

There is an odd reference to 'a Miss Gulson' (p. 123), a legacy from whom allowed the Sisters to engage the eminent Scottish architect Reginald Fairlie (1883–1952) to design the convent at Myreslaw Green, Hawick (completed in 1912, vacated by the Sisters in 1986, now a residential care home). This must be Miss Helen M. Gulson, who inherited the Hawkesyard estate in Staffordshire from her uncle Josiah Spode IV and bequeathed it at her death in 1896 to the Dominican friars. Miss Gulson and her uncle were received into the Catholic Church in 1885, at Stone as it happens.

As Susan O'Brien lamented, in her essay in *From without the Flaminian Gate: 150 years of Roman Catholicism in England and Wales, 1850–2000* (London 1999), a valuable collection that surveys the scene and would fill out the background to this story, the place of women religious in recent years is little understood. Yet, throughout the greater part of the decades covered in this book, religious sisters did far more than bishops, priests or any pope, or anyone but their parents, to form the faith of the vast majority of ordinary Catholics. To the handful of histories that exist of religious congregations in England Anselm Nye has made a valuable addition.

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THE LOGIC OF DESIRE: AQUINAS ON EMOTION by Nicholas E. Lombardo OP, *The Catholic University of America Press, Washington DC, 2010, pp. 319, £31.50 pbk.*

The classical theological tradition in general, and St Thomas in particular, are frequently if erroneously seen as the enemies of the passions, the repressors of feeling, and the deniers of desire. Yet those who think of Aquinas as a dry scholastic would do well to note Templeton prize winner Nicholas Lombardo's claim 'that the theme of human affectivity and its perfection by virtue is one of the major organising principles of the *Summa* – that is not just one of many themes, but a theme of central importance to his project' (p. 198).

On reading *The Logic of Desire* it is hard to remain unconvinced of this. Lombardo expertly shows how for Aquinas the dynamics of desire, appetite and affect are not only essential to normal human functioning, but are intrinsically good and equally essential aspects of our God seeking; they 'direct being toward its *telos*' (p. 26). In a *Summa* whose structure is seen as moving from God, to creation and humanity, through Christ back to God, the power of this idea becomes self-evident once the connection between appetitive movement and our natural desire for the good is grasped. 'Appetite is inextricably linked to being and goodness' (p. 27), and is 'the engine driving the *exitus-reditus*: both in the divine *exitus*, since it flows from an act of God's will, and in the creaturely *reditus*, since appetite motivates creation to return to God' (p. 30). 'As a doe longs for running streams, so my soul longs for you, my God' (Ps 42). By contrast, and here is an interesting idea, evil is 'not just . . . a privation of goodness but also . . . a frustration of appetite and the consequent disintegration of being, insofar as evil blocks appetite from attaining its natural *telos* (p. 30). Thus, '(o)ur sins against God are also and always sins against our deepest desires' (p. 242). So much, so positively stated, then, by a supposed despiser of affect.

Yet I suspect all this may be less obvious to those who fail to see the (teleological) point of emotion, or who having severed its connection with reason, treat it as a 'mere' sentiment to be privately indulged perhaps, but a major impediment to rationality. It may be equally hard to grasp by those who view emotion as an enslaving tyrant to be ascetically overcome or a disrupter to be repressed. But those who more positively value feeling might be reassured: according to

Lombardo's Thomas, we are born to desire, love, and delight, and our natural loves, properly ordered, with and by God's grace, can lead us to true flourishing and to God. 'For Aquinas, love... is the most paradigmatic of the passions' (p. 36). Examining closely Aquinas's views on the passions and affections, explicating their inner structure, and locating them in their historical and ethical contexts, Lombardo thus offers both a theological and a quasi-psychological account – the 'logic' of desire – in a situated analysis which can serve as the basis for future interdisciplinary discussion. This is a first rate book which deserves close study by philosophers and psychologists as well as by theologians and mediaeval scholars, and is as a good primer for the primary texts, but I fear few psychologists will get to read it. More's the pity.

After a useful introduction which includes a brief consideration of the handling of emotion by recent analytic philosophy, we are treated in the first three chapters to a tour, *manuductio*, through the nature of the passions in general, their structure, and the intellectual appetites and affections. In the next three, the crucial connections are articulated between passions, reason and virtue, the disordering effects of sin, the redeeming effects of grace, and the nature of human flourishing. Christ's affectivity is then carefully considered and the book concludes with two useful evaluative chapters and a short conclusion.

If passions are movements of the appetites, virtues, as becomes crystal clear, are simply the flip side of passions. They are the habitually practised appetites and desires, politically ruled by reason, and properly ordered to the true, the good and the beautiful. Or as Lombardo quoting Melina puts it: 'virtue is desire educated to see the stars' (FN 97, p. 116). Hence, 'Aquinas's account of the passions vis-à-vis reason occupies a point midway between Hume and Kant' (FN 98, p. 116). But the moral life is far from straightforward for it is the 'conflux of appetites that makes us complicated' (p. 33) yet 'each is necessary for human flourishing; each is a God-given inner compass oriented toward happiness; none can be ignored and their careful discernment and prudent management is the key to a balanced life' (p. 34).

I was fascinated to be reminded that Aquinas situates his Christology after offering his accounts of God and the person and hence that '...theology and anthropology thus provide an ontological foundation for his discussion of Christ' (p. 204). Psychology has much to learn from Aquinas, therefore, and potentially much to give back. Obvious concepts for rediscovery by the human sciences include the appetites, will-as-desire, schooled-passions as virtues, and the full, flourishing possibilities for human nature, but to do so psychology will need to make its peace with teleology as well as theology. And to do this it may need to grasp a deeper learning point. Far from being mere 'folk psychology', good theological anthropology offers accounts of faith (e.g. Newman), and now here of emotion and virtue, that govern the psychological landscape without having to deal directly with underlying mechanisms. In this important sense theology is formally architectonic for psychology. Lombardo accurately refers to this overview as a form of 'Faculty Psychology'. He is right to do so, but knows that the term is freighted. Quite correctly he warns against the reductionist danger of taking it too literally at the level of mechanism. Personally I prefer to think of this whole family of theological accounts as offering structural *grammars* for the psychological activities involved. Hence the appropriateness of Lombardo's title, the *logic* of desire.

On therapy, Lombardo offers a brief yet creative account of how psychoanalytic accounts of repression could be elucidated through engagement with Aquinas. There are, of course, other approaches to therapy, and issues in psychology in general, that might benefit from a similar engagement. Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), for example, could be rescued from its current shotgun marriage of behaviourism, Buddhist mindfulness, experiential acceptance,

and pragmatic hedonism, by working on prayerful acceptance and discernment of desires, and commitment to actions characterised by courage and fortitude. And the connection between existential security (peace of mind) and virtuous action has still to be empirically explored. In several places, therefore, I found myself wanting to read more, but, frankly, this is work for other scholars and researchers, and for other disciplines to reciprocate and complement with what they have already discovered.

Lombardo's overall treatment is nuanced, balanced and does not pull punches. He is alert to omissions in St Thomas's coverage of experience and memory, and honest too in acknowledging potential difficulties in Aquinas's consideration of Christ's affectivity and suggestion that the earthly Christ had full beatific knowledge. 'His [Aquinas's] approach does not just jeopardize his affirmation of the authenticity of Christ's humanity. It also creates problems for his account of human affectivity' (p. 217). This is because in at least one case, Christ's, Lombardo's reading suggests that the appetites can function separately and this 'atomizes the faculties of the human person in a way that belies the complexity of human affectivity' (pp. 217–8). As he points out, however, these discontinuities derive mainly from Aquinas's metaphysical understanding of Christ's divinity and 'not from any uneasiness about attributing ordinary human experiences to Christ' (p. 218).

Throughout, the quality of the writing is high, as are the book's production values, and there are many pithy, quotable sayings often relating to our embodiment and nature. 'For Aquinas, an itch is a passion of the body, but the desire to scratch the itch is a passion of the soul' (p. 229). Quoting Donohoo, Lombardo notes that '... ideology can lay down pavement over human nature, but sooner or later vegetation starts to come up through the cracks' (FN 7, p. 233). 'Sins are located mainly in affection' (p. 190), but 'virtue is the proper fulfilment of appetite, not just its restraint' (p. 191). And, in a phrase worthy of the bard, the 'sadness of envy' (p. 191) arises when the envious person misguidedly sees another's goods as diminishing his own happiness.

This is a book for keeping or, more charitably, at least *prudent* lending! Not surprisingly, given its author, what comes through is a strong Dominican sense of the goodness of creation, creatures and nature; a creation that is not without flaws, for sure, but not so irredeemably fallen that there is no hope for us. For me, this easily 'out-positives' positive psychology without suffering from the latter's implicit Pelagianism. And this reviewer felt wiser and happier for having read it. As the author concludes, 'Still a gracious host, Aquinas continues to reward those who engage him in conversation and his writings on emotion deserve a wider readership' (p. 274). I couldn't agree more.

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SURNATUREL : A CONTROVERSY AT THE HEART OF TWENTIETH CENTURY THOMISTIC THOUGHT edited by Serge-Thomas Bonino OP. Translated by Robert William and Matthew Levering, *Sapientia Press, Ave Maria, FL, 2009*, pp. 349, \$34.95 pbk

THE NATURAL DESIRE TO SEE GOD ACCORDING TO ST THOMAS AQUINAS AND HIS INTERPRETERS by Lawrence Feingold, *Sapientia Press, Ave Maria, FL, (2nd ed), 2010*, pp. 490, \$32.95 pbk

Recent times have seen fresh interest in assessing the contribution of Henri de Lubac SJ to Thomistic scholarship. This collection of essays forms part of