

Reviews & Notices

Cary, Philip; John Doody, and Kim Paffenroth, eds. *Augustine and Philosophy*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2010. ISBN 278-0-7391-4540-1. 312 pp.

This anthology is one of the series issued by *Augustine in Conversation: Tradition and Innovation* which aims to explore the relationship, new perspectives, innovation, and common threads, etc., with the writings of Augustine. The series explores studies in diverse fields - *Politics, Literature, History, Liberal Education, World Religions, and Philosophy*.

This anthology includes – Part I 1) *Augustine on the Glory and the Limits of Philosophy* (Johannes Brachtendorf), 2) *Augustine and Philosophy: Intellectus Fidei* (Frederick Van Fleteren), 3) *Augustine's First-Person Perspective* (Gareth B. Matthews), 4) *Keeping Time in Mind: Saint Augustine's Proposed Solution to a Perplexing Problem* (Alexander R. Eodice), 5) *Augustinian Compatibilism and the Doctrine of Election* (Philip Cary), 6) *Dreams of Responsibility* (Jesse Couenhoven). Part II 7) *Recurrere in te unum: Neoplatonism, Form and Content in Augustine's Confessions* (Wayne Hankey), 8) *The Contradictories of Confessions XII* (John Peter Kenney), 9) *The Epistemology of Faith in Augustine and Aquinas* (Paul Macdonald Jr), 10) *Augustine's Influence on the Philosophy of Henry of Ghent* (Roland Teske), 11) *Wittgenstein's Augustine: The Inauguration of the Later Philosophy* (James Wetzel), and, 12) *Toward a Postmodern Theology of the Cross: Augustine, Heidegger, Derrida* (John D. Caputo).

Augustine has always been an intense thinker, embracing, 'unsinkable' so to say, and very much quoted despite the eons and centuries intervening, and – endlessly inspiring. Aside from being a bishop, saint, and church father, he is installed in this opus as a philosopher though some articles could not avoid the intermingling with issues which are appropriately theological. But despite choleric objections, what is philosophy really for? What is reason destined for?

His writings that come in tomes orbit in a large spectrum of ideas and issues which indeed find contemporaneous fit today. This opus focuses on ground level of what the writers of this anthology consider philosophical etc. This conviction seems most evident in the *Confessions* that is now one of his more popular and quite available texts at popular bookstores.

To Augustine, philosophy was the basic ‘love of wisdom.’ This means that philosophy is essentially an endeavor of reason *alone*. Philosophy, as a function of the mind, teaches well but is unable to convert the soul because such function does not touch the will. Conversion is a task of faith and divine grace. These levels are maintained by Augustine quite rigidly. Ancient philosophy realizes its fruition in the Scriptures which provide the *end*. It is in Augustine that the earliest First-person perspective was introduced to Western Philosophy. This was his early reaction (or anticipation, as saints are wont to read ahead) against skepticism formulated in *si fallor sum* (“If I am mistaken, I exist”). Matthews finds in Augustine other philosophical advancements in language acquisition, a priori knowledge, mind-body dualism, intentionalism in ethics, time, and creation theory. It is to be noted the First-person perspective is very introspective, quite an intuitive approach. Eodice takes up Book XI of Confessions and discusses *Time’s* measurability and divisibility. Time is real as a function of consciousness and as an extension of the mind. Why does God bestow particular graces on some and not on others? Cary’s article deals with Compatibilism as he critiques doctrine of election or divine choice. Couenhoven takes up the issue on dreams. We are judged not only for actions we have done, but so too with our states of mind. Our dreams tell something of our hopes and fears as individuals. The Second Part of the opus deals with Augustine and other philosophies/philosophers such Neoplatonism, Christian transcendentalism, the epistemological model of faith, the importance of grace, etc.

This opus serves as an introduction to Augustine not only in philosophy but so too in theology with the saint’s essential orientation towards the One. This book should be used however only as a reference together with the actual source books written by Augustine.

Franklin F. Beltran, O.P.

Nichols, Aidan OP. *The Conversation of Faith and Reason: Modern Catholic Thought from Hermes to Benedict XVI*. Illinois: Hillenbrand Books, 2011. ISBN: 978-1-59525-034-6. pp: 222.

The approach of Nichols, as gleaned from the title, is historical. He begins with the explanation of what methodology to use, explanation of what faith is all about, followed by the different epochs and philosophers that in one way or another touched upon the theme of faith and reason. It shows that the author is a clear thinker and straightforward as a writer. Considering the broadness of the topic, the reader will not get lost as he goes along the book. The list of books in the bibliography is commendable too.

The topic is very significant and timely. In an age when religion is being used to justify violence and hatred, Nichols’ work puts a strong message that fideism cannot be an option nor rationalism be the way of thinking of a *homo religiosus*. History shows that when one is emphasized over the other, tragic consequences occur. The word *conversation* found in the title of the book echoes the dialogical character that must be found between God and man. Dialogue that leads to union is at the heart of religion, not division and confusion.

Perhaps a noteworthy statement comes from p. 4: *This ecclesial dimension serves to exclude any attempt to resolve the issue of faith and reason by philosophical means alone.* Nichols hits a point here that is not often seen. It appears that the relation between faith and reason is a subtopic in the history of philosophy, that the complex problems behind can be exclusively approached in the light of philosophy and the sole intellectual powers of a thinker without the role of the community. The church as a community of faith and an epistemic community (in a sense) has a role to play in the way we deepen our understanding of the relation between faith and reason.

How does the Catholic Church in the Philippines practice faith and reason? Are there Filipino Catholic thinkers who wrote and published on this topic? Maybe, a sub question that needs to be seen is how is philosophy, approached in the relationship between faith and reason, taught in Philippines college seminaries? What is the impact of the relation between faith and reason in the formation of the native clergy in the Philippines? It is better to reflect on these questions in the historical, philosophical, and doctrinal levels as we approach the 500th anniversary of the Christianization of the Philippines in 2021.

Nichols' work is powerful enough to move us into further thinking as evidenced by the questions above. In this, a congratulatory word to Nichols is not sufficient to convey how his book contributes to the formation of the Catholic faith especially in this country. The reader will not be disappointed.

Jose Adriand Emmanuel L. Layug

Doolan, Gregory, ed. *The Science of Being as Being. Metaphysical Investigations.* Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012. ISBN 978-0-8132-1886-1. 330 pp.

Among the added advantages of an anthology in metaphysics is the rare-plus premium of having more focused studies spread out in detail and made available in one volume. Here, we have ready on our laps a more profound treatment, a more lengthy discussion on topics that otherwise are generally discussed in faster pace fashion found in introductory books for beginners.

Among other things, capitulating on the advantage mentioned, this quality would hopefully serve as a major saving factor for Doolan's anthology. The organization of the lectures, the effort that has gone into the publication of the talks, and the temerity of choosing a topic in Metaphysics deserve more than a medal for him and his staff.

How else would you find each topic handled by specialists/researchers, and tackled according to different turns of history? This anthology is dedicated to the singular icon at CUA in metaphysics - Msgr. John F. Wippel. His stature may indeed have engendered a name worthy of a respectable status for the School of Philosophy of the Catholic University of America obviously in metaphysics and medieval philosophy.

Doolan offers Msgr. Wippel the endearing encomiums of *magister, scholaris, amicus* in this published work which chronicles the lecture series held at Catholic University of America on *Metaphysical Themes – In Honor of John F. Wippel*. The lecture series marked the honoree’s seventy-fifth (75th) year. The celebration signals the profound respect for his singular influence in metaphysics.

The book title of *The Science of Being As Being* may appear commonplace and redundant, but that best describes Metaphysics taken from the terse description by the genius who started it all, Aristotle (*Met IV, 1, 1003a20-25*)! The saving factor *Metaphysical Investigations* stamps the anthology character.

The book is introduced by Doolan with a brief made of the following divisions -

Part One: The Subject Matter of Metaphysics. 1. Robert Sokolowski, *The Science of Being as Being in Aristotle, Aquinas, and Wippel*; 2. Dominic O’Meara, *The Transformation of Metaphysics in Late Antiquity*; 3. Jan Aertsen, *Why is Metaphysics called First Philosophy in the Middle Ages?*; 4. Andreas Speer, *The Fragile Convergence: Structures of Metaphysical Thinking*; *Part Two: Metaphysical Aporiae.* 5. Gregory T. Doolan, *Aquinas on Substance as a Metaphysical Genus*; 6. Jorge J. E. Gracia, *A Scholastic Perspective on the Individuation of Races*; 7. James Ross, *Merely Metaphysical Possibility.* *Part Three: The Two Theologies.* 8. Stephen Brown, *The Role of Metaphysics in the Theology of Godfrey of Fontaines*; 9. John F. Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on Philosophy and the Preambles of Faith*; 10. Brian Stanley, O.P. *Thomas Aquinas on Demonstrating God’s Providence*; 11. Eleonore Stump, *Eternity, Simplicity, and Presence*; 12. Marilyn McCord Adams, *Why Bodies as well as Souls in the Life to Come?*

Rare indeed it is to organize a conference on Metaphysics. If publications like this opus are a refreshing sight in libraries, we will have to thank the organizers of the conference who whet [a more exact term ‘force’] the appetite for an equally rare creature as Metaphysics. Being is in the part as well as in the whole. It is through particular sciences like cosmology, mathematics, etc. that the whole of being by contrast is arrived at in Metaphysics. ‘Small things’ [or small beginnings] like particular sciences beg for bigger things, the summit, if you may. Reason will never be satisfied with the partial. Reason will continue to crave and salivate for the *itself-ness* of Being in First Philosophy. The small presages the whole. All throughout, there is the sustained insistence on what is eminently realistic and concrete. This will have to be kept in mind since behind Wippel is his avowed conviction in St. Thomas Aquinas. There is too, the sustained dialogue with man as agents of truth, from *ens qua ens* to *mens qua mens*. Reason pines for the ultimate till it arrives at “neutral immateriality” which transforms into the *Creative Esse*. But why is Metaphysics so tough a nut to crack?

It may appear asking too much but there should have been a kind of *Conclusion* at the end of the articles, some kind of a *recap* that will help readers identify the important themes presented by each writer (or speaker in the conference). For a topic like *Metaphysics* which is undoubtedly not for everybody’s taste buds and tests fragile virtues, this enumerated set of themes may come as an *Addendum*. But we understand certainly the rigors required

to accomplish this *finale* in this book. A special group is formed whose members are equally knowledgeable of the topic formulates the themes or recapitulations (the latter term as preferred by Doolan), and approved by the article author respectively. Quite tedious we understand, but this *Addendum* could be more impacting as a simplifying methodology so necessary in this topic which is very basic and fundamental, yet, it is easily the most misunderstood [calling mentors specially] branch of philosophy.

Otherwise, we are left to having on our desk a *memorial* of talks which indeed the objectives of the conference have been happily achieved! Perhaps the text of Krapiek, O.P. could also assist the beginner.

Strange how the more basic things are, which ought to be understood well at the start, the more they are found to be profoundly difficult to be learned well. Something is wrong somewhere.

Norberto M. Castillo, O.P.

Cleveland, Christopher. *Thomism in John Owen*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. ISBN: 978-1-4094-5579-0. 173 pp.

This book counts valuable among the recent studies in Reformist thought by showing how Medieval philosophy influenced the thoughts of the seventeenth century Puritan theologian John Owen. In particular, this is a refined and published version of the dissertation of Christopher Cleveland which is geared to examine the role of Thomism in the construction and development of John Owen's theological program which sought to develop a Reformed (i.e., largely Biblical) perspective with a sturdy intellectual (i.e., metaphysical) basis from the Western tradition.

Cleveland demonstrates such Thomistic influence, while noting nonetheless that Owen, for a time, rejected the use of philosophy and natural reason and theology and openly criticized Thomism and Aristotelianism. The author showed Aquinas' influence in select works of Owen that may trace the development of his thought: as seen in the early works such as *Display of Arminianism* (1654), *Perseverance of the Saints* (1654) and *Vindiciae Evangelicae* (1655); up to those which represent his mature Christology such as *Discourse on the Holy Spirit* (1674) and *Christologia* (1679). Thomism is further infused to Owen through other influences like Diego Alvarez and the Dominicans who argued against the Molinists and the Jesuits on the *de auxiliis* controversy, as found in Owen's disputes against the Arminians and Socinians.

Cleveland's project concentrates on three major areas of Thomistic influence in the works of Owen. First is on the Thomistic doctrine of God as pure act of being, without any potentiality, which Owen used to argue for the simplicity of divine nature. Herein, Owen used the Thomistic understanding of God as the source of all motion and action, thereby saying that God ordains all events through His nature as pure act and His role as the Unmoved Mover. The author then proceeds to examine the significance of the second

Thomistic concept, which is divine simplicity in relation to Owen's doctrine of divine providence. Through which Cleveland is able to prove how Thomism have assisted Owen to depict God as perfect, unique, and distinct from all creation; who is in full possession of "divine power, sovereignty, and prerogatives" (p 68). The third Thomistic influence is found at the third and fourth chapters where the author examines Owen's appropriation of the notion of infused habits of grace in twofold parts: as found in Owen's concept of regeneration in the *Discourse of the Holy Spirit*, and on the notion of sanctification in the same work and in *Justification by Faith*. While maintaining a very Protestant and Reformed position in discussing Owen's notions of regeneration and sanctification, Cleveland's Thomistic appropriation is nevertheless credible for its sincerity and historical conscientiousness to begin at the farthest possible point which is the Aristotelian notion of habit.

In the fifth chapter, Cleveland proceeds to explore how Owen used Thomism in explaining the person of Jesus Christ in the work *Christologia*. Such resulted into a "Christological formulation of the hypostatic union that is heavily influenced by Thomas Aquinas but focused upon the worship of the Son of God" (p 122). Such articulation on the person of Christ is important to affirm the precedence of the divine to the human, and for a proper understanding of the Incarnation as mediatorial between God and humanity.

Due reputes may be given for the work's historical approach as proven by Cleveland's meticulous contextualization of Owen's works at the backdrop of his very own intellectual story – of Owen's bouts against scholasticism and his constant aim to supplant a substantial rational framework for a better understanding of Scriptures, and in effect the justification of Reformed Orthodoxy. Each chapter shows how the author reminds the readers of the general objective to philosophically substantiate Scriptural reading and exegesis. For an over-all assessment, Christopher Cleveland's exposition of such Thomistic influences have ironically showed the unassailable presence and influence of Scholasticism as the most systematic and rational component in theologies, even up to the time of Reformation.

Fleurdeliz Altez-Albela

Aguas, Jove Jim S. *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (Jon Paul II)* Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2014. ISBN 978-971-506-722 – 5. 219 pp.

The canonized saint, St. Pope John Paul II, left a remarkable history in the hearts of many people as an influential pontiff of the Catholic Church. His travels around the world allowed the people to feel the love of God through His person. He was known by many for his encyclicals but few know the other side of the esteemed saint. In the circle of Thomism with a personalistic orientation, St. Pope John Paul II, or more popularly known as Karol Wojtyla, is an important philosopher who combined Phenomenology and Thomism. Knowing the importance of the philosophical contributions of the saintly philosopher, Jove Jim Aguas writes this book on the thoughts of Karol Wojtyla.

The opening chapter of the book draws the reader on the history of Karol Wojtyła and his formation in Philosophy with a brief stint in the Angelicum, Rome. His intellectual influences were St. John of the Cross, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Max Scheler. The debate on whether Karol Wojtyła is either a Thomist or a Phenomenologist took many turns. However, the author justified the originality of the thought of St. John Pope Paull II as different from other phenomenologists. His Thomistic-Aristotelian training is already solid and incorporated Phenomenology as a method for the first person experience.

The second chapter dwells on the concept of person and subjectivity. The problem of the human person starts with the subjectivity embedded in that person. For Karol Wojtyła, the author saw that subjectivity has many-sided interests. Karol Wojtyła traced the many-sided interests on the subjectivity of man through the history of Western Philosophy which is bound on antinomies like idealism, realism, subjectivism, and objectivism. Answering this problem, Karol Wojtyła proposed a different angle by which the dignity of a person can never be alienated. He introduced the concept of personalism, a concept of a human person applied through the Trinity and Incarnation. Though this is a theological personalism, Karol Wojtyła realized that such concepts are applicable in the everyday living of man. Another important angle seen by Karol Wojtyła is the search for the essence of the human being through subjectivity. The only problem with this is that we reduce human being into boxed concept. For Karol Wojtyła, finding the irreducible in man should be underscored.

The third chapter focused on the person and human acts. For Wojtyła, the human act is a good avenue to know the essence of the person. In understanding the essence of human acts, experiencing and happening are crucial concepts. It is through the actions of man that we understand his/her nature. The concept of efficacy is very important for Karol Wojtyła since man is given the experience as an actor. This efficacy has a subjective and objective causation. For efficacy to be subjective, the role of subjectiveness is important. Subjectiveness is the experience of man as a subject without experiencing interiority like subjectivity. Another set of concepts crucial in understanding the thought of Karol Wojtyła are transcendence and self-determination. One must remember the centrality of action to the self or I. Self determination is kindled if the person can shift from “I can” to “I will.” In the process of self-determination, the self-possession and self-governance are very important. The objectiveness and objectification of the ego are important in the self consciousness of the person undergoing such change.

Continuing on to the next Chapter, the ideas of subjectivity and participation were explored. Starting with the problem of subjectivity, the author explored the “I-other” relationship. The main problem with this relationship is the non-transferability of the “I” to the “other.” It is unjust to say that a person can have the total experience of the other. Knowing this, the notion of man’s sociality, existence and action together with other persons becomes important. Though actions are personal, the fact that people are together with others implies the effects that the actions have to other people. One cannot simply act alone since there are people who will be affected by his/her actions. More than this, one’s existence has

been branded with sociality since it is a part of every human nature. To ensure the sociality of man coupled with intersubjectivity by being with others, the concept of participation is brought forward. Participation is not just mere being with other people. Participation is the revelation of the self to others in the social interplay without losing the uniqueness and individuality. The person maintains his/her independence by determining their own actions as well. This is very important in the concept of community. In a community, two relations can be garnered, the “I-thou” relation and the “we” relation. The “I-thou” relationship in a community is focused on “I” with many activities as a concrete manifestation of the self towards other. On the other hand, the “we” relationship concurs with the uniqueness of the self with others in forming a community.

The book also explores the idea of person, love, and human sexuality. The author claimed that the concept of love preoccupied Wojtyła and technically the claim of the author reflected the number of pages of the chapter stressing such preoccupation of Wojtyła. Love can always be related to human sexuality. However, the notion of love has been abused and connected to other ideas like commercialism and instrumentalism. On the other hand, Karol Wojtyła wanted the concept of love to be grounded on the nature of the human person. Through this, the notion of a personal love can be evoked. Love, for Karol Wojtyła, is for the human person alone. Rekindling the categorical imperative of Immanuel Kant, Karol Wojtyła formulates a version of his own for the notion of love. Karol Wojtyła reminded that actions are done for the sake of the person as an end, and forgetting not that the person has a distinct personal end as well. This is very important in the concept of marriage. Marriage calls the two persons to become a single flesh – one flesh wherein two persons subordinate each other for the sake of the relationship and well being. Unlike a relationship built on pleasure, the personalistic norm of love should be observed wherein one respects the value of a person that is greater than pleasure.

Chapter VII presented the ethical and moral philosophy of Karol Wojtyła. In understanding human acts, the lived experience of a person should never be overlooked. With this, the role of experience in ethical must support the very idea of ethics. To fully understand this, the role of will, efficacy, volition, reason, norms, and moral value will do an important task in the nature of a good act. Going to the concept of moral value, the moral value is always geared towards the end. Since it is geared towards the end, the moral value is always teleological in nature. Being good is the aim or goal of every moral act. The experience of efficacy sets the dynamic relation of a person towards his/her actions reminding the person that he/she owns their very actions.

Concluding the book is Chapter VIII where the author wraps up the concepts discussed and expounded by the philosopher Karol Wojtyła. Primarily, his philosophy of the human person is grounded on Thomistic ontology enriched by Phenomenological nature of man in the image and likeness of the Holy Trinity, which is different from the brand of phenomenology of Husserl and Scheler. Besides this, human action is identified through one’s actions not as separate from the self but as a manifestation of the self. Intersubjectivity, on the other hand, relies on the performance of human acts with other people in the

community. Integration is another important concept in Wojtyła wherein a post examination of a concept or phenomena should be connected again to the whole of reality.

Over all, the book is a very good supplement in studying the philosophy of Karol Wojtyła. The author, Jove Jim Aguas, proved himself of the expertise he has of the philosophy of Saint Pope John Paul II. The author's lifelong contemplation of JPII's philosophy resulted in a dense and solid book which is surprisingly easy to read and to understand. This book is a must especially for those who are beginners in the philosophy of Karol Wojtyła. The book doesn't fall short of the treasure that the saint had given to the world.

Beaujorne Sirad A. Ramirez

Meili, Josef; Ernspteter Heiniger, and Paul Stadler. *Reconciliation – Justice – Peace (Forum Mission Book 10)*. Kriens, Switzerland: Brunner Verlag, 2014. ISBN: 978-3-03727-059-2. 278.

This current volume is the last in the series of annual publications that lasted for 10 years (2005-2014). The project is an initiative of the *Association for the Promotion of Mission Studies*.

The volume takes the themes enumerated in its title, *reconciliation, justice and peace*. The aim is to gather contributions from as many countries as possible which share the same situations of conflicts and struggles. It carries fourteen titles, twelve of which are intended as original contributions while the other two are reprints (one of the two is a document from *Kairos Palestine*). The entire volume may not be easily readable for ordinary readers because not all articles are written in English. More than being a liability however, the use of multiple languages also makes it possible for as many scholars around the world to make use of this collection because of the opportunity to read articles in languages other than English.

Forum Mission 10 presents us important insights regarding the mission work on reconciliation, justice, and peace. There is a basic fact that conflicts and struggles still exist even in those civilizations which the world has often thought to have already overcome the crisis. Prof. Reggie Nel's two articles in this volume allow us to see this as the case of South Africa. He informs us of the complexity of the South Africa situation, where the existence of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* – which had been instrumental for the notable progress in the condition of South Africans – remains to be challenged by the evolving nature of the problem.

Other authors, Lori Ransom and Mark MacDonald (Canada) and Tim Noble (Czech Republic), argue that in some situations the traditional approaches for conflict resolution – like the institution of a *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, which normally employs the victim-oppressor narrative – may not necessarily work, or even at times could become counterproductive. Hence, a thorough study of the local situation, they would argue, is needed and the cultural and even at times ethnic expressions of all concerned sectors need to be taken into consideration.

More importantly perhaps, this volume provides us an important argument about the role of theology in mission work. It is useful to consider how a mission work that is immersed in the tradition of incarnation and Christian theology could positively contribute towards some forms of resolution.

While the publications of Forum Mission stops after this volume, another initiative has started in 2013 – *Mission in Dialogue* – and we could still therefore expect the continuing conversations about these very important issues that confront our present world that is beset with divisions, fragmentations, and conflicts.

Joel C. Sagut

Hurd, Elizabeth Shakman. *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-691-16609-4. 200pp.

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, a professor at Northwestern University, Department of Political Science, teaches and writes on religion and politics. She is the recipient of a Buffett “Big Ideas” award and directs the Buffett Faculty Research Group on Global Politics and Religion at Northwestern. Her book offers an excellent way of navigating the current discourse on religion and politics in the context of national and international policies and governance. Following the three-fold distinction of governed religion, expert and official religion, and lived or everyday religion, Hurd critically examines the meanings and assumptions of *religious rights* and *religious freedom*. By rejecting the view that religion is a stable category “to formulate foreign policy, pursue rights advocacy, and govern internationally” (p. 122), she proposes a new thinking “beyond religious freedom.”

In pursuing this goal, she argues in chapter 2 that religion cannot simply be divided into good and bad religion. This distinction dominates the foreign policies of International agencies such as the United Nations, United States, and European Unions. Bad religion is intolerant and dangerous both to the local and international community, hence they become the agenda for surveillance, while good religion is considered as a solution. For this reason, international agencies work with good religions to suppress and reform bad religions through foreign aids and development assistance projects. By taking the case of the Sahrawi refugee camps in Southwestern Algeria, the policy of the two faces of faith translates into privileging one religion over the other. International agencies have become a quasi-legal body of determining which group belongs to good or bad religion. Hurd “casts doubt on the assumption that academic experts, government officials, and diplomats (especially “religious” ones) know what religion is, where it is located, who speaks in its name, and how to incorporate it in foreign policy and international public policy decision matrices” (p. 35).

She claims in Chapter 3 that the international notion of religious freedom is vulnerable to politics. Analyzing international agencies such as the US Office on International Religious Freedom, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, The British and EU Advocacy on Religious Freedom through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

and European External Action Service, and other government agencies working and advocating international religious freedom, religion is assumed as a universal category from which instruments of freedom are determined and itemized. While they provide a consensus of a stable universal framework of religious freedom, they also indicate that religion is what is dictated by the experts, the governed religion, and that the articulation of freedom is that which is consistent within the practices of the dominant faith community.

Chapter 4 explores the politics of US foreign religious engagement. Through various programs, the US State Department engages religious leaders and faith communities in many parts of the world to save religion from religious and political tyranny. The nobility of such goal, however, precludes religious communities in the periphery. In order to pursue religious freedom, the US State Department delineates a religion worthy of support and protection. In doing so, it provides greater advantage and defines the basis of religious rights based on one faith community over the others, distinguishes religious leaders as either legitimate or illegitimate. Thus, at the bottom of the notion of international religious freedom, is the hegemony of a particular religion due largely to the recognition of or in collusion with the international agencies such as the US State Department.

Hurd also discusses the meaning of religious rights based on the relation and distinction of majority-minority religions. The struggles of the religious minorities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), in particular the protection of the *Copts* in Egypt, the *Ahmadis* in Pakistan, and the *Baha’I* in Iran, show that the majority defines religion and is always the arbiter of religious identity and practice (p. 103). Religious rights are confined to the beliefs and practices of the religious majority, which empowers their religious leaders and renders their faith community as the only basis of religious freedom and rights. The normative life sanctioned by the majority prescribes and proscribes ways and means of living at the individual, socio-cultural, and political levels. This becomes more dangerous when the majority-minority distinction attains legal status in some countries like in the Middle East because it automatically enshrines *particular* authorities of a specific religion as the ultimate arbiter of religious orthodoxy and orthopraxis.

By consistently questioning religion as stable category in global politics, Hurd calls for a new thinking “beyond religious freedom.” Politicizing Religion is the tendency to legitimize a particular religious community. It empowers specific religious leaders and standardizes an exclusive set of practices. In politics, religion is that which is construed by those in power for purposes of law and governance and social order.

Hurd’s discomfort of religion arises from her discourse on lived or everyday practice of religion. The lived religion is unorganized and is oftentimes beyond standard orthodoxy and orthopraxis. Believers can have multiple religious affiliations and conduct their lives based on various truth-claims which may not necessarily be in conformity with the standards of the faith community and the edict of the religious leaders. This fluidity of lived-religion implies the unstable characteristics of religion. To fix religion in law and governance as basis of social order is to effectively and immediately favor one religion over

others. This empowers religious leaders of the legitimate faith community as the final arbiter of truth and practice. As a result, the excluded is illegitimate and its leaders are classified as nuisance, its customs and traditions are considered as aberrations, and their communities perceived as negligible. It is for this reason that, for Hurd, it becomes necessary to rethink the discourse on religion and politics. The notions of religious freedom and religious rights should disaggregate religion from its stable and hegemonic tendencies to be able to give justice to the various articulations and expressions of lived and everyday religion.

Hurd's entire argument rests on the unpredicatability and volatility of lived and everyday experience of religion. The book is highly commendable in raising this issue to force the discourse on religious freedom and religious rights to be more inclusive. It aims to broaden the notion of religion. It is a very important reading material in locating the problem of religion and politics in the context of global politics, where international foreign policies implement development assistance in underdeveloped countries. The nature of lived and everyday religion, however, as consistently argued by Hurd, constantly resists all attempts of standardization and systematization due to its incoherency and incorrigibility. Thus, the claim to consider lived religion as an inescapable component of defining religious rights and religious freedom render the latter as forever slipping away from normativity. Allowing religious freedom and religious rights to be infected with the unpredictable and volatile nature of lived-religion is to keep them unstable making society more prone to power struggle, religious anarchy, and social disorder.

Pablito A. Baybado, Jr.

Ekong, Joseph. *Religion in Education (Aquinas Day Series, vol. 3)*. Lagos: Dominican Publications, 2015. ISBN: 978-490-540-4. 125 pp.

Religion in Education edited by Joseph T. Ekong, O.P covers eight chapters containing articles about the role of religion in education particularly in the context of the educational system of Nigeria. Published in collaboration with the Dominican Publications, Lagos, majority of these articles were written by Dominicans from the province of St. Joseph in Nigeria to mark the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas in 2009. The published forms however came only in 2015 as the third volume for *Aquinas' Day Series*.

How to address Nigeria's crisis in its educational system by identifying the role of religion in education is the specific question that the articles reflected upon. The entire educational system of Nigeria had been for decades confronted with serious problems stemming from the fact that religious educational institutions and other mission schools had been excluded from participating in the educational delivery. Schools had been taken over by a military-led government since 1971 believed to be an ill-conceived and ill-motivated political move causing the near collapse of Nigeria's entire educational system. To prevent further negative repercussions, the government suddenly reversed its policy of nationalizing education by allowing once again religious institutions to become collaborators in the educational industry and returned mission schools back to its original proprietors. Such

move, however, was not accepted well. Some continued to insist the exclusion of religion from the educational curriculum and the ban of religious institutions from participating in the educational delivery which were most often coming from secularist and anti-religious sentiments. They claim that religion belongs to the private sphere alone, and since education belongs to the public sphere, it should be the sole responsibility of the government. The authors in this volume however insist that religion has a positive role in improving the moral formation and education of citizens, and religion can even positively contribute to the transformation of the society.

In his article, “The Role of Religion in Education,” Isichei mentions that education limited to the pursuit of technical knowledge alone prevents the seeker from understanding other sources of knowledge including those which are metaphysical. “Religion in education gives authenticity to the human search for a “being” other than man/woman and guides the understanding that whatever is the material object of science is given in existence. Religion in education guiding human rationality in search of ultimate reality would aid sciences to recognize that one supreme human science whose object is not limited to being of a particular category but being as being, which is the science of metaphysics.”

Further, Isichei affirms the value of religious education since it also promotes the values of truth, justice, respect for all, and care for environment. It also provides guidance in making reasoned and informed judgments about religious and moral issues and at the same time enables students to cultivate positive attitudes towards other people and their faith respecting their rights to hold different religious beliefs from their own.

Mbukanma in his article, “Religion in Education,” develops the idea of education as necessary for the moral formation of the human person. He cited the classical Greek model of education which emphasizes holistic formation aiming towards not just refining one’s mental power to think but also towards being a moral and a virtuous person. This is in contrast to the modern idea of education which focuses on the cultivation of a technical know-how but overlooks the necessity on how to live a morally fine life. We have, therefore, sometimes “excellent engineers, a wizard in mathematics, but at the same time a thief.” It is in these kinds of circumstances that allow Mbukanma to affirm the role of religion in assisting the individual to cultivate a moral conscience and become a social agent in the society. He argues that integrating Christian religion in the educational curriculum may help individuals develop attitudes such as love for God, which can lead towards a genuine love for neighbor that ultimately serves as the foundation of the virtue of justice. Education, morality, and religion can therefore contribute towards the transformation of a society. This is what Adekoya also affirms especially in the context of Nigeria where incidences of poverty, social, economic, and political failure are increasing. He said all these are traceable to lack of proper religious and ethical values, the very values which education and religion promote. He specifically suggests Al-Farabi’s concept of education which is oriented towards not only the pursuit of theoretical virtue that culminates in intellectual knowledge but also towards acquiring practical moral virtues. Adekoya claims that the formation of such kind of individuals prepares them eventually towards becoming useful and good citizens

of the society. And this is exactly what Nigeria needs in order to progress towards social transformation.

While affirming the positive role of religion in education, Agwulono warns about the possible abuses that religion can instigate. Example of which are the abuse of religion for merely psychological compensation, the abuse of religion as a means to achieve political power, and the abuse of religion by using it to exploit the poor and deceive feeble-minded people. Instead of these abuses, religion, according to Agwulono, must inspire a positive environment which fosters “enabling factors for action in the society, demonstration of a personal responsibility, social action, political engagement, cultural transformative initiatives, and creative efforts in the construction of the human city which God commanded us to build.”

The volume contains other similar articles identifying the positive role of religion in education and how it provides a framework in developing a strong foundation geared towards the education of the human person who is not only equipped with technical knowledge but also in possession of the capacity to demonstrate virtue and a good sense of moral conscience.

Concepcion Liza V. Corotan

