rural or city-bound. (I think of my father's lines, "Our pastures, oh Lord, are the streets of the city: / what meaning have your words of sheep and of vine?"; Joseph P. Clancy, *The Significance of Flesh*.)

Mary Low's book stimulates such questions, and I have no doubt that studying the early Gaelic Christian tradition will help us understand our own culture. To this end, a book like Low's is a good guide to the past, since it does not try to create a facile "otherworld" of a pristine Christianity there. The above criticisms aside, this is an excellent book, full of good syntheses, perceptive explorations and original insights. It is the only serious consideration of the Celtic Christian attitude to nature, and it works closely and intelligently with the texts. It is a rare and valuable counterbalance to the woollier side of modern writings about Celtic Christianity.

THOMAS OWEN CLANCY

ARISTOTLE AND AUGUSTINE ON FREEDOM by T. D. J. Chappell *St Martin's Press*, **London, 1995, pp 213. No price given**

Tim Chappell's book is an examination of Aristotle's and Augustine's views of voluntary action, freedom and practical rationality. Chappell argues that in general we describe free action in describing voluntary action (in fact 'the philosophical "problem of freedom" is no more and no less than a problem in the theory of action', p. 121), that this is what Aristotle and Augustine are up to in their accounts of voluntariness, and that they both believe voluntary acts are not only uncompelled and informed, but also rational. There is much of interest in this book, but these are the most significant—and the most controversial—claims.

Chappell's method is fairly rigorously analytical and the book is easy to read, a few cumbersome passages apart. It will appeal to those who enjoy a diet that blends classical texts and more modern metaphysics and philosophy of language (quotations on the title page are from Hume and Strawson). Some, however, may regret given its subject that the scope of the book does not include current revivalist accounts of ancient and mediæval theories of practical reason and freedom (e.g. Sherman, Nussbaum, Reeve, Stump, Finnis, Williams, MacIntyre ...).

Part 1 discusses Aristotle's explanation of voluntariness as lack of compulsion and ignorance and argues lack of irrationality must be considered a third condition. Chappell provides detailed and helpful discussion of self-initiated behaviour, practical knowledge, and rationality and deals with one serious difficulty for his interpretation: Aristotle's account of *akrasia*, apparently voluntary yet irrational action. The textual work on *akrasia* here is an original and important contribution and well worth close attention. Worthwhile connections are made with the contemporary debate (Hare, Davidson), though these could be a little more up to date (e.g. Mele, Heil, Pears..).

Augustine's very different concerns with voluntariness are

addressed in Part 2. Chappell demonstrates similarities with Aristotle's account and argues that for Augustine too an account of voluntariness is an account of freedom. After an excellent discussion of *voluntas*, Chappell constructs the Augustinian theory of practical reason and the good life and concludes by explaining his treatment of evil conduct which seems to raise the same difficulties here as *akrasia* raised for Aristotle.

I will concentrate on the treatment of freedom, rationality and wickedness. Chappell states from the outset that his aim is to describe freedom not explain it, and he means to do so with an account of voluntariness. It is not always clear (e.g. p. 121) whether the freedom he describes is freedom of (human) action or (metaphysical) freedom—a difficult concept certainly for one who like Aristotle believes everything that exists is caused, in one sense or another of cause, and that what exists exists for the best. To claim (metaphysical) freedom = voluntariness seems wrong: plants lack freedom, yet this does not mean their behaviour is compelled, ignorant or lacking in rationality; it simply means it is not in their *nature* to act on reasons they accept. Also, Aristotle does discuss uncaused events that are not voluntary acts (e.g. *Metaphysics* E 2–3 on the fortuitous). Indeed, at least one scholar (Sarah Broadie *Ethics with Aristotle* [OUP, 1991, 124–78] believes voluntary acts may be reconcilable with psychological determinism and that the need to prove they entail freedom of *any* sort is thus still open (Broadie, p. 130ff.).

Perhaps what Chappell means is that voluntariness is the only freedom of *importance* to us. However, Aristotle would seem to disagree. At *Nicomachean Ethics* 3, 5 he distinguishes knowledge of one's voluntary acts and self-knowledge. This in turn allows him to distinguish responsibility for action (voluntariness) and responsibility for the characters from which our acts flow: 'we are masters of our actions from the beginning right through to the end, if we know the particular facts, but though we control the beginning of our states the gradual progress is not obvious' (1114b31–32). Responsibility for character implies a form of freedom which is of great personal and practical importance but is distinct from voluntariness: freedom to scrutinise the ends we pursue with regard to what they might make us, or freedom of self-determination.

A further reason for thinking voluntariness does not fully explain the importance of freedom to us is this. Involuntariness implies impairment of freedom, but the significance of this impairment may not be the loss of voluntariness (capacity to originate actions) but the diminishment of other human goods for which freedom is (instrumentally or constitutively) necessary. Some recent work (Sen, Finnis, MacIntyre, Raz, Nussbaum...) on the value of freedom (autonomy, self-determination, self-control, temperance...) suggests a more important role for it in the good life than merely the ability to originate actions for ourselves. Freedom matters not only for

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voluntariness but for the sake of the other important human goods the pursuit or achievement of which it enables (without freedom no friendship, conscientious action, justice, religion, integrity...). Lack of voluntariness diminishes responsibility and so does radically affect the responses of others to my acts and my attitudes to myself, but freedom matters to me also, perhaps primarily, because of aspects of my good other than itself.

In Chapter 1 Chappell sets up the claim that since true beliefs (lack of ignorance) and unhindered pro-attitudes (lack of compulsion) may fail to be relevant to the act we actually perform, an extra condition is needed: that we act not just in the *presence* of belief and desire but *because of* the combination of belief and desire, i.e. that we act rationally (lack of irrationality). Behaviour, even if uncompelled and free from ignorance, is not voluntary if it cannot be explained by the agent as the outcome of the combination of some of his beliefs and desires, thus practical rationality is a third, unstated, condition of voluntary action for Aristotle (and Augustine). Chapter 2 provides a fascinating discussion of the two uncontroversial conditions (including a good treatment of moral knowledge and a useful distinction between one's specific function and one's 'meta-function'—to ascend the hierarchy of nature). In Chapter 3 Chappell turns to the topic of rationality.

It is certainly true that for Aristotle voluntariness requires some elements of practical reason, at least perception of a good and some step-by-step reasoning. What seems strange is to claim rationality as an *additional* condition of voluntariness. The attempt to introduce Davidsonian analysis of rational action seems to fall in the wrong place. Pro-attitudes and beliefs find their natural place in major and minor premises of practical syllogisms on the Aristotelian account and if they exist, then, in the absence of prevention, actions will surely follow (cf. *De Anima* 701a16–17). There is no *need* to recognise acting because of combinations of desires and beliefs as a third condition of acting for Aristotle: the presence of appropriate desires (self-initiation of acts) and appropriate beliefs about their realisation (relevant knowledge) is sufficient for voluntary action (this seems to me to be the point of the claim that the conclusion of a practical syllogism is an action) and for the explanation of voluntary action. Rationality *explains* how lack of compulsion plus relevant knowledge issues in action, it does not *supplement* this account.

Furthermore, the proposition that voluntariness implies rationality does not sit easily with the clear statement that young children and some animals, though lacking reason, may act voluntarily (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1111b8–9), or the claims that spontaneous acts and (though Chappell takes issue with this) irrational acts may be voluntary. Naturally, elements of practical reason enter into all voluntary acts, but practical reason covers a vast range of factors including education, dialectic, perception, natural and cultivated virtue, the varieties of appetite, the activities of deliberation, choice, syllogism.

So the claim that where there is voluntariness there is rationality risks being uninformative unless practical rationality is sufficiently explained and rational factors relevant to the voluntary act in question correctly identified.

Chappell is well aware of the difficulty posed for his account by voluntary acts of those who lack rational judgement, and he works hard to explain the rational factors at issue. He distinguishes here 'merely voluntary' acts from 'prohairetic' acts: the former are acts performed *because of* the combination of desire and belief in the agent, the latter are acts in which these reasons are *consciously predeliberated* by the agent (p. 63). As Chappell points out, this distinction is one available to Aristotle—it would allow him, for example, to differentiate good acts undertaken in necessity from those undertaken after pondering one's reasons. The distinction also establishes 'the logical dependence of the category of the merely voluntary on the category of action on *prohairesis*' (p. 66).

This response is a little disappointing. The promise to demonstrate the need for an (additional) rationality condition of voluntariness in Aristotle ends up amounting to no more than the uncontroversial claims that acts chosen by mature adults (prohairetic acts) include conscious pre-deliberation of reasons and that voluntary acts are acts chosen because of reasons whether or not these reasons are consciously pre-deliberated. Something of rationality does exist in merely voluntary action but that something is now simply explanation by desire-belief combinations of which we are unconscious. What is at stake between acting because of, though not in consciousness of, such combinations and acting in their presence? Merely that in the latter case I do what I have reason to do but not for that reason whereas in the former case I acknowledge my reasons, i.e. the self-initiation and relevant knowledge conditions with which Aristotle himself explains voluntariness.

Chappell more persuasively sets out the inconsistencies in Augustine's account(s) of responsibility and voluntariness and supports a reading that holds voluntary acts require *voluntas* (the opposite of compulsion) and the aspiration to the human good (which requires wisdom and so lack of ignorance). Chappell believes action on *voluntas* is not non-rational willing but action for good reasons. Although Augustine has no complete account of practical reason, voluntary action is action intelligible in the light of some good, ultimately of some final good. Having very usefully collected together Augustine's various thoughts on the nature of this final good (pp. 162–72), Chappell briefly, but impressively, unites these formulae in the ideal of matching in one's choices the God-created order of nature.

In many ways the best part of the book is the final chapter which considers Augustine on evil conduct. The thesis is that 'bad will' does not *explain* evil choice for Augustine but expresses his belief that rational explanation of evil conduct is impossible (there is no voluntary evil action); thus the account of bad will is necessarily incomplete.

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Wickedness is itself the cause of wickedness, it does not 'come from' any other source; since it is aimed at no human good a full explanation of it, a rational account, is not possible. It is simply inexplicable.

Now, this may make a certain sense of Augustine but only at a certain cost. For it is surely not the case that evil acts are aimed at no good but rather at one or more goods in inappropriate ways. Someone who kills, tortures, cheats, deceives etc. does not aim at nothing but aims at some good (money, play, reputation, survival, aesthetic satisfaction...) and does so in morally impermissible and unreasonable ways. Unless they are pathological, wicked acts are not unintelligible, not pieces of sub-rational behaviour—this is why we consider wicked agents morally responsible. Chappell thinks either we hold wicked acts are unintelligible or embrace the Manichaean doctrine of positive evils, but this is not so. We can accept something like the position of Aquinas: though from the point of view of ultimate happiness, Perfect Beatitude, sins may be non-acts, they are still chosen for the sake of some (impoverished, imperfect conception of) human good; they are still expressions of rationality for which agents may be held morally responsible, even if they are (all things considered) unreasonable.

I have not discussed any number of topics about which Chappell's book is useful and clear-sighted; nor have I explored distinctions with which he might attempt to answer queries. This book is clearly worth reading for anyone interested in theories of practical reason or in understanding Aristotle and Augustine. In bringing Aristotle's and Augustine's ethics closer together and doing so within the confines of analytic philosophy Chappell has achieved a great deal.

HAYDEN RAMSAY

SPITTING AT DRAGONS: TOWARDS A FEMINIST THEOLOGY OF SAINTHOOD by Elizabeth Stuart, *Cassell*, London, 1996.

Spitting at Dragons is that most impressive mix, a popular work distilled by a scholarly understanding, which remains loyal to a demanding and dogmatic denominational tradition (that of Christian feminism), and yet breaks new ground valuable for other traditions also. Its question is an important one: how is an ordinary, rational, intelligent Christian to view the community of saints? In particular, how is an ordinary, rational, intelligent Christian *woman* to view the community of saints?

The first chapter, making use of writers such as Mary Daly, Sara Maitland and Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, sums up the case for the prosecution. Today's enlightened women should have nothing to do with saints. Lives of women saints in all ages stress submissiveness, sexual purity (or endless penance for the lack of it), a sense of unworthiness and an eagerness for suffering, sometimes self-inflicted. They can often be little short of pornographic. These claims, while they certainly beg some questions, are convincingly illustrated from patristic, medieval and modern hagiography. Furthermore, it is claimed, the