaborated