

therefore fated to try to make reflexive sense of self and the world – the visionary not the vision, the spirituality not the spirit.

Consequently the question is this: are apparitions of Mary becoming part of a more general and loose spirituality that stretches beyond the Church? Or put another way: even as apparitions become more ecclesiotypically-friendly, will they seep beyond the *Ecclesia* and into a spirituality which is individualizing and even antithetical to the *ecclesia* itself? But will Mary then be no more than a safe, ‘nice’, My Lady of Me? I have no idea. Neither do I know if I have put the questions as clearly as I might. Despite the ostensible specificity of its concern, Maunder’s book raises major and slowly-detonating thoughts.

KEITH TESTER

THE PURSUIT OF THE SOUL: PSYCHOANALYSIS, SOUL-MAKING AND THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION by Peter Tyler, *Bloomsbury*, London, 2016, pp. 200, £14.99, pbk

Peter Tyler’s intriguing short book explores soul concepts from ‘the classical Christian tradition and those of contemporary psychology’ (p. 5) to help re-soul psychology, and encourage new expression in soul language. The classical representatives selected by the author are Plato, Plotinus, Augustine, Origen and Evagrius, while from contemporary ‘psychology’ we have Otto Rank and James Hillman, with Freud and Jung putting in cameo appearances. Secular psychology and the soul are often estranged nowadays, and, as Tyler suggests, a rejuvenated soul discourse is needed to spiritualise psychotherapy and psychology, hence his unusual phrase, ‘soul-making’.

I learned a great deal from Tyler’s treatment, not simply about significant figures in psychoanalysis such as Rank, but also about plausible connections between thinkers in the modern tradition such as Wittgenstein, Tagore, and Merton. I agree that we need a ‘third way’ between reductionist, scientific and super-naturalist worldviews. The author is correct that a more soul-conscious psychology needs an account of the intimacy of the transcendent. Otherwise we risk domesticating and dissolving the transcendent into a purely immanent spirituality, or univocally locating it an infinite distance away leaving its super being free to meddle as an efficient cause whenever it chooses.

As Tyler indicates, however, ‘(t)hose seeking a comprehensive and all embracing history of the soul in Western culture will be disappointed’ (p. 6). He is right to warn us. As he points out, it is debatable whether such a vast project is now feasible or practicable. But there is a world of difference between a representative, if not comprehensive treatment,

and one that sidesteps major thinkers along the way. Not only are seminal figures such as Aquinas (flagged as a high scholastic who holds neo-Platonism in check) omitted, but the reading and purview of ‘psychology’ is, quite frankly, partial, biased, and dated. Perhaps this is due to Tyler’s eagerness to bring the linguistic, perspectival, turn of postmodern thought quickly into dialogue with therapeutic discourse and modern psychoanalysis on the one hand, and with Wittgenstein, Thomas Merton and Edith Stein on the other; I confess I’m not sure.

Unfortunately, in suggesting that *scientific* psychology is positivist, analytic, and reductionist in its entirety, and can therefore be side-lined, Tyler’s treatment risks further fuelling misconceptions of psychology already too prevalent among some theologians and others in the humanities. Psychology taken as a whole is not exactly as he casts it. The book itself implies that ‘contemporary psychology’ is not equivalent to psychoanalysis without remainder, not that is if we wish to avoid a category error. Moreover, there are now several, fertile, sub-fields such as the psychology of religion, moral psychology, cultural psychology, positive psychology, the history of psychology, even so-called ‘critical’ psychology that are starting to open themselves up to philosophy and the humanities. Areas like these are arguably better positioned for theological conversation than traditional psychoanalysis. For example, one could usefully combine, say, a reading that does equal justice to both St Thomas’s Aristotelianism *and* his neo-Platonism with a well developed socio-cultural, moral psychology. This would link the soul as the form of the body, character as shaped by infused and acquired virtues, the participation of all creation in the divine economy, and the embodied, cultured, and tradition dependent mind. We can apparently hope for a later treatment of Aquinas from the author (p. 97, fn 1), but a trick or two has certainly been missed here!

The (recommended) post-Wittgensteinian linguistic turn used to engage in *Weltbild* (world making) rather than to provide a cut and dried *Weltanschauung* (world view) has also already had a significant effect on modern psychology, resulting in the emergence of the very hermeneutic, discursive approaches Tyler recommends. Admittedly, this has produced something of an epistemological and ontological stand-off between experimental psychology and qualitative, interpretative methods in the discipline as a whole, but there *is* awareness of the issue. Some thinkers, Iain McGilchrist for example, have already offered sophisticated treatments of the manner in which we engage with reality, grounded non-reductively in cognitive and affective neuroscience, that connect with this very question. Such approaches have already been used to good effect to inform certain theologies and philosophies of religion, but are not considered here.

For me, this book also had a rather dated feel. The linguistic turn in philosophy, so often promoted as cutting edge and postmodern, increasingly has a somewhat twentieth-century flavour. If anything, our

emerging philosophy is now a *post* postmodern, new realism in which world, mind, and language (signification) are held together in the same frame, not just the dyad of mind and language on offer here.

To prevent misunderstanding, I should perhaps state that I have little time for narrow scientific positivism, and far more sympathy with a Christian theological outlook. I also have great respect for different traditions in psychology, not least the psychoanalytic. That said, this is a quixotic if not a curate's egg of a book. It is quixotic not merely because it adopts a somewhat idiosyncratic approach but because to this admittedly biased reader it sometimes felt as if we were tilting at windmills. But some windmills, such as the somewhat surreal James Hillman, irrelevant for much of the broad sweep of modern psychology, might be giants for others. Who knows? It is a curate's egg for the usual reasons; many parts are good. There is little doubt that psychology in general and the psychoanalytic tradition in particular would benefit from more extensive dialogue with Christian philosophy and theology on the soul. Equally, there is much for theologians and philosophers to learn from parts of modern psychology about the person with the potential to refresh aspects of soul-discourse, making it more accessible for late modern minds. I am not convinced, however, that this book fully addresses these issues, although it is a valiant attempt to do so.

PETER HAMPSON