

we are led to ask not so much *what* Anscombe thought as *how* Anscombe thought and how we might get better at thinking ourselves.

DAVID ALBERT JONES

AQUINAS AND THE MARKET: TOWARD A HUMANE ECONOMY by Mary L. Hirschfeld, *Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, 2018, pp. xviii + 268, £36.95, hbk*

According to the historian of economics, Anthony Michael Charles Waterman, since the early nineteenth century economics has replaced theology in shaping political decisions about the public sphere, with significant cultural repercussions on Western society. In this context, theologians cannot ignore economic thought or limit themselves to offering generic or naïve considerations on justice and poverty, often abstracting them from the actual conditions of their practice. The value of *Aquinas and the Market* depends greatly on the author's ability to consider contemporary mainstream economics within a Thomistic framework, showing, at one and the same time, both the legitimacy and the limits of economic rationality from a theological viewpoint. In order to walk *toward a humane economy* through a dialogue between these two fields of knowledge, Mary Lee Hirschfeld – Associate Professor of Economics & Theology at Villanova University – is endowed with the rare combination of such qualifications as a Ph.D. in Economics (Harvard University, 1989) and a Ph.D. in Theology (University of Notre Dame, 2013). Because of the high specialization and the unavoidable fragmentation of the contemporary academic disciplines, it is particularly instructive to listen carefully to someone who, such as Hirschfeld, is an expert in two distinct fields. This condition is almost indispensable in the academic context of theological economics, whose purpose is not only to help believers to reconcile their actual economic activity with their faith's demands, but also to offer a 'comprehensive framework' able 'to remember that wealth is meant to serve us and not to be our master' (p. 3).

In this sense, effective theological thinking can help us to recognize the instrumental character of economic objects (material goods, services and money), instead of considering them as ends of human actions in order to achieve happiness. Correctly, in fact, Hirschfeld considers the pursuit of happiness – in its objective and not only in its subjective meaning – as the common ground on which theology and economics can meet each other, without neglecting their radical differences concerning the role of human infinite desire and the sense of happiness. From this point of view, the role of Aquinas's thought concerning the 'last end' and the virtues (in particular justice and prudence) appears clearly as the theological framework

for interpreting economic elements (such as the rational choice model, efficiency, utility, material goods, money, private property...) in order to overcome the hiatus between economics and ethics and, thus, to move toward a humane economy. Far from offering a mere historical reconstruction of Aquinas's contribution to the development of economic thought, Hirschfeld tries to safeguard the fruitful acquisitions of contemporary economists from the repercussion of positivistic and materialistic assumptions, which are at work (often surreptitiously) in the economic thinking process.

Paraphrasing John Milbank, one could say that 'only theology saves economics', at least from the distortions caused by epistemological self-referentiality. Among these, for example, I would like to mention only two cases: the allegedly neutral character of the rational choice model, employed by economists to analyse human behaviour, and the reification of profits. Because of its logical structure, the rational choice model seems able to give a neutral description of economic behaviour, especially regarding ethical evaluations. Indeed, Hirschfeld thinks that this 'model ends up being nonneutral'. The reason is that the rational choice model is 'conceptualized in terms of one type of good – material good – and that conceptualization is then applied to all goods' (p. 66). Developing an argument about the uniqueness of human reason (distinct in higher and lower form), the author claims that – since 'we are able to discern qualitatively distinct finite goods in light of the universal good and make judgments regarding which goods we will pursue' – Aquinas would have questioned the existence of 'a metric by which we can reduce these various goods to a single measure of value such that reason is just an exercise in determining what delivers the highest value' (p. 75). This simple consideration, among many others, opens to the possibility of opposing the model of practical reason, conceived by Aquinas through the virtue of prudence, to the rational choice model. With respect to the problem of the reification of profits, then, the Thomistic framework allows Hirschfeld to underline how 'instead of thinking primarily in terms of the real goods and services that are produced [...] we begin to think in terms of the monetary measures of economic activities as having an independent reality' (p. 155). The Thomistic difference between natural and artificial wealth, within a theological framework shaped by the metaphysics of *analogia entis* and oriented to the 'last end', can help economists to think about material wealth as an instrument for a flourishing life. This holds for as long as they renounce considering the human desire for material goods as unlimited and insatiable, but rather conceive it as ordered to be 'measured by appropriate ends' (p. 31).

Ultimately Hirschfeld claims that the Thomistic thought, by virtue of its capacity to consider the human condition beyond the modern contraposition between 'what humans are' and 'what humans should be', can improve modern economic analysis in order to enhance its pragmatic value. Moving from mainstream economics to Thomistic economics means

affirming that some tools elaborated by economists (such as models and statistical techniques) exist to serve human happiness in at least two ways. First, this teleological setting makes it possible to interpret economic questions not only according to mere economic indicators, such as the GDP, but rather ‘in light of broader measures of human well-being’. Secondly, a Thomistic framework requires that economic analysis take into account that it concerns human beings, and that it ‘plays a role in shaping cultural conversations that can either promote or hinder our ability to translate economic wealth into authentic happiness’ (p. 209). Even if this book does not add much to our knowledge of Aquinas’s economic thought, it is highly recommended because Hirschfeld shows how the Thomistic framework is fully capable of interacting, even today, with modern economics in a critically constructive fashion.

MARCO SALVIOLI OP

BONAVENTURE, THE BODY, AND THE AESTHETICS OF SALVATION by Rachel Davies, *Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2020*, pp. xii + 187, £75.00, hbk

EARLY FRANCISCAN THEOLOGY: BETWEEN AUTHORITY AND INNOVATION by Lydia Schumacher, *Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2019*, pp. xi + 311, £75.00, hbk

Cambridge University Press has published two strongly contrasting books on Franciscan thought. Schumacher goes systematically about the exercise she sets herself. She establishes the sources that early Franciscans treated as ‘authority’ as a context in which to ask the question, “What was new by way of an approach to the especially topical doctrinal questions of the age?”

Establishing themselves when they did, the mendicant orders had a difficulty about where to set the boundary between the early Christian writers who eventually came to be considered ‘patristic’ authorities and those who were near or recent contemporaries and whose ‘authoritativeness’ might be questionable. Twelfth-century compilers of florilegia included Anselm of Bec and Canterbury, Bernard of Clairvaux, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor. But now there were universities and new styles of scholarship and competitive lecturing and much room for dispute about the trust to be placed in conflicting academic opinions.

So Schumacher takes her readers carefully through the influence of Augustine among the early Franciscans and the impact on their thinking of the translations of new works of Aristotle into Latin. There were disagreements as to whether those should be added to the syllabus at all, and if so, in Arts or Theology. Anselm’s ontological argument was still