

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is all about doing, interacting, deciding, growing and maturing. It is all about discovering the meaning of happiness, a destiny which is distinctly human. In the Aristotelian grammar, it is all about the transformation of the potential man to the more perfect man. And if happiness seeks to be truly human, ethics calls for an interdisciplinary approach – psychology, sociology, politics, spirituality, etc. Humanity is developed towards wholeness from compositeness, and the usual departmentalization seems at the start as only a part of the whole process. Ethics means every means, e.g. the whole of reality.

Jean Vanier, the author, is the founder of *L'Arche* and *Faith and Light*, which are known networks of communities for people with intellectual disabilities. The spiritual icon, Henri Nouwen, is identified with this community.

It is worthy indeed to note that a topic such as happiness in *Nicomachean Ethics* emerges from the passions of the pen of the writer who is known to preoccupy himself with intellectual disabilities. Out of the vulnerabilities of man arises the splendor of the perfection of humanity. The author of this book assumes a distinct position of being able to sublimate the message without being subliminal. His pen breathes of the tracks of the Gospel!

His opus *Becoming Human* was #1 best-seller when it appeared in the market. He wrote his doctoral thesis on Aristotle and taught philosophy at the University of Toronto. As book writer, he received the Paul VI Prize for his work on human development and progress.

This book aims to breathe in a different air as the text offers an uplifting and contemporary touch on Aristotle's vision of happiness developed 2,400 years ago. The importance is then laid on human facts and experience, and thus enables the person to see into his/her inner longings, and hopefully discover the personal tracks towards fulfillment. It is important to note that man is responsible for whatever end he/she attains, and this quest involves the nontransferable task of being able to master and control oneself. Steering is easier when the pilot is experienced with the ups and downs of life.

The practicality of Aristotle's text stems from the fact that the beginnings are found in man's interiority and therefore an equally fundamental question is raised: "What do we really want in this life?" His ethics are not meant to remain in the head alone; it must sink down to the heart and down to the finger tips. "Aristotle's ethics require that we work on ourselves" (xi).

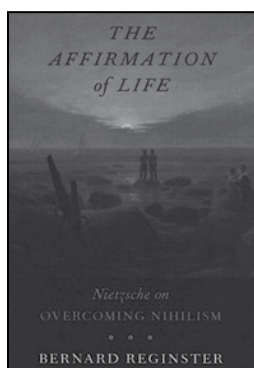
Here is one book which deserves to be read by mentors in ethics, not excluding those who have had encounters with Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Mentors will discover in this book the missing links that make the learning of *NE* interesting and practical. The language which the author uses in this book is a precious art that unavoidably defies bookishness while remaining faithful to the mind and mine of the text.

As a version perhaps based on the writer's doctoral dissertation, this book, besides some portions which epitomes brilliance of reflections, can indeed afford continuous revisions towards easier and more fluid reading. Do we need to cover all the topics mentioned in the original text? But that is precisely the catch of ethics, its contemporaneity inevitably varies from culture to culture. Then we are forced to go back to the level of principles.

Any translation, of which this book is, suffers the pitfalls of mediated communication. Yet, it is important to note too that the text we find in Aristotle is a rewritten form done by his secretaries. Aristotle lectured, his secretaries scribbled.

Certainly, it takes native virtue according to Aquinas to recognize the wisdom wrought by others, and Jean Vanier's pen brings, in a very different kind of approach, a wisdom all of us does surely need. A cursory look at the 'Table of Contents' is one proof. *Made for Happiness* opens different doors to a deeper adventure in *Nicomachean Ethics* and we thank this writer and author for the rare pleasure.

Norberto M. Castillo, O.P.



Reginster, Bernard. *The Affirmation of life: Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism*. USA: Harvard University Press, 2006. 312 pp. ISBN 978-0-674-03064-0.

At the sight of a sudden systematization, one queries but also serves right Reginster's presentation of Nietzsche's thought on *overcoming* despite the ever-tagged contradictions one has to face upon reading it. Overcoming is indeed not a

case of customs and norms, and especially not about merging those into a system setting a regulative standard. Nietzsche himself nauseates and mistrusts the unconditional foundations of systems and the hostility they give off in the neutral chaos-es of life. And yet the book *The Affirmation of life: Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism* is about a transitory systematizing from nihilism to life itself. Reginster, however, reconciled that apparent contradiction first by proving, like most Nietzsche readers would have to, that Nietzsche's thoughts are not cluttered musings and themes of an insane man independent in themselves, devoid of any central temporal connection with the others, and second, by tying the fabrics of these themes into continuous responsive paradigmatic struggles between nihilism and the affirmation of life. Reginster trudged on the grounds of good systems that Nietzsche defined insofar as they traverse the perspective of this terrestrial life, its nihilisms, but also its overcomings.

Throughout the book, several normative suggestions can be found because of the apparent diversions and striking proclivities that in one way or another found a dynamic impulse in the original struggle against nihilism. They served as meta-ethical standpoints by which such struggle is perpetuated so long as they improve the subject on facing greater challenges. Reginster weaved the Nietzschean themes and systematized them into the jurisdiction of real life, that is, by positing psychological features in and through his analytic expositions of the themes and by redeeming philosophical implications from rationalistic and ascetic captivities.

In the thematic approach thus, one notices how Reginster marks the movement of the corpus. He begins with the exposition of the problem of nihilism and the death of God. Far from being strictly axiological in nature, the first chapter examined the nature of values and how they are responsible for the unrealizability and valuelessness of the post-world following the death of the objectivity of God. Without God, things would hinge on a psychologically disoriented or despairing life. The observance then of an axiological exposition towards a psychological analysis follows a philosophical conclusion, thereby accentuating the problem of nihilism as parceled on the realm of philosophy. Reginster follows up the lost objectivity to a meta-ethical thinking capable of re-evaluating and overcoming disorientation, that is, the essence of life and the world itself – the will to power. It procures an endless mastering of one's self and the resistances that it continues to overcome and seek. At the peak of this 'will to power' one finds the strength to be great by facing the most terrible of suffering. This happens by re-evaluating meta-ethically towards the highest values and substantially towards the content of these values. In it we find that suffering is not a hindrance but an avenue for creativity. Finally, Reginster exposes the Eternal Recurrence, where affirmation, both in its theoretical and practical form is re-examined and contextualized in the domain of life itself, and the Dionysian Wisdom, where the attitude of the human finds the cycle of creating and destroying one's self in becoming better at the threshold of self-overcoming.

It is important to note how his weaving and exposition of the themes of nihilism, meta-ethics, suffering, and will to power has caught comments from recent Nietzschean studies. In the spring of 2012 issue, Volume 43, number 1, of the *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* (Penn State Press), three critical articles commented on the book. Maudamarie Clark's *Suffering and Affirmation of Life* (pp.87-98) argued on the systematicity of Reginster's account, emphasizing a rejection of his isolating of suffering's condemnation as a root of nihilism. This has transpired by Clark's finding a sort of misbalanced inheritance-review of Reginster's association of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. She nevertheless affirmed yet criticised the direct link between Reginster's reading of the will to power and the affirmation of life. Ivan Soll's *Nietzsche's Will to Power as a Psychological Thesis: Reactions to Bernard Reginster* (pp.118-129) is one to support that very reading but finds it less discussed in the book. Soll went on to work farther the metaphysical accounts of the Will to Power which touched the tendency of Reginster's psychological account to be one, and eventually critiqued both Nietzsche and Reginster. While the two magnified the method and approach of the themes, Nadeem Hussain's *Metaethics and Nihilism in Reginster's The Affirmation of Life* (pp.99-117) dealt with the case of Reginster's frequent clinging to normative suggestions that tend to seek the peril of adding more rigour and strictness to Nietzsche's characterization of systems, making it stereotypical and hostile to life instead. Hussain gleamed through the meta-ethical issues and supported the fictionalist reading, as it makes more sense as adding colours to the austerities that an un-cheerful perspective (as opposed to the cheerfulness that Nietzsche prescribes) may entail in life. In the end of the issue, Reginster's *Replies to My Critics* (pp. 130-143) handed on a significant discussion thereby clearing the ostensible misunderstandings.

Jan Gresil S. Kahambing

Schwartz, Daniel. *Aquinas on Friendship*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007. 189 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-920539-4.

This opus is included in the list of some twenty various titles in the *Oxford Philosophical Monographs* headed by an Editorial Committee.

The original source of this monograph is a doctoral dissertation done at Oxford under the supervision of John Finnis (and Richard Cross initially) with Michael Inwood and Tim Chappell as thesis examiners (and readers). The same group of supervisor and readers assisted in the production of the monograph. The reduction of a dissertation to a readable monograph may not be an easy task. Traces of the *ghost* of the dissertation format appear in the form of a Conclusion or Summary in chapters 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7. This approach is a big aid to the reader other than the people who saw the dissertation to the finish line! An *Appendix* is added on page

165: *The Duality of the Rational Volition in Christ's Human Nature and Friendship with God*. Schwartz shows his readers the extent of his scholarship. Aquinas depended a lot on the Fathers of the Church.

The writer is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Encouraging, glowing encomia in fact, offered by reviewers of the monograph are included in the cover jacket.

The monograph includes a section of *Abbreviations and Conventions* which is prefaced by a statement that this section "follows J. M. Finnis (the dissertation supervisor) in the latter's opus *Aquinas: Moral, Political and Legal Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)."

An extensive Bibliography proper however lies at page 167-174, followed by an *Index Locorum*, an *Index of Subjects*, and an *Index of Names and Places*.

The Bibliography appears impressive though a rough perusal of the list makes one doubt the reasonableness of the inclusion of so many sources which appear so distant from the central topic of the text. I guess this is a common malady of enthusiastic dissertation writers. I was looking for another book of Romanus Cessario which has an important discussion on *Friendship*. The author records only one source: *Christian Satisfaction in Aquinas*.

This monograph on *Aquinas on Friendship* classifies itself on an exploratory level (... *a terrestrial expedition than a reconnaissance flight*) and one can hardly be faulted for something which is safely generic.

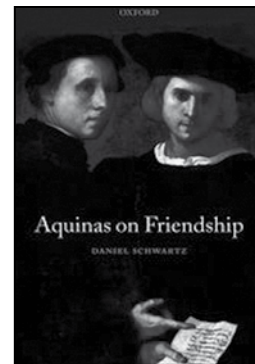
"The aim is not merely to present Aquinas' observations, comments, and reflections on friendship, but rather to engage them philosophically (viii)." What that exactly means remains to be read further.

Examining his footnotes, the author swings largely between the *Summa* and the *EN* (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle). Philosophically? The author might have missed taking a longer look at Aquinas' *Commentary on Ethics* of which an English translation by Litzinger he registers as one of his sources and as part of his Bibliography. Very well, with the list of bibliographical sources, we presume the author does not only have a working knowledge of French, Spanish, English, but certainly of Latin too! Nothing less could be expected from a doctoral dissertation writer.

He correctly points out that human flourishing – morally, intellectually and spiritually involves a social life anchored on virtue (S.T. I-II q. 4, a. 1c). The relationship between justice and friendship is explored and Chapter 7 of the opus essays the penitential forms of corrective justice in restoring friendship. Herein lies the 'comfort zone' if the author's specialization and the distance between his avowed title of the monograph *Aquinas on Friendship* and the body of the text increases. It might be safe to presume that in this space lies the philosophical task he intended to accomplish.

He discusses pride in chapter 4. What prevents us from joining other people's projects?: Pride (Vainglory) as an Impediment to conformity of wills. Aside from the *Summa*, he consults *De Malo*. Well done! But his discussions (philosophical) appear too sparse and abbreviated. Perhaps due to editorial policy?

The succeeding chapters are very interesting. Very contemporaneous. Aquinas, I hope, will be happy to have another worthy disciple who breathes a familiar vein. This book needs to be read slowly and meditatively because true friends are scarce and difficult to find. Many thanks to Daniel Schwartz.



Adrian S. Adiredjo, O.P.

Lopez, Antonio. "On Restlessness," *Communio* 34 (Summer 2007): 176-200.

The proximate nuance of restlessness is evidenced by work ethic that circumscribed a world that is immersed in science and technology. Work equates income, and this becomes man's most relevant form. He then becomes a citizen of the world, which involves generational turns, in pursuit of this obsessive form. This is diagnosed as man's absence from himself – wherein time, place and meaning are nowhere because he, the subject, is nowhere. Such is the disengagement from self, from history, and from sonship of man.

Ultimately, man becomes an orphan who accumulates material things and becomes ubiquitous without limits and borders in search for more. Aquinas calls this in his *De Malo* a consequence of covetousness, the immoderate love for possessing (*amor habendi*). Covetousness is a disorder which prevents man from rest, makes him over-concerned with superfluous matters. This is opposed by the counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. Human existence becomes truly what it should be when it strives to acquire the filial form proper to its being recreated.

Avaritia leads to *acedia*, and so goes the interlinking, whether it be in matters which are either good or bad. In *acedia*, restlessness is embedded, a depressing sadness which rejects the love that God is, the refusal to love the other's good. This breeds an *evagatio mentis*, the wandering of the mind, a kind of temporal rest from emptiness which does not alleviate the situation. This wandering of the mind is a search for novelty for the sake of novelty. It is a substitute for the loss of the divine love.

Restlessness then is not merely a psychological disease; it is a vice, a rejection of the good. When man therefore becomes restless, he seeks to possess in a disordered way, ends up confused, and leads himself into *nihilistic instinctivity*.

It is only in faith's seeing that will give rise to a new hope of a sense of expectation which is based on the presence of the Father who is seen in the Son (Heb 1:3). Man is therefore restored in his sonship, and a positive form of restlessness takes over what was a negative form of restlessness before. Ultimately, we discover that the root of man's sinful restlessness results from a distortion and the absence of love, and the negative fear of death.

At Gethsemane and Calvary, Christ's offer to the Father transforms man's negative restlessness into a loving reciprocation of the Father's love with the human acceptance and embrace. Then, God's restless love for man meets man's love for God. Human nature remains truly itself only when it recognizes that it is created, it remains created, and will forever remain filial in nature.

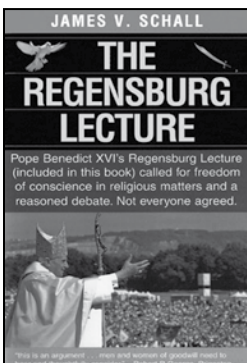
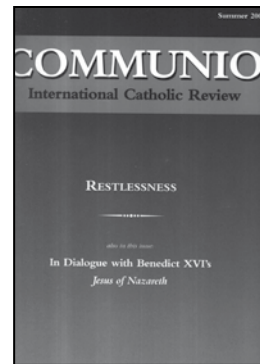
Man then becomes conscious of his personhood, his meaning as a relation of love, of being from and being for the other. Unity becomes a reciprocal *presencing* of the beloved in the lover. There is a transition from anxiety for the cares of the world, towards a transformation to an indwelling and reciprocity proper to love.

Antonio Lopez in this article examines restlessness from the vantage point of the theological virtues. Human restlessness is transformed from what before was a tortured gaze to a growth which hopes, desires and waits for the sublime, prompted by faith and informed by charity. The author weaves the texts of the Commentary of the Life of Moses of Gregory of Nyssa and the epistles of Paul the Apostle. Indeed, the author intended his article to be a theological treatise, but the article could have been better entrenched if philosophical arguments were simultaneously developed along side.

Norberto M. Castillo, O.P.

Schall, James V. *The Regensburg Lecture*. Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2007. ISBN – 13 978-1-58731-695-1; ISBN – 10 1-58731-695-1.

From the Latin *legere* which means "to read," a lecture is a reading not just of paper, but more so of reality. Unfortunately some of these



perceptive readings of reality are not just simply ignored, but are even violently rejected. One of these is the *Regensburg lecture* of the now Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. In his opus, *The Regensburg Lecture*, James V. Schall examines the papal lecture as a university lecture (Chapter I) and its relation to violence and God's nature (Chapter II), Europe (Chapter III), Modernity and the three waves of dehelleneization (Chapter IV), as well as revelation and culture (Chapter V).

In his introduction, Schall explains that the deposit of faith rests not so much on taken for granted tradition as on authority "based on the testimony of someone who actually witnesses or sees the facts or understands the truth" (p. 2). Indeed, Benedict XVI's works "needs to be read and reread" (p.4) because of his concern for the wholeness of truth. To get a wider view of this wholeness includes the hard understanding of "the plausible errors surrounding [truth] and arguments against it" (p. 11). Unfortunately, because of its difficulty one easily resorts to relativism that compromises the truth.

Being a university lecture (Chapter I), the papal speech "is a reflective, reasoned presentation of the truth" (p. 20). After all, the university is the right place to pursue and explore the truth using reason as well as "coherent ideas and arguments" without being pressured by politics.

Doing this, he confronted the issue of violence in Islam (Chapter II) based on a "textual evidence in the Koran" (p. 25). The failure to do this confrontation before "in the academy, in the Church, and in the state, is one of the main reasons that the problem still exists and continues to grow in seemingly an exponential manner even in our own time" (p. 23). Moreover, "[c]ertain intellectual affinities... exist between Islamic voluntarism and modern relativism and multiculturalism, something that the Pope has long been concerned about" (p. 43).

What gives Greek philosophy (Chapter III) the edge over other philosophies is its attempt to reflect mind and reality and its sense of logic. This was started by Socrates who distinguished myth from reality. "The 'myth,' in its ultimate meaning, is a description of reality that does not literally conform to reality" (p. 57). Unlike the Islamic concept of Allah which is portrayed as arbitrary in the Koran and Islamic theology, God in the western logic, cannot contradict itself. The significance of the name of Judeo-Christian God as 'I am' is that it refers to true reality (what is) and not merely to a human-created myth. He is *Logos*, who reveals Himself so as to be understood by man. Hence, "there is an order in God, in the cosmos, and in man, an order that is, intrinsically, not arbitrarily but essentially related" (pp. 53-54). This led to the "inner coherence of the Greek mind and revelation" (p. 83).

Unfortunately, with the gradual de-Hellenization (Chapter IV), one slowly loses this sense of truth. The first stage is the dethroning of metaphysics by ethics, the practical intellect by the theoretical intellect. This lowers down our perspective. "We no longer look to those divine and immortal things that Aristotle told us in book ten of the *Ethics* as our main delight... Contrary to Aristotle, man does make man to be man. Humanism is defined against theism" (p. 92). The removal of metaphysics was necessitated by the Protestants' insistence on *sola scriptura* and *sola fide*. "This separation left faith standing alone out there, itself indifferent to the presuppositions that were contained in the minds of those who heard it" (p. 95). Being anchored merely to practical reason, faith loses its access to the whole. This resulted to the divide between faith and reason.

The second stage is the reduction of science into what is merely tangible. "The only thing that can be thus considered ... 'scientific' is an 'interplay' between mathematics and experiment. If not measured by this criterion, it is not said to be 'scientific'" (pp. 104 – 105). The result is seen in the decline of science in the Islamic world during modernity. This all the more proves the need for philosophy which uses methods other than mathematics (p. 114) and "anterior theological propositions" on which depends "the permanency of secondary causes" and investigation of nature.

The third stage is the postmodern relativism that rejects Greek logic and reason. While it is true that this relativism is done to promote peace and ecumenism among cultures and religions, it remains to be dangerous. In proposing to other cultures, there is a necessity of understanding not just what is good, but also what is unreasonable and is therefore against faith and human good.

The last stage of dehelleneization leads us to explore the relation between faith and culture (Chapter V). The point of using Greek paradigm is not to impose something alien on another culture, but simply to make a "claim to intelligibility using reason" (p. 116). This goes beyond the modern scientific approach because it uses philosophy that appeals not just to a part, but to the whole. Unfortunately, the West has started this aversion to seeing the whole of reality because it goes against its expectation. "We would not want to know the coherence of things if it requires us to change our ways or our understanding of things, or especially our relation to God" (p. 121).

But such an aversion itself is worse than the pain of openness because it leads to violence both to the mind and to reality. It violates the mind because it refuses to nourish it with the truth and reality. This in turn violates reality because we impose a wrong idea onto reality. "The notion that we can create our own positive law and do 'what is right' by simply doing what positive law says [as in the case of] abortion is also irrational violence against the innocent – it must stop" (p. 127).

In one occasion, Schall clarifies the statement of Benedict XVI that tends to be misinterpreted not by the Muslims, but by the Franciscans and Scotist philosophers. In the lecture, Benedict mentions that with Duns Scotus arose "a voluntarism which, in its later developments, led to the claim that we can only know God's *voluntas ordinata*" thereby making the Divine capricious "who is not even bound to truth and goodness." Schall says that Benedict may have "referred to William of Occam or Marsilius of Padua, even later Thomas Hobbes" (p. 63). Indeed in a catechesis on Scotus (7 July 2010), the then Pope would shift to a more nuanced analysis of Scotist voluntarism. He says that Scotist vision does not fall into the extremes of intellectualism or voluntarism. "[F]or Duns Scotus a free act is the result of the concurrence of intellect and will, and if he speaks of a 'primacy' of the will, he argues this precisely because the will always follows the intellect." So there is nothing wrong with the Scotist primacy of the will that merely refers to Divine love which is Logos. It is Occam who exaggerated this primacy to the point that God appears whimsical. After all, Benedict himself says that the concept of the arbitrariness of the Divine Will started in later developments of the Scotist thesis and not with Scotus himself.

This is a must read for all those who are in search of the truth regardless of his faith or culture. It tells us that in order to act well, we must think well. And in order to think well, we must respect the reality out there and not impose what we merely think it is.

Rudolf Steven N. Seño, O.P.

Gladwell, Malcolm. *Outliers: The Story of Success*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2008. 309 pp. ISBN 978-0-316-03669-6.

This is a book written by the author of *The Tipping Point – How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* and *Blink – The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. Both books were hailed as bestsellers in America and were considered most influential of the past decade according to reviews which appear in the book jacket.

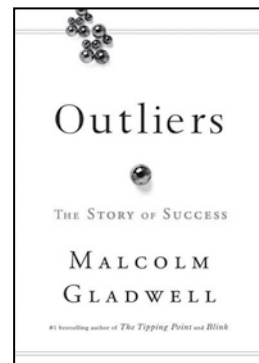
Outliers is *The Story of Success* and runs along same vein of worship, salability and commerce. Ours is a world which desperately hungers, and is ubiquitously curious about people who, according to *its* own standards, succeed and lead the rest of the pack in search for the pot. You do not have to ask what is the enamored goal of success – it is wealth.

The author Malcolm Gladwell is writer of all the three books which establishes the promise and creates the goal, in the same manner that others in this same field are bent to do – by changing the way we see the world; by changing the way we think about thinking; and by transforming the way we understand success.

Inured in writing the way people today would like to read, Gladwell banks on his experience as a staff writer for *The New Yorker*, and as business and science reporter at *Washington Post*. As he composed his 309-pages work, he has successfully glued his readers as he once did those early morning patrons of the broadsheets where he wrote for –where he talked about people and what they had achieved.

He comes up with exemplars – Bill Gates, Gordie Howe, Bill Joy, the Beatles, John D. Rockefeller, Paul Allen, Steve Ballmer, Steve Jobs, Eric Schmidt, Christopher Langan, Joe Flom, and a host of others. These are personalities usually featured in *Time* and *Newsweek* for whatever that means and is worth for. Components like family background, opportunities, group work and environment, the historical periods they exercised their talents, cultural backgrounds, demography, their perseverance, etc. The author comes up with a mix which he tells his readers those elements were there all the time but you did not find the mix which succeeds. You failed to be different in short.

Out-li-er means something that is situated away from or classed differently from a main or related body. It is also a statistical observation that is markedly different in value from the others of the sample. These two statements stand out as main reference points of the author.

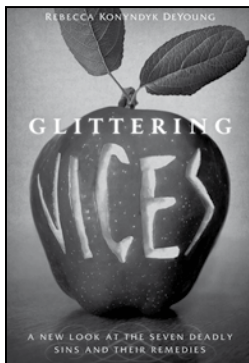


The Table of Contents is journalistically trimmed and provoking like an inviting show window – The Roseto Mystery; Opportunity [The Matthew Effect; The 10,000-Hour Rule; The Trouble with Geniuses; The Three Lessons of Joe Flom]; Legacy [Harlan; The Ethnic Theory of Plane Crashes; Rice Paddies and Math Tests; Marita's Bargain].

The book is an interesting reading as it floats and tells the story which the writer succeeds in describing with color and zest. But there is that vacuum that lingers and lies at the end of the tunnel the way these kinds of books are purveyed. One would not miss this book if you forgot this in the plane.

The book ends with *Notes* which certainly was an interesting reading; *Acknowledgments* which reinforced the truth and fact that no book is ever produced by one person in his/her lonesome self. Gladly, the book has nine pages of *Index* mostly of names but the inside texts are mostly one-liner references. This book comes in hard copy with a handsomely designed jacket. Worth buying?

Manuel F. Roux, O.P.



De Young, Rebecca Konyndyk. *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and their Remedies*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009. 205 pp. ISBN 978-1-58743-232-3.

There is a certain magic, if we may say, that spells in the words of De Young. She certainly captures the heart of the interested reader. The air of dialogue and simplicity of prose is palpable and it easily connects. Perhaps it is on account of her being a classroom mentor whose love for this particular topic is twinned with that rare unselfish dedication focused on the learning of students.

In this opus she writes, “I sought to help students understand the Christian moral tradition as expressed in the work of figures like Thomas Aquinas but soon realized how impressed they were by its practical value as well.”

The practical level that ethics aims at is hit by the mentor. Without the *praxis* component, ethics stays at the cerebral level, on the theoretical, on mere literary criticism. Words, words, words. What a colossal waste of time.

To her students, the course De Young taught them was “Spiritual Formation 101.” That certainly speaks a lot of the mark and niche De Young has earned from her audience. That speaks a lot of De Young’s passion in her mentorship that transformed her students into disciples. When the topic centers on the capital vices and being able to touch the audience during these contemporary times, De Young’s success is no mean feat. It is unimaginable.

Her article on *acedia* appeared in *The Thomist* 68 (2004) and that is where I was first introduced to her pen and mind. My students felt the same the way her students reacted but I thought Aquinas readily accedes to learners whose mental doors are docile. Thereon, her articles became staples for readings of my students in *Spirituality in Thomas Aquinas* with other contemporary sources available in *The Thomist*, aside from a précis of Aquinas taken from the pertinent loci in English translation of *De Malo*.

A study of the deadly sins can otherwise be an effective tool and reversely stimulate spiritual growth when readings and discussions are done towards an experiential spiritual formation despite the armchair classroom setting. A mentor with the likes of De Young’s enthusiasm should be right on the menu. Reading Aquinas this way seems to be one of the better approaches, if there be other *better* ones, rather than reading his pages as cold instructional parchments as is usually done in many academic centers.

Torrell, O.P. would readily agree with us on this particular score. The absence of this meditative virtue-formation approach today may be the reason why contemporary authors whom De Young mentions in her text, find it so facile to miss the center which Aquinas targets in his discussion of the seven deadly sins.

“Virtues or vices are gradually internalized and become firm and settled through years of formation.” Saints or sinners are not molded overnight. Quite so often, they are initiated at home, and reinforced or reversed in the latter years by peers. Breeding or home-formation when well-entrenched

can be so strong that they serve as foundation all throughout one's life. "There is no quick and easy substitute for daily repetition over the long haul."

Do not underestimate this 205-page opus. The writer's style is direct and invites dialogue. The topic concerns us, our Achilles heels which serve as stepping stones to our perfection. You will not regret bringing this book around for its pages glitter.

Norberto M. Castillo, O.P.

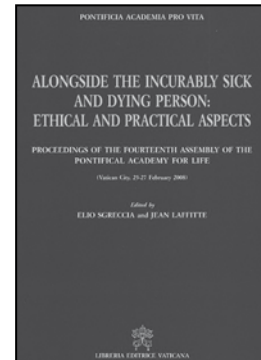
Sgreccia, Elio and Jean Laffitte, eds. *Alongside the Incurably Sick and Dying Person: Ethical and Practical Aspects*. Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2009. 312 pp. ISBN 13: 978-8-82098-110-5.

The issues in the care for the elderly and dying become highly contentious when the aspect of relationship is missing and isolated from among the care providers and the family and thus leaving the elderly and dying abandoned, alone and lonely. These issues have become the bone of contention in the proceedings articulated in the 14th Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life in February, 2008 at the Vatican. Fortunately, the resource persons had aptly taken with great care as to delineate the significant dimensions that had evidently been consigned in the trash bin of negligence. By doing so, the Assembly participants wanted to put to the fore those that can possibly be done but would not entail too much effort, money, resources, time and skill. Moreover, all the dimensions that should unreservedly benefit the patients must be made available as the scientific, human and spiritual. These cannot simply be sidelined as these are the ones that offer tangible help to the terminally-ill and allow the latter to still enjoy the meaning of life.

At hindsight, editors Elio Sgreccia and Jean Laffitte, have taken the task of painstakingly compiling proceedings of the 14th Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life even as they tackle the very important aspects in the care of those in pain and suffering and more specifically those whose life is on the precipice of death. The compilation of these proceedings has been well articulated in the main object of the said Congress as the participants focused on "the taking care of, assuming responsibility for, the terminally sick person who experiences the suffering of illness and worse, loneliness, *sometimes abandonment or alienation* (italics mine), in the final phases of his and her own existence, looked from a double perspective, that of the patient and that of the doctor." Moreover, the Congress confronted a complex debate on the ever more movable and nuanced borders between ordinary and extraordinary assistance to the patient. But more than confronting the attendant complex debate, it has also offered new vision and courageous analysis from the theological and anthropological point of view as well as the medical-ethical aspects. What was striking though in the proceedings was the provision of practical perspective in the very doable human management of the said terminally-ill patients.

One notes that the care for the terminally-ill has always been considered as pressed with a lot of complexities even as it unwittingly offers a lot of medical and ethical dilemmas on the patients and doctors, not to mention the loved ones who are equally burdened with the same complex issues. While we do not dismiss the traditional care that have often been very useful to the sick and terminally-ill, the Congress noted some advanced modes and methods in order to emphasize the more human and doable things that are left for the patients to enjoy while waiting at the "departure area." While the Congress mentions the solicitous and continued support for the sick, it also made mention about the support that must be generously offered to the family who are experiencing the prospect of losing a loved one while currently facing economic and human constraints. Hence, in the care of the terminally-ill, one must not forget the care for the loved ones of the terminally-ill who face unwelcome restrictions due to deprivation of financial and human attributes. In the end, the Congress wanted that those in the health care should take into consideration the holistic support that must be unreservedly given to the sick, and this includes the loved ones who will be left behind. This Congress therefore gives importance to the family dimension that necessarily accompanies the whole gamut of health care for the sick and dying.

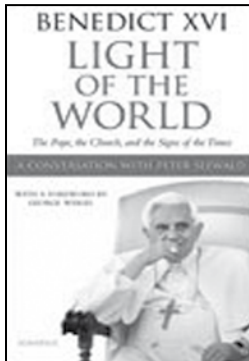
It is noteworthy that all powers that are still available can be summoned in order to make the last days of the sick more meaningful and bearable. The Foreword of the book aptly captures what the



Congress wants done: “It is in these areas that the synergy of the Church and the *human and health care* institutions can be shown to be particularly valuable, to ensure the help necessary for human life in its time of fragility.”

Any seriously driven health carer, be he a family member, or doctor, or allied health carer or institution will benefit from the proceedings of this Congress. There are just too many wonderful thoughts and reflections worth assimilating in this book.

Jerry R. Manlangit, O.P.



Benedict XVI. *Light of the World: the Pope, the Church and the Signs of the Times. A Conversation with Peter Seewald.* Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 2010. 219 pp. ISBN 978-1-58617-606-8.

Benedict XVI's book *Light of the World* seeks to address the postmodern questions that have made the exercise of his Petrine ministry increasingly hard. In this rare one-on-one interview with Seewald, he crafts and weaves faith-based and perennial answers to the pressing questions on his Church's teachings on priestly celibacy, women priests, marriage and family, same-sex marriage, and the manner by which it handled the devastating sexual abuse scandals. "At the end of the day," he says, "the point of the Church is to turn us toward God and to enable God to enter into the world" (p.185).

In Part I, "Signs of the Times," Benedict XVI attempts to situate, on the one hand, his unenviable office as the supreme shepherd of the Roman Catholic Church, and the challenges that he has to face and confront in order to remain faithful to its evangelizing mission to the world, on the other. For him, the present-day world presents both a crisis and opportunity for his Church to make it better and more effective in carrying out its evangelizing task, something he invariably mentioned in the course of the interview (pp. 136, 140, 152).

In Part II, "The Pontificate," Benedict recalls his surprised election as pope in 2005 following the death of John Paul II whom he holds with deep and affectionate respect. In the context of his travels in many countries, he explains his views on ecumenism and on-going dialogue with other faiths and religions, and the forgettable Williamson Affair which has embarrassed the Church and jeopardized its relationship with Israel.

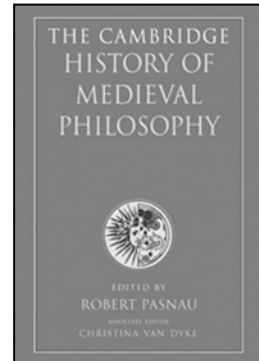
In Part III, "Where do we go from Here?," Benedict enlightens his readers on his views on human progress and science, and he laments their unbalanced influence on humankind's basic orientation toward reality. In view of the changes underway in human societies, particularly in those places where Christianity seems to have lost its flavor (particularly in Western world where the "Church is melting away"), he again points to the need for a new evangelization in which the one gospel will be proclaimed, according to him, in its great, enduring rationality so that it can reenter humankind's thinking and understanding in a new way. Benedict asserts the need for religiosity to regenerate itself anew and in so doing find new forms for its expression and comprehension. Remembering Paul VI's powerful and well-known comment about the modern man's inclination to listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, it is only hoped at this point that Benedict, with all due respect, does not forget that a living witness to the Truth and truths of the Gospel is equally important, if not more important and effective, as teaching or theologizing about it.

Having said that, the book gives its readers an intimate glimpse into the person and theology of now Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI. Unlike his other theological books, this one is a comfortable read and a good start to enter into his perspective and hermeneutics on the gravity of the issues and challenges that the Church must face today. He presents his case with typical depth, clarity and clinical precision, hardly becoming bogged down in the detail and probably having utmost in his mind the need to reach out to interested but uninitiated reader. The book is written in a candid and conversational style which can engage the reader, and draw him/her into the evidently Augustine-inspired theology which Benedict seems to deeply uphold. To both his supporters and to those who may find his theological structure problematic, this book is a must reading, if only to allow themselves to understand not only his authoritative and lucid theological reading of the Church and the world

of today but also the humanity and struggle of a person who deeply loves the Church that was once entrusted to his Petrine care.

Noel G. Asiones

Pasnau, Robert & Christina Van Dyke, eds. *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, vols. I & II. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 1220 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-76216-8 (Vol. I); ISBN 978-0-521-76218-2 (Vol. II)



Fortunately, it has become an admirable habit among genuine and selfless intellectuals to join forces in analyzing a common intellectual concern with greater depth, in greater detail and in wider expanse.

This is a sourcebook in the history of medieval philosophy. The two volumes approximately contain 59 articles written by some 58 authors, three appendices (A. doctrinal creeds, B. medieval translations, C. biographies of medieval authors), a bibliography of primary sources, secondary sources, an index *nominum*, and an index *rerum*. The time-line starts in the late eighth century which saw the rise of intellectualism after the fall of the Roman Empire. Special attention is given to contexts specially when the rise of the universities and the development in the cultural and linguistic spheres took place.

This present volume succeeds *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* published in 1982 by Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, Jan Pinborg and Eleonore Stump. The authors of this current volume of *Cambridge* assure its readers that the articles contained here are entirely new with extensiveness that touches Islamic and Jewish thought. The cross-references create potential contact points between articles and this enables a random reading which is bound to make some likely connection somewhere. With the appendix on medieval authors available in these volumes, context and contact are facilitated. This feature is quite unique in this *Cambridge* volume which all the more *personifies* the philosophy away from its abstract image. The cross-section of the contributors images a global character which is at once immense and awesome.

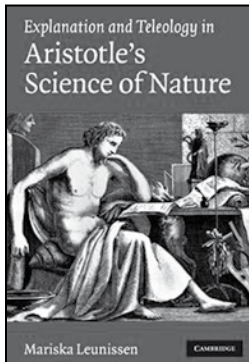
Medieval philosophy rises from the ashes of the decline of ancient Greece and Rome, reminiscent of death to life paradigm. The beginning of medievalism centers in Baghdad in the middle of the eighth century, and in France right along with the itinerant court of Charlemagne in the last quarter of the same century. Beginnings seem easier to embrace, but endings appear to be a tougher stuff to conjure. We can only approximate that it may have started c.a. eighth century and slowed down but persists towards the fourteenth and beyond. The *beyonding* may extend quite surely till the celebrated Renaissance and it was not until the 17th century that the dominant philosophy features a different mode and species. What makes medieval philosophy overwhelming as this *Cambridge* volume exudes is the global reach of medievalism that has touched every item imaginable including the diverse tongues and languages. In short, one can never be certain about an aspect in medieval philosophy because it could easily thread across uncharted waters, and coherence demands that one takes care of recognizing what is across the river so to say. The study on the theology of Aquinas, to offer an example, requires the study of many personalities of either Islamic or Jewish origin. The manner by which Aquinas took and absorbed his readings and quotations is also another issue to be cautious about.

Is it therefore strange that the turn of scholarship nowadays involves many minds to sift what long before was traditionally a one mind affair?

That the medieval times saw one of the highest intellectual heights reached, and one of the profoundest depths touched, should all the more make scholarship in this particular field more humbling. Robert Pasnau the chief editor is quite conscious about this when he wrote “our remarkably poor understanding of it” (p. 2). Despite the two stages of *Cambridge(s)* that appeared in the market, despite the banding of committed medievalists in order to produce the volumes, an immense amount of work remains uncharted, and the little done so far (like these ones) will forever remain exploratory to say the least. Aside from Aquinas, our knowledge of Avicenna, Maimonides, Abelard, Scotus, Ockham and Buridan – will remain at the tentative tip of the iceberg.

To create a tentative finish to these volumes, five contributors from diverse interests and perspectives were asked to compose a list of *desiderata* for research in the century to come. This is one brilliant idea which other authors could emulate. Expectedly, the responses were as diverse and as variant. The heterogeneity of the responses could not be far from being *natural*. We can only relish at the potential responses to the queries such as Dominik Perler's *Why radical skepticism was not a medieval concern*; or Martin Stone's need for more critical editions. Robert Pasnau chronicles the *Thirty Desiderata for Research on Medieval Philosophy in the Twenty-First Century*. If there is one unique feature of this *Cambridge* volume that deserves highlighting, it is this forwardness of aspirations that easily drums interest and enthusiasm for medieval studies which have often featured in conflictive academe as a favorite punching bag. In between the lines, these *Cambridge* volumes relay the message – little knowledge can easily clog the mind and makes one's tongue naturally precipitous. *Mea culpa*.

Norberto M. Castillo, O.P.



Leunissen, Mariska. *Explanation and Teleology in Aristotle's Science of Nature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 250 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-19774-8.

It seems to be a good turn of studies and scholarship on the works of Aristotle that questions are more and more veering towards the existent and the underlying principles that lie being. This opus works on teleology and the notions of chance and necessity as a consequence. A study on natural teleology leads to the formulation of explanations of natural phenomena. This book covers the works of Aristotle on *Physics*, *On the Soul*, *De Partibus Animalium I-IV*, *De Caelo*, and the *Posterior Analytics*.

There is a purpose for everything. And good functioning means *life or living well*. Function or end is the consequence of the operation of a goal-directed efficient and its formal causes. The latter cause refers to the soul of a natural being. This involves the realization of a potential of the form.

The initial process of coming to be of a being is enabled by its teleology and conditional necessity. These basic operations lead to the formation of features which are necessary prerequisites in order to operate its vital and essential functions. Anterior to the final cause is the nature of this being which is one and in harmony with the efficient cause. The realization of a form constitutes the end state towards which the efficient cause directs intrinsically.

The secondary stage of teleology is responsible for the presence and the shaping of other subsidiary features that enable the well-being of the living being. It is due to the material necessity that constitutive materials and entire structures are organized. These are both causal patterns and teleological because it is the efficient cause that oversees the intrinsic processes of nature and consequent outcome of well-being.

Teleological explanations are ultimate principles of dynamic being. Hence, teleological explanations form the content of scientific knowledge. The four elements of this scientific knowledge are matter, form, efficient, and final causes. The teleological explanation features most importantly in natural philosophy. It is primarily due to the latter factor that the presence, absence, or variation of natural phenomena is facilitated. The intimate nature of the phenomena is depended on its final cause. It must be noted however that all the four causes are necessary to explain the teleology of the natural phenomena, *causae sunt se invicem causae*. It is dependent on particular causes of phenomena that will determine the emergence of a particular cause that will play a more important role.

The regularity of operations and outcomes in living systems are dependent on their natures which are intrinsically directed to their specific outcomes. They cannot be accidental and neither can they happen by chance. The mutual dependencies of these causes are at once 'bottom up' and 'top down' overarching schemes. These integration of these processes are involved whenever ordering, timing, limiting, sequencing operations occur.

The importance of final causes lies in their explanatory priority. They are easily observable. Once the ends are established, we can proceed to determine the conditionally necessary antecedents, thus a more complete picture of the phenomenon is obtained. Final causes therefore are those elements which are more known to us and they serve as points of departure in our knowledge quest. It is on the

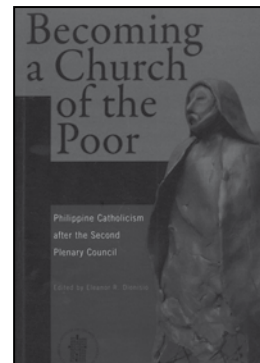
organized wholes that we are able to distinguish between the essential and incidental elements. We have to be warned that the final cause is only that which culminates the process. And this final cause can also be termed as good since it is contributory to existence, essence and the being's well-being. It is also dependent on the final cause that the other causes are properly situated.

Here is a book that will serve a big assist to both the student and the mentor in their study of natural philosophy. A reading of S. Broadie's *Nature and Craft in Aristotelian Teleology* (1990) which appears in the bibliography is certainly recommended as well. The bibliography of this work is like a checklist of other sources we should consult. Take note of the names of Ackrill, Annas, Barnes, Bekker, Bonitz, Bostock, Burnyeat, Charlton, Code, etc... a good 15 pages of selected bibliography which can be out-sourced for a dynamic expansive discussion in natural philosophy. Give this list to your libraries to provide them leads which book in this philosophical area they should purchase.

Mariska Leunissen's *Explanation and Teleology in Aristotle's Science of Nature* is a must-read.

Norberto M. Castillo, O.P.

Dionisio, E.R., ed. *Becoming a Church of the Poor: Philippine Catholicism After the Second Plenary Council*. John J. Carrol Institute on Church and Social Issues: Quezon City, 2011. 117 pp. ISBN 978-971-92774-2-2.



The book consists of seven essays that assess in the light of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II, 1991) interventions of the Church in the Philippines in four major areas of sociopolitical concern: family and life issues, elections, agrarian reform, and the environment. It is also dedicated to the memory of the late Bishop Francisco F. Claver, SJ, who is widely considered to have played a crucial role in the said council, and was a co-founder of the John J. Carrol Institute on Church and Social Issues.

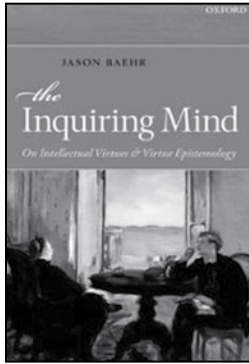
The introduction provides a concise but adequate historical backdrop on the Church's involvement in the sociopolitical life of Philippine society, interfaced with a tribute to Bishop Claver's trailblazing path toward a socially engaged and participative local church. John J. Carrol, SJ, expounds on the late Bishop's ecclesiology of dialogue, participation, and co-responsibility which goes against the trend that reasserts hierarchy and centralization of power and authority. Dionisio writes about what she observes as a cacophony of discordant Catholic voice on the contentious and divisive Reproductive Health issue, and critically examines it in the light of the two distinct but complementary dimensions of the church as both teaching and listening community. The next three articles revisit the Church's interventions from the standpoint of its self-avowed aspiration to become a Church of and for the Poor. Martin writes on the Church's solidarity and support for the plea of the rural poor for agrarian reform and its engagement as inspired by her Catholic social teaching as well as emanating from the experiences of her personnel in the rural areas. Karaos adds her analysis of the equally controversial issue on large-scale mining on which the Church has likewise given a prophetic and credible witness to PCP II's vision of the Church as a Church of and for the Poor. Ramos-Llana traces and describes how the diocese of Legazpi, Albay lives out the direction set by PCP II and effectively realizes her task of human liberation from dehumanizing poverty.

The last two articles explore aspects of the Church's sociopolitical involvements in general illumined in part by PCP II's mandate for her engagement in the building of democracy. Rivera, SJ, expounds on the Church's diverse and sometimes contradictory involvements in the 1996-2010 elections in the context of the need for what he calls as "discerning communities." Batomalaque, Nicolas and Rabacal examine public opinions on Church's involvement in politics, as reported in the series of International Social Survey Program's Survey on Religion, and show how these studies seemed to reveal a qualified confidence in the institutional Church's (translated as bishops and priests) involvement in the sociopolitical arena: on the one hand, a Church respecting the principle of separation between her and the State, and a Church exercising its moral and prophetic authority in Filipino society, on the other.

This handbook modestly aims at helping readers see and understand the sociopolitical involvement of the Church in the Philippines twenty (20) years after PCP II. In many respects,

the aim is unmistakably satisfied. The essays in this book are well-written and engaging. Dionisio's introduction and essay on the ecclesiology of PCP II deserve a special mention. The book clearly portrays a church that tries to live up to its conciliar commitments in spite of the limitations and frailties of some of its members and structures.

Noel G. Asiones



Baehr, Jason. *The Inquiring Mind. On Intellectual Virtues and Virtue Epistemology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 233 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-960407-4.

I prefer to use the word *study*, though the title *The Inquiring Mind* is definitely more attractive, if not more compulsive. How does one settle down to being a committed, and forever a student? One does not easily become a focused or a captive at such activity in a short click of the person's thumb, certainly. The disciplining of oneself is the toughest, whichever the objective to achieve. When the goal aims at the spiritual faculties like the mind and the will, the difficulty proportionately escalates. There is no telling *when*, though there may be some inviolable wisdom at the side that would advise one *how*.

There is the need of an intrinsic pull which configures our personal resources and unites the whole of the person. We are referring to a range of intellectual character traits such as those mentioned by the author – attentive observation, thoughtful or open-minded imagination, patient reflection, careful and thorough analysis, or fair-minded interpretation and assessment. There are other traits like inquisitiveness, attentiveness, carefulness, thoroughness in inquiry, fair-mindedness, open-mindedness, intellectual patience, honesty, courage, humility and rigor.

Baehr lays down his cards right at the start which outcomes are to be expected from a person who is conditionally in-process. What are intellectual virtues really? How do their nature, structure, and role impact the cognitive economy? How do the intellectual virtues connect with knowledge?

The author offers this book as his contribution to the interdisciplinary complex we now call virtue epistemology (intellectual virtues + epistemology). At the bottom line, becoming good presumes a clear vision of the referent e.g. the nature and structure of what is good. This premise is supported with a quote from the NE 1094a 22-30. As a consequence, a very interesting dimension on personal worth is revealed. Whichever objective that is sought reveals the person.

The basis for intellectual virtues – *techne*, *episteme*, *phronesis*, *Sophia* and *nous* are taken from NE 1139b.

Table 2.1 on p. 21 is an interesting construct by the author. It refers to Inquiry-relevant challenges and corresponding group of intellectual virtues. The table goes through the stages of challenge, motivation, focusing, consistency in evaluation, wholeness or integrity, mental flexibility and endurance. Intellectual character virtues grow because they are nourished and exercised. Repeated choice or action fixates them. They are different from cognitive faculties.

Does God create a ready-made virtuous person? The author raises this provocative question in footnote 9. The mind is surely awakened by such inquiry and this could be a good talking point in a classroom scene. I figure the negative. God will prefer man to make use of his mind and heart which God himself gifted. Integration is the word. Intellectual virtues while distinct from cognitive faculties are intimately connected. Hence, being intellectually vigilant, observant, sensitive to detail, fair-mindedness – all connect to intellectual virtues.

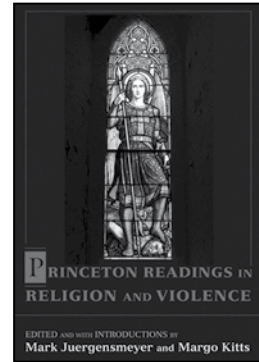
It is the opus of Zagzebski (1996) which inspires the author "that knowledge is true belief arising from acts of intellectual virtue." "Knowledge amounts to belief arising from acts of intellectual virtue." Since intellectual virtues have "a common and distinctive intentional object" e.g. reality, these virtues are "a kind of moral virtue." Hence, intellectual virtues are personal qualities which aim at epistemic ends, while moral virtues are personal qualities which aim at moral ends.

Baer's style delights especially for readers who are not narrowed down by traditionalistic approaches. He makes a happy mix of the fundamentals with the current, and the interdisciplinary with the contemporary. His discussions are quite replete in the empirical and experiential without

being academic or statistical. His distinctions may mislead however, and confuse his own objectives. Indeed, he comes with a touch of originality, but the bottom line saves us from leaving this opus half-empty: all truths are practical and applicable. That is assuming that they are true.

Franklin F. Beltran, O.P.

Jergensmeyer, Mark and Margo Kitts, eds. *Princeton Readings in Religion and Violence*. United Kingdom: Princeton and Cambridge Publ., 2011. 235 pp. ISBN 978-0-691-12914-3.



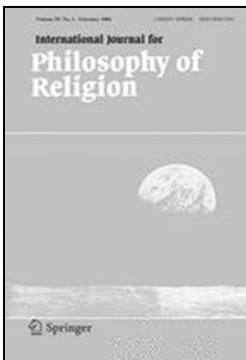
Is not religion the source of peace and goodwill among people in the world? Since when did religion become the root of violence, persecution and war? Religious root of violence in the modern times, where we are all witnesses, is not really a modern preoccupation of religious fanatics and some misguided religious mercenaries. This book attests that what may be called sacred writings, sacred rituals, and even the prescription for holiness of life, become the veil that covers religion-inspired violence.

Jergensmeyer and Kitts gather some of the works of authoritative scholars on some world religions that give primary focus on religion's role on violence. The editors divide the book into two major parts. Part I deals with the literature on 'religious justification of war.' Part II is on understanding the 'religious role in violence.' Both parts include some philosophers, theologians, sociologists and even psychologists, such as Thomas Aquinas, Emile Durkheim, Sigmund Freud, Maurice Bloch, Karl Marx, Jean Baudrillard and the like. Moreover, discussions on religion will never be complete without citing the scriptures of major religions such as the Hebrew bible, the Bhagavad Gita, the Qur'an, and the Holy Bible.

The book serves more as an anthology of work relating violence with religion. However, it does not only include texts from the sacred books of world religions but involves even personal anecdotes and writings from modern-day activists as instigators of suicide bombings, attackers of abortion clinics, and perpetrators of nerve gas assault. The collection of essays in the second part explains, from anthropological, literary, post-colonial and feminist perspectives, why religion and violence are closely related. In a way, the collection is a fascinating and instructive material of carefully chosen excerpts from sacred texts and chronicles, first-person essays, parts and chapters of source documents.

Surely this book is a contribution to the timely conundrum on modern day violence, war, terrorism and other religion/faith based notorious activities. The book brings the other side of religion that propagates peace, serenity, love, joyful worship and canonized dogmas. The unthinkable idea of killing in the name of God or in the name of religion, even as a way towards salvation, finds their literary explanations from much of the book's essays. We will come to understand that what continue to serve as terroristic and horrifying events, dreaded by many of us, are not only by-products of two millennia of religious practice but are also fruits of an inspired way of life from one's chosen religion. Hopefully, this work can shed light to some misunderstood and hated parts of what we call religion and violence and their closed link with one another.

Jesus M. Miranda, Jr., O.P.



Dumsday, Travis. "Divine Hiddenness and Creaturely Resentment," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, 72/1 (August 2012): 41-51.

In a recent article, Travis Dumsday added a response to the ongoing discussion about divine hiddenness. In summary, the question on divine hiddenness could be stated as: "if God really exists, and He wishes that people will believe in Him, why does God seem to be absent in the life of some people, where such absence becomes the reason why these same people doubt His existence?"

Dumsday's particular reply to this question is the concept of 'creaturely resentment,' which may refer to the 'envy' that develops after

one's exposure to God's greatness in revelation. Dumsday claims that God refrains from employing early revelation to most people "due to the risks inherent in a too-early exposure of a finite intellect to the Divine Majesty. Instead, God lets us remain unaware of Him for a time. In addition to this state of (partial or total) ignorance, He also allows us to experience pain and loss, perhaps even allowing us to get to the point where our expectations are lowered" (p. 45). Then he added, "And so God allows us to remain for a time in a state of affairs in which His existence is subject to rational doubt, in order to mitigate the risk of unfortunate reaction to a too-early awareness of Him" (p.45).

As Dumsday claimed, hiddenness need not be taken as a reason to doubt God's existence, that is, the fact that God seems absent in the life of some people does not justify an atheist's claim that 'God does not exist.' God's hiddenness could not be readily taken as tantamount to the absence or non-existence of God. However, there also seems to be a need to square with Dumsday's claim that the hiddenness of God is *His own doing*, that is, that God himself withdraws from creatures in order to mitigate the risk of creatures' envy. Dumsday has this to say in his article:

It is not entirely clear what the reaction of a finite creature is liable to be when first becoming explicitly aware of the presence of the Divine majesty... Specifically, one possible reaction is overwhelming jealousy and resentment - jealousy of God and resentment at not being more godlike. The tradition suggests that there is a danger in an immediate awareness of the divine, and that the danger might be mitigated by certain forms of preparation that can only occur in the absence of an explicit experiential awareness of God. This risk and the means of its mitigation provide some reason for God to not grant us such an awareness of Himself from the start of our rational lives" (p. 43).

Knowing such risks, Dumsday so argues, God then temporarily refrains from revealing Himself. It is in doing so that our expectations of Him are lowered, thereby offsetting the possible setback of resentment (jealousy). He then "puts us through a set of trials, such that the Divine Majesty will be welcomed as salvation rather than resented or hated" (p.45).

Furthermore, Dumsday claims that the 'creaturely resentment' reply to the question on divine hiddenness has theological ties with the Christian teaching on 'fallen angels' and the sin of our first parents. He recalls that Lucifer's decision to rebel against God, or the desire to become an equal to God, is caused primarily by his envy. Moreover, Adam and Eve's first sin was occasioned by the serpent's temptation that is premised by the possibility of becoming like God. Dumsday takes these claims to be theological grounds for the argument that 'to avoid man's resentment, God opted to refrain from revealing Himself.'

But we ask Dumsday the following questions: will God really purposely withdraw his presence from the people in order to avoid their resentment? Moreover, do we really have a better theological argument when we argue that God has changed His mind (thus, withdraws Himself from us and makes Himself hidden) because His initial revelations to the fallen angels and to our first parents failed?

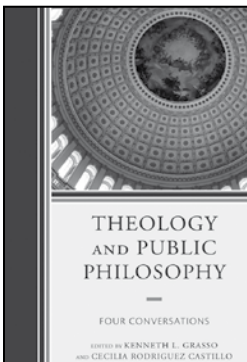
Theism claims that hiddenness does not prove the non-existence of God an argument that even Dumsday will agree. But, I propose that divine hiddenness is better appreciated as a theological question. Dumsday opines, correctly in my view, that the question on divine hiddenness could even occasion a 'positive relationship with God.' However, I believe that this apophatic character of revelation may not be attributed as God's act. Instead, most Christian literature, contrary to what Dumsday has pointed out, argues that it is the nature of God to reveal Himself to us. But, we oftentimes fail to see him, not because God withdraws Himself from us, but because of our human condition: our *finitude*. Thomas Aquinas for example claims that even if God reveals himself to us in this world, such revelation could not be complete, not because God intended to withhold part of Himself from us, but because of the creaturely (finite) nature of our faculties. Revelation can only be completed in the Beatific Vision when we have already overcome the limitations of our creaturely existence. Hence, in the question on divine hiddenness, the answer lies in the character of the human person, the finite character of our nature including our cognitive faculties.

So, why does God seem to be absent in the lives of some people? The answer lies in our human *condition*. Our finite intelligence needs to be aided, either through the infused virtues from God or through training in natural theology and spirituality, in order to become aware of God's presence. Hence, to discern 'religious experiences' [the presence of God in one's life] from among our varied experiences will need a certain form of discipline. It needs proper training and instruction from the elders or 'experts' of our faith. Inasmuch as we would have to be trained for music or for other

crafts, we would have to be trained in our spirituality. Inasmuch as it requires discipline and training to discern aesthetics and beauty in the world around us, we too would have to be initiated to the discipline of discernment, especially if we are to discover the presence and actions of God even in the everyday things that we are doing. This is the reason why the help of spiritual counselors and masters are important. They could point to us the proper direction for the discernment of the will of God. God is omnipresent, and we need the proper disposition to find Him in the world.

This is the reason why I argue that divine hiddenness is better treated as a theological question: the answer to it presupposes a minimum admission that God exists, and his seeming absence needs to be overcome by a delicate discernment of his presence even in those things and instances (like evil) where He seems to be totally absent. An atheist could hardly be convinced that God, as theists - especially Christians - claim Him to be, is present even in those perilous situations. Only believers may be able to see Him in those times, otherwise, the non-believer may first be converted to faith before he can admit the same. In fact, believers who are aware of our creaturely finitude know that only the discovery of God's presence can answer the longings of our heart for perfection. The irony about who we are is the fact that we long for Transcendence despite our existential limitations. It is only in the admission that God exists where we understand the compatibility of our finite human nature and our heart's inner longing for Transcendence. It is our faith that allows us to understand, as Augustine would say. Without faith, we remain to be finite creatures and our vision shall be limited by the boundaries of our equally finite world.

Joel C. Sagut



Grasso, Kenneth L. and Cecilia Rodriguez Castillo, eds. *Theology and Public Philosophy: Four Conversations*. United States of America: Lexington Books, 2012. 210 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0739166642.

Prof. Dr. Kenneth L. Grasso is professor of political science at Texas State University. His interest includes the Catholic Social Thought and the liberal tradition, two themes that are eminently present in this recent collection, *Theology and Public Philosophy: Four Conversations*. Prof. Grasso's co-worker in this project is Assistant Professor Dr. Cecilia Rodriguez Castillo, who is also from Texas State University. This collection gathers renowned figures in the academe: Charles Taylor, Nicholas Wolterstorff, Robin Lovin and Jean Porter, who each composed an essay for a specific theme. Their essays are ably commented by their colleagues: Kenneth Grasso, Fred Dallmayr, William Schweiker, J.

Budziszewski, Jeanne Heffernan Schindler, Joshua Mitchell, Charles Mathewes, Jonathan Chaplin, Michael Budde, Eloise A. Buker, Christopher Beem, Peter Berkowitz and Jean Bethke Elstain, who provided the *Epilogue*. Prof. Grasso himself composed the *Introduction*.

The conversations were designed to bring into the open two important issues in contemporary western societies (particularly the United States of America): religion and public life. The work is a concerted effort of all those names mentioned above who are bound together by their conviction that theology could meaningfully offer a contribution to our present attempts to define and improve our common life in our respective societies. In his *Introduction*, Prof. Grasso argues that "these essays explore the broader and deeper question of the possible contribution of theology and theologically informed moral reflection to the contemporary quest for public philosophy capable of sustaining and advancing America's ongoing experiment in self-government and ordered liberty." Though the explicit objective is very specific, America's context, the essays here certainly speaks of concerns shared even by other western and democratic societies.

The four conversations referred to by the title are the four specific issues dealt by the contributed essays: the relationship between theology and the modern culture (part I), theology and foundations of political authority (part II), religion, culture and public dialogue (part III), and moral pluralism and its problems (part IV). Each part has a main article and each main article is engaged by three commentators. The book is a *conversation* because 'on the one hand, the contributors are united neither by a common disciplinary perspective nor by a common theological or religious orientation,'... and on the other hand, the volume fosters a kind of dialogue that is distinct from the contemporary

discourses that are mostly ‘really polemics or sloganeering, or at best, a series of monologues in which the participants never really understand much less engage one another.’

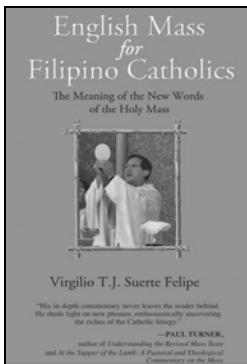
The book’s rallying cry is the relevance of theology in public conversations. As pointed out by Prof. Grasso, the effort to put aside or sideline faith and theology from the public forum has proven itself futile. When the supporters of the enlightenment project thought that modernism would eventually displace the concept of God from public life, present experiences would tell us that such theory has never been warranted. Faith continues to inspire people, and the understanding about the presence of a deity continues to influence the decisions and actions of people. “Contrary to expectations, with the possible exception of Western Europe, modernization has led to neither the disappearance of religion nor its relegation to the private sphere. The world of the early twenty-first century, as McClay writes, remains vibrantly, energetically, and at times, maniacally religious, in ways large and small, good and bad, superficial and profound, now as much as ever” (p. x). Tracing the fate of faith and religion in the evolution of human ideas from the time of the enlightenment down to our era would allow us to say that ‘theology,’ though attacked and maligned several times, has time and again succeeded in re-asserting its own logic, and has never really faded from the public scene.

The Enlightenment project has wanted to do away with ‘heteronomic philosophies’ in order to favour the responsible ‘autonomous’ exercise of human freedom. It has argued that institutions (like the church and state) could never appeal to any norm external to the human person in settling issues and conflicts in our common life. Hence, the natural law that has been understood in the middle ages as a ‘rational participation to the eternal law’ would have to be rectified and, as Kant and Locke would argue, it would have to take a humanist form emancipated from the clutches of ‘faith’ that has been used instrumentally by the powers of the middle ages. Enlightenment has proposed that natural law has to rely mainly on reason (without any external attachment to the resources of faith) or emotion (as in the case of Hume’s moral sentiment), which are thought to be universal faculties of the human species. With this exclusive appeal to native human faculties and powers, the Enlightenment project hopes to foster universal laws and principles that could command in us a sense of duty and which could settle the superficial differences among people, manifested especially by the variation of our cultures and traditions. But the years that have passed since the inception of this project will reveal that the aims of the enlightenment to universalize our moral norms have never been realized. Quite the contrary has even occurred. Our contemporary societies are witnessing the multiplicities or pluralities that so often divide people, a division that has even sadly resulted to lethal offenses and aggressions. Such divisions have become the defining character of our human societies, and the children of the enlightenment are now desperately looking for the appropriate formula, for they seem to be running out of time in the process of proving the non-futility of the enlightenment ideals.

It is on this background (Grasso’s description of *anomic democracy* and the *unencumbered self*) that contemporary academicians and practitioners, who continue to believe in the capacity of theology and theologically informed moral inquiry, have found fresh hopes to become more vocal and articulate in their own convictions. This book is one such expression.

This work is an attempt to gather varying voices from unique backgrounds but shared commitments. This is what real conversations are supposed to be: it’s a talk among people who are different but with a common understanding of who they are and what they are supposed to achieve. No authentic conversation could happen without such virtues of sincerity, honesty and integrity. There has to be a sincere conviction that there is something that we share among ourselves and that there are reasons to believe that we can work together. The book is one notable project that is worth imitating especially among Catholic universities who may face their own respective concerns regarding the concrete and specific roles that our faith has to play in our specific contexts. The book’s editors have humble claims about their rather important contribution: “The essays in this volume make no pretense of offering final and definitive answers to the questions they address.” But, this even makes the book more valuable. The essays here present us the future directions of projects that are worthy of our attention. It is rather the hope of this reader that this conversation shall continue and would take indigenous faces and tones if only because faith encounters specific concerns in our particular communities. Moreover, as partners in this effort of finding the appropriate philosophies to use in the public forum, those from rival traditions (those who openly reject the role of faith and theology in the public forum) may hopefully offer their critique so as to generate deeper reflection as to the kind of role that faith and theology may play in our public conversations.

Joel C. Sagut



Suerte Felipe, Virgilio T.J., *English Mass for Filipino Catholics – The Meaning of the New Words of the Holy Mass*. Makati City: St. Paul's, 2012. 146 pp. ISBN-13: 978-971-004-153-4.

On 28 April 2010, His Holiness Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI manifested optimism in his address to the members and consultors of the *Vox Clara* Commission, which is responsible for the translation of Latin texts into English of the third edition of the Roman Missal. He said, “*Soon the fruits of your labors will be made available to English-speaking congregations everywhere. Through these sacred texts and the actions that accompany them, Christ will be made present and active in the midst of His people.*” In addition to striking a clearly affirmative tone, the Holy Father has foreseen the challenge that “*many will find it hard to adjust to unfamiliar texts after nearly forty years of continuous use of the previous translations.*”

Furthermore, he said that “*the change will need to be introduced with due sensitivity, and the opportunity for catechesis that it presents will need to be firmly grasped.*” This book responded positively to the demand for such requisite catechesis, which aims to avert “*any risk of confusion or bewilderment*” so that “*the change will serve instead as a springboard for a renewal and a deepening of Eucharistic devotion all over the English-speaking world (ibid).*”

The work is a catechetical commentary on the third edition of the *Missale Romanum* (Filipino: *Aklat ng Pagmimisa sa Roma*), the liturgical book that contains the texts and rubrics for the celebration of the Mass in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church. It contains the Order of the Mass with all its accompanying presidential prayers and responses. During the Jubilee Year 2000, Blessed Pope John Paul II (1920-2005) promulgated the aforementioned edition of the Roman Missal first issued by Pope Paul VI (1897-1978). Despite some changes to the Holy Mass, it is the same Mass [pp.111-117] that the Church has been celebrating since Christ commanded His disciples to “*do this in memory of me*” (Luke 22:19). It contains the same Order of the Mass that was promulgated after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and follows the mandate of the conciliar fathers for liturgical renewal and reform: “*For the liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it*” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 21).

Since the promulgation of the “new” Order of the Mass in 1969, there have been movements to require a new edition of the Roman Missal: the Holy See provided additional Eucharistic Prayers; the feast days of canonized saints were added to the liturgical calendar of the Church; and the rules for the way we translate the ritual texts from the original Latin into the vernacular have changed (cf. SC, 36). On 28 March 2001, the Holy See issued the Instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam*, which included the requirement that, in translations of the liturgical texts from the official Latin, “*the original text, insofar as possible, must be translated integrally and in the most exact manner, without omissions or additions in terms of their content, and without paraphrases or glosses. Any adaptation to the characteristics or the nature of the various vernacular languages is to be sober and discreet*” (LA, 20). This was a departure from the principle of dynamic equivalence promoted in the translation of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) after the Second Vatican Council. One of the most conspicuous modifications that will greatly affect all faithful is the way the original Latin texts have been translated into the English language. In the earlier editions of the Roman Missal, the method of translation laid heavy emphasis on the way the receiving community would hear and understand the text [dynamic equivalence, p. 8]. As a result, many of the prayers were substantially simplified to reflect contemporary English usage. Eventually, some texts were added which were not found in the original Latin editions. Now, translators have to give particular attention to maintaining biblical references, employ inclusive language where possible, avoid simplifying the words and phrases into contemporary terms, and ensure as much continuity as possible between the original text promulgated in Latin and the translated text in English [formal correspondence, p.8]. It may seem accurate by being literal, but it often requires explanation [p.8].

The Christian faithful, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand such changes with ease. The author is aware that “formal correspondence”, which tries to preserve the Latin words to avoid misinterpretation, requires thorough explanations that this book can offer so that the faithful will

be led to “full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy” (SC 14). Concomitantly, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly what they signify today. The author scrutinized the meaning of the major changes in the texts of the Holy Mass through preliminary etymological analyses of the words leading to its biblical foundation and theological implications contextualized in the Philippine setting.

The book is an expanded and modified version of the article, “And with Your Spirit” (And Also with You) published in *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas*, vol. LXXXVIII, no. 892, September-October 2012, pp. 483-500. It now consists of three chapters and two appendices: Chapter I [pp.1-10] serves as a primer that utilized historical approach in clarifying the reasons for the new English translation of the Roman Missal; Chapter II [pp.11-110] is the highlight of the book that presents a pastoral catechesis on the “new” words by providing a catechetical exposition of their literal meaning and a spiritual and moral link with our life as Catholics; Chapter III [pp. 111-117] expounds the theological or doctrinal explanation of the Holy Mass. The two appendices provide the prayers before and after the Eucharistic celebration. However, neither the Order of the Mass with the highlighted modifications nor a comparative textual analysis in tabular form of the editions of the Roman Missal are provided.

The author used personal experiences (i.e. life as a U.S. immigrant), anecdotes, analogies (i.e. using multivitamins to explain the *Credo*; sodium chloride to explain the divine nature), cultural background, contemporary jargons and expressions (i.e. using Transformers to explain Transubstantiation; using the impersonal “May the force be with you” of Star Wars to explain the personal and intimate “The Lord be with you”) in order to connect with his readers. He made clear connections of one topic to another by using a clear and smooth transition from one paragraph to another without interruption. The in-depth critical analyses of the “new” words are interwoven with the Filipino sentiment. The critical explanation of the parts of the mass especially the words “*consubstantial*” [pp. 47-53], “*incarnate*” [pp. 53-56], “*he descended into hell*” [pp. 56-60], “*the mystery of faith*” [73-77], “*enter under my roof*” [pp.99-102] and the nuances of the response “*and with your Spirit*” [pp. 16-21, 41-42, 67-69, 96-97, 106-110] which is repeated four times in the Holy Mass were explained clearly and remarkably.

The book endeavors to present a concise yet substantial explanation of the many questions an ordinary lay Catholic faithful would ask regarding the changes in the texts of the Holy Mass. It clearly expounds each technical term with the presumption that the readers need to be reminded of the concepts he/she has previously encountered or be introduced to an entirely new concept. The book is primarily written for lay Filipino Catholics [p.xvii] that supplements other commentaries regarding the topic. However, this book is also recommended for seminarians, religious sisters and clerics alike for the study of such changes through a layman’s perspective, which is important to their ministry. It utilized the Sacred Scriptures, pertinent Church documents such as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the *Catechism for Filipino Catholics* and Benedict XVI’s teachings on the Holy Mass; important secondary sources; workshop and conference outputs; and authoritative websites as sources.

Although there was no mention of the Filipino translation from the “new” English texts of the Roman Missal that will happen in the near future, the author has given a fitting conclusion that “*The lack of a more profound inculturation in the Eucharist*” [p. 120] for the Filipinos to identify themselves with is one of the root causes of confusion or bewilderment. Furthermore, “*vernacular masses in the Philippines have ironically appeared foreign*” [p.122].

Louie R. Coronel, O.P.

