

faith and practice well grounded in our material reality – a timely weapon against the irrepressible hydra of Manichaeism.

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NEWMAN'S EARLY ROMAN CATHOLIC LEGACY 1845–1854 by C. Michael Shea, *Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017, pp. xiii + 230, £60.00, hbk*

Newman studies now have something to reckon with. The *status quo* set by Owen Chadwick's *From Bossuet to Newman* (1957), though perhaps not 'pulverized', has been dealt a serious blow. One central and influential thesis of Chadwick's classic on the history of development theory is that continental Catholic theology – especially in Rome – outright rejected Newman's theory of development, or at the very least lacked sympathy, interest, acceptance, or support for Newman's theory. For Chadwick, as for Newmanists who inherited Chadwick's narrative, Newman's *Essay on Development* lay fallow for most of the nineteenth century, and was only later vindicated in the twentieth century by those capable of proving that Newman's theory did not amount to Modernism.

Newman's Early Roman Catholic Legacy puts paid to Chadwick's narrative and the possibility of it further dominating Newman studies. Scholarship on the reception of Newman's *Essay on Development* now has to contend with an alternative narrative supported not only by evidence heretofore unaccounted for, but also by an examination of the same evidence but with a fuller and, indeed, superior contextualization.

Far from Newman needing to prove himself and his orthodoxy as a Catholic, Rome gave Newman the benefit of the doubt. Shea shows how the positive disposition towards Newman's *Essay* was also bound up with a profound respect for the Oxford Movement he led, Newman himself and his conversion, the personal risk and cost involved in it, and development theory's worth to Catholic apologetics in relation to Protestant objections. In unpacking the details of Newman's red-carpet welcome in Rome, Shea persuasively concludes that 'it would be hard to conceive of a convert rising more rapidly in the Church than this. Nor would such treatment be conceivable for someone under suspicion of heterodoxy' (p.144).

With respect to Rome's actual reception of Newman's *Essay*, Shea marshalls forward evidence, such as an article published in one of the premier journals, the *Annali delle scienze religiose*, by the Jesuit Giacomo Mazio, that shows the *general* acceptance of Newman's *Essay* by some of the highest and influential Roman authorities, even less than a year after the work was published. This sets the stage for Shea's re-assessment of Newman's exchange in 1847 with the Roman College dogmatic theologian, Giovanni Perrone. The exchange, in light of the

above, is interpreted not as a flat out rejection or denial of Newman's theory, but as a serious and critical engagement with a theory to which Perrone was open and wanting to assimilate, albeit, in a way that was consonant with his theological categories and terminology. And while no one can explain away some of the real divergences between Newman and Perrone as exhibited in Perrone's marginalia, (e.g., 'the Church was always conscious of all the truth of faith divinely entrusted to her'), the latter's apprehensions must be put into a larger context. Hence, Shea's other contribution lies in his assessment of what happened *after* the exchange. He documents the ways in which Perrone's thought itself developed, and how Newman's theory influenced subsequent works of Perrone, especially in preparation for the 1854 definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and further documents how others, both in Rome and in England, interpreted Pius IX's Bull, *Ineffabilis Deus* (1854), as a vindication of Newman's theory.

Still there are elements to Shea's argument that need to be filled out more. If the question pursued is, 'To what extent was Newman's actual book, the *Essay*, received?', then, indeed, the issue of faith and reason, and Newman's proximity to a Bautainian fideism (Chs. 3–4) has to be dealt with. But if the question is about the reception of *development theory*, then it would be helpful to unpack the relationship between the disputes on faith and reason, on the one hand, with development theory, on the other.

Similarly, if we are after the reception of Newman's theory of *development* – and not, for example, whether or not in Rome's eyes Newman was orthodox – then we have to detail the most seminal and, indeed, most contentious components of Newman's development theory, and then ask, were *these* positively received? How did the Roman theologians, for example, receive Newman's historical claims of divergent and contradictory historical testimonies, or Newman's teaching about an implicit or unconscious, but nonetheless real possession of something that only became explicit later? Few would have denied progress *in general*. But Newman's *Essay* claimed much more.

Finally, questions emerge with respect to the explanation in the last chapter of the waning influence of Newman's theory in the 1860s and beyond. Shea attributes the waning of interest in development theory to the radical political atmosphere, and the related passing of the Roman School, and the rise of Neo-Scholasticism. In short, a reactionary political posture on the part of the Church translated into a reactionary theology which was infatuated with a pristine past, and therefore was ultimately uninterested in questions of development. But if Shea's argument that development was actually not as contentious in Rome as it seemed, and if development theory was to some extent assumed by not only Romans, but the world episcopate, to be at play in *Ineffabilis Deus*, then might there not be an alternative explanation? Namely, might it not have been the case that the Church came to believe that the most

pressing intellectual challenges it faced, such as rationalism, scepticism, secularism, religious indifference, and even atheism, required philosophical and theological apologetics more speculative and theoretical than historical?

To elaborate a bit more, it would seem that Neo-Scholasticism was better equipped to deal with the dissolution of what Gilson called the 'unity of philosophical experience' than an appropriation of and reflections on doctrinal development. Development theory was for the Christian seeking understanding (and the apostolic Church), not for cultured despisers of religion. In other words, the problem Newman faced in writing his *Essay* was not necessarily the most pressing problem that the Church faced, and therefore, the Neo-Scholastic revival's side-stepping of development might have had less to do with its supposed 'either-or' approach, or its supposed lack of interest in history, and more to do with its confronting the more ultimate philosophical and theological questions at stake.

These questions notwithstanding, the scholarly virtues of Shea's work are many: a laudatory immersion in scholarship not in English, an impressive utilization of various archives, and an exemplary collation of relevant pieces of evidence that builds a narrative that now has to be reckoned with.

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A POLITICS OF GRACE: HOPE FOR REDEMPTION IN A POST-CHRISTENDOM CONTEXT by Christiane Alpers, *Bloomsbury Academic*, London, 2018, pp. x + 229, £85.00, hbk

This learned and meticulously documented book is the outgrowth of a recently completed Dutch doctorate in theology. It is both an ambitious foray into, and excellent account of, a good deal of contemporary Anglophone Anglican and Protestant theology, as well as an astute account of many aspects of the theology of the Belgian Catholic and Dominican theologian, Edward Schillebeeckx.

Christianity has for multiple centuries in the West been politically, religiously, and socially manifest in the form of Christendom, vestiges of which can be seen in part of the United Kingdom at present, where the Church of England is politically sanctioned as the religion of the state. Christendom may be simply defined as a culture with two principal features: first, it is a society in which all or most of its institutions assume the truthfulness of Christian faith; and second, it is a civilization in which the Church is socially and politically aligned with the reigning civil power, and is even able to enjoy the possibility of military protection and advancement. Christiane Alpers rightly sees that much of Europe