

It also provides interesting information about the image, such as the late development of the devotion to the image in the late nineteenth century, the origins of the *sinulog* dance and the festival that is named after it, and the involvement of the image and the symbols associated to it to the conflicts that arose in the province during the nineteenth century.

Most importantly, the monograph also highlights the importance of the image in Cebuano life. What makes it unique from other works on the Santo Niño is that it defines and highlights the intricate relationship between the image and the historical development of Cebu. It argues that the image has not only established a significant place in Cebuano life, but also provides the Cebuanos a unifying and defining figure that transcend social, political, and ethnic divisions that exist in the province. It also shows that the devotion to the image is affected by the events that are occurring in the city and the province and not the other way around, citing the examples of the late development of the devotion to the image due to the challenges that the province faced during the 1740s to the 1820s and the ascendancy of the image as a defining symbol of Cebuano life vis-à-vis the formation of a shared consciousness among the inhabitants of Cebu in the nineteenth century. This is a clear contrast to the experience of other towns such as Manaoag, Pangasinan whose developments are affected by the introduction and spread of the devotion of its patron saints. One could say that it is an example of a work that deals with local religious history.

The monograph also provides room for more inquiries on the history of the Santo Niño. Questions, such as the effect of the transfer of the administration of the Minor Basilica of Santo Niño from the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus of the Philippines to the Province of Santo Niño de Cebu to the propagation and preservation of the devotion to the image, the spread of the devotion beyond Cebu, and the condition of the image and the devotion to it during the Second World War, arise due to the specialized nature of the work. Nonetheless, the work is a must-have reference material for those who are interested in learning about the history of the image, of Cebu, and the relationship between the two.

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***Joseph Ratzinger in Dialogue with Philosophical Traditions from Plato to Vattimo*. Edited by Alejandro Sada, Tracey Rowland and Rudy Albino de Assunção. London: T and T Clark, 2024. pp. 410. ISBN: 978-0-5677-0685-0.**

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This book is unprecedented. People are used to associate theology with the name Joseph Ratzinger. Indeed, they are correct. Joseph Ratzinger is a topnotch theologian and teacher of the faith in the Catholic Church. Until his death in 2023, his works are in deep conversations with the greatest theological minds in the past and current theological movements in the world today. But in the field of philosophy? Only a few are aware of Ratzinger's engagement with topnotch philosophers. This book acquires great significance since it fills in a huge lacuna in studies of Ratzinger's thought, stressing to the readers that anyone who is serious to plumb into the thoughts of this great German theologian and pastor of the church ought to see the deep impact philosophy has in his theological thought. Philosophy has a big contribution to the thoughts of this great man and the publication of

this book is timely for it articulates an unrecognized area in Ratzinger's thought. In other words, the life and thinking of Joseph Ratzinger is a living example of the mutual relationship between faith and reason, a theme which he constantly taught as prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (now Dicastery of the Doctrine of the Faith) and as Pope.

A group of leading scholars around the world were gathered together and contributed a piece, exploring in depth the philosophical connections and influences in the thought of Ratzinger. The book is edited by three experts, one of whom is a recipient of the prestigious Ratzinger prize, Tracey Rowland. She contributed an article on the scope of reason and the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein and on Karl Marx and the problem of the priority of praxis. Another contributor is Hannah-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz, herself a recipient of the coveted Ratzinger prize, wrote something on Josef Pieper and its connection with Ratzinger's thought. Readers in the anglophone world are given the rare opportunity to investigate the thinking of Ratzinger through the lens of experts who attempted to articulate the impact of philosophy in his theology.

The work is a gem. It comprises twenty two articles by experts deeply committed to the thought of the Bavarian Pope. In terms of organization, the contributions were arranged from the ancient period starting with Plato going to Augustine and Bonaventure, two leading figures in the middle ages very dear to the heart of Joseph Ratzinger and comprising the topics of his two doctoral thesis that qualified him for university teaching. Added to this is the Angelic Doctor, Thomas Aquinas whom Ratzinger is also indebted, something that many would like to dismiss, since an impression was (hastily!) given that Ratzinger is more Augustinian than Thomist. This article would like us to revisit this judgment. Next come the moderns, from Kant to Nietzsche. Within this stretch are the names of Hegel, Comte, and Marx. Most are Germans, with the exception of Comte. Ratzinger engages himself with difficult questions posed by the moderns especially in relation to faith and God. Included in the contemporary period are the names of Buber, Rorty, Rawls, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Popper, Sartre, Camus, Habermas, and Vattimo. On the Christian/Catholic side are Romano Guardini, St. Edith Stein, Josef Pieper, and Robert Spaemann. From ancient to contemporary, the huge personalities in the field of philosophy are represented. It shows the immensity and breadth of Ratzinger's thought in dialogue with leading philosophers. It also reflects Ratzinger as an open yet highly independent and critical thinker. Anyone who assumes that Ratzinger is locked in the middle ages should think otherwise as proven by these excellent contributions. He himself is the living witness to his speech given when he visited Germany in 2006 as pope. *The courage to engage the whole breadth of reason, and not the denial of its grandeur - that is the program with which a theology grounded on biblical faith enters the debates of our times.*

This expresses an important principle in the Catholic church: faith and Theology cannot simply exclude the positive contributions of reason and philosophy. Ratzinger often calls for a reason "open to transcendence." Through the writings of these experts, they were able to put into words the living example of a reason open to transcendence as exemplified in the person of Ratzinger. An example is the contribution of Mary Frances McKenna on Edith Stein and the Reasonableness of Faith that shows authentic faith does not leave behind the goodness of human reason.

Among the issues that pervade throughout the book is Ratzinger's constant opposition to the dictatorship of relativism (DOR) in all its forms. Readers and researchers can find various arguments and insights offered by the contributors on how the Bavarian Pope argued against DOR.

Another theme is the issue of historicity and the universal validity of objective truth. In this regard, the piece of Thomas Guarino on Vattimo and Ratzinger are expected to motivate readers to study this thorny issue more deeply.

Big names such as Immanuel Kant, GWF Hegel, Romano Guardini, Josef Pieper, F. Nietzsche, R. Spaemann, J. Habermas, and Martin Heidegger each were given substantial attention as well as A. Comte, J-P. Sartre, A. Camus, K. Popper among others.

Another volume hopefully would follow which aims to show how the eastern way of thinking and philosophy deepened Ratzinger's thought.

The use of the word *Dialogue* in the book's title is fitting for it manifests Ratzinger's openness even among those who do not side with him. It is also noteworthy that the title of the book mentions Joseph Ratzinger's name and not his title and position in the church as cardinal and pope which goes to show that the work is not to be taken as an imposition or a lessening of academic freedom. On the contrary, the book should be seen as a catalyst for future studies in the many sided thoughts of this man who once described himself as a "humble worker in the vineyard of the Lord."

We congratulate all who made this work possible.

**Jose Adriand Emmanuel L. Layug**

**McEvoy, James. *Love and Friendship in the Western Tradition: From Plato to Postmodernity*. The Catholic University of America Press, 2023. pp. 409. ISBN: 978-0-8132-3669-8.**

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Imagine a journey through the overwhelming landscape of Western thought, following the evolution of two of the most fundamental human experiences: love and friendship. This is precisely what James McEvoy offers in his book "Love and Friendship in the Western Tradition: From Plato to Postmodernity." The work is divided into five distinct parts, each reflecting the depth of McEvoy's lifelong philosophical engagement with a theme central to both personal and communal human existence. More than a mere historical survey, McEvoy's book is a philosophical reflection on how the notions of love and friendship have not only evolved over time but also shaped and re-shaped the Western culture.

McEvoy begins his exploration by tracing the philosophical roots of love and friendship back to classical antiquity, highlighting the ways in which Christian thinkers selectively adopted and adapted these ancient Greek ideas. He pays particular attention to Aristotle and the Stoics, noting, "Christian thinkers in their turn were not slow to make adaptations of the ancient conceptions of friendship" (p. 4). This nuanced observation