

Our Lady, something which unites Orthodox and Catholic, but also shows Christianity's ability to stretch to contain a bewildering variety of devotional structures and practices.

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**DIVINE CAUSALITY AND HUMAN FREE CHOICE: DOMINGO BÁÑEZ, PHYSICAL PREMOTION, AND THE CONTROVERSY *DE AUXILIIS* REVISITED** by Robert Joseph Matava, *E.J. Brill*, Leiden, 2016, pp. xi + 365, £133.74, hbk

In 1607 Pope Paul V brought the *Congregatio de Auxiliis* to a close. It had been established by Pope Clement VIII in 1597 to assess the orthodoxy of Luis de Molina's *Concordia*. Molina's ideas were innovative and had found favour principally among members of the Society of Jesus. Central to those ideas was the claim that efficacious grace, considered in itself, was ontologically the same as sufficient grace and that therefore the efficacy of actual grace depended upon the free consent of its recipient. Since human free choice determined the efficacy of actual grace, efficacious grace was straightforwardly compatible with human free choice and human beings were free because they were able to do otherwise, 'granting all the prerequisites for action' (*Concordia* I, disp. II, §3).

Paul V's decision surprised many; Molina had come close to censure no less than six times since the *Concordia*'s publication (p. 34), at least two of which occasions had occurred during the *Congregatio de Auxiliis* itself. Moreover Dominicans, with all the prestige of the Thomism at their command, had tended to take a different view and promote it vigorously. That view, known as physical premotion, was principally articulated by Domingo Báñez, a Spanish Dominican and professor of theology at the University of Salamanca. Báñez agreed that human beings were free because they were able to do otherwise – because they had the *potential* to do otherwise – but he denied that having such potential required that *all* the prerequisites for action be granted. Since the rational will's object was the universal good (*ST* 1a2ae q. 2 art. 8) and any created good was only a limited good, the will was therefore in potency to any such good. As such it needed to be moved to act by something already in act, just as anything in potency did. That mover was God who, uniquely as first cause, could move the will through physical premotion. Efficacious and sufficient grace had to be intrinsically different in order to move the will in different ways, and freedom just required the potential to do otherwise, independently of the prerequisites for action.

This is the debate into which Robert Matava enters with his book *Divine Causality and Human Free Choice*. It provides a historical, critical, and synchronic study of the *de Auxiliis* controversy's 'select primary sources' (p. 8) which is useful because we are still waiting for the judgment of the

Holy See in these matters and because Matava's efforts are focused more towards Báñez, 'the presently less-studied side' (*ibid.*) of the controversy. However, Matava's intention is not to rehabilitate physical premotion but rather to make a positive contribution of his own. This contribution – that God creates our free acts – is presented in chapter six and is defended in chapter seven. The rest of the book prepares the way for this claim. Hence Matava outlines and rejects the theories of Molina and Báñez in chapters two to four. In chapter five he does the same for Lonergan's view, whilst in chapter one he outlines the background to and history of the *de Auxiliis* controversy.

The overall effect is impressive. The book combines careful historical scholarship with acute speculative insight. It is clearly written and will benefit anyone with an interest in the subject matter. It is a significant and worthwhile contribution to the *de Auxiliis* controversy. Yet for all the book's strengths one can note areas of concern.

First, as long as one thinks of physical premotion as a kind of motion there is reason to doubt Matava's characterisation of it as a 'created reality' (p. 73). In the *Prima pars* Aquinas insists creation is proper to beings, that is to subsisting realities or substances. Other realities such as predicamental accidents and forms are merely 'of a being' and therefore not created but concreta (*concreata*) (*ST* 1a q.45 art. 4). In the *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Aquinas further distinguishes motions – imperfect acts – from accidents and substances (*In meta.* lb. 4, lc. 1, n. 13–15). Hence if accidents are not created then neither are motions and nor is physical premotion. Nor can we infer from this that motions are uncreated: 'uncreated' and 'not created' have different extensions: only God is uncreated, only substances are created, and anything else is not created, just reduced from potency to act.

Second, suppose Peter does A at  $t_1$  and B at  $t_2$ . What guarantees Peter's identity between  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ ? On Báñez's account Peter is a created substance conserved by God between  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  and every other moment Peter exists. It is the created unit – the substance which Peter is – that guarantees Peter's identity whilst its accidental potency is being reduced to act by other causes. That solution is not available to Matava, however. On Matava's account the created unit is the substance together with the act (p. 302). Hence we have one created unit at  $t_1$  and a different created unit at  $t_2$  and whichever way Matava tries to explain Peter's identity between  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ , he will not be able to avail of God's creative act to do so.

Third, given Matava thinks 'an act of free choice cannot be determined by an exogenous antecedent' (p. 212) one wonders whether Matava's view is ultimately too libertarian for it to be legitimately attributed to Aquinas (p. 243). Aquinas thought God could move the will according to its mode (*ST* 1a2ae q. 113 art. 3) and interiorly (*ST* 1a q. 105 art. 4). Similarly Báñez thought God could move the will 'according to the mode of its nature' (*Tractatus* II c.1 §6). Since choice is an elicited act of the will we would expect both Aquinas and Báñez to be comfortable with the idea

God can move the will to choose for itself. That Matava is not suggests that whatever the merits of this fine book the view Matava puts forward is not that of Aquinas.

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**THEOLOGICAL RADICALISM AND TRADITION: 'THE LIMITS OF RADICALISM' WITH APPENDICES** by Howard E. Root, edited by Christopher R. Brewer, *Routledge*, London and New York, 2018, pp. xii + 165, £105.00, hbk

In 1972, the Oxford Bampton lectures were delivered by Howard E Root, then Professor of Theology at Southampton University. Under the terms of the Bampton bequest, lecturers are required to publish their material, but Root, who died in 2007, omitted to do so. The present volume finally makes the lectures available, and reading them at this historical distance inevitably inspires a certain frustration over what might have been, had they been in the public domain earlier. More positively, there may be something happily providential about their appearing now.

The lectures were given the intriguingly provocative title, the 'limits of radicalism', a notion which, for Root's original audience, will doubtless have drawn particular piquancy from the lecturer's own radical credentials developed during the previous decade. It has proved an enduring temptation to read these credentials in a somewhat superficially unilateral sense, in terms simply of an obdurate deafness to tradition, and it is a major and praiseworthy concern of his editor to set the record straight. This is clearly an act of justice to Root, which also enables a distinctive and valuable voice to be heard afresh in contemporary dialogue on the nature of theology.

Root was one of the instigators of, and a major contributor to, the symposium of Anglican theologians whose proceedings were published in 1963 as *Soundings*, under the editorship of Alec Vidler, then Dean of King's College, Cambridge, and identified, surely plausibly, in the introduction to the present work as 'probably the most influential volume of essays in British post-war Christianity'. That this influence, however, may on occasions have been in some degree of tension with the essayists's own academic and apologetic intentions is suggested forcefully by Root's preoccupations in the Oxford lecture series, which, as Christopher Brewer makes clear in his wide-ranging and helpful introductory essay, represent not a volte-face from, but an organic development of, his earlier work.

Brewer shows how, for instance, in his contribution to *Soundings*, Root envisages not a dismantling but a reinvigoration of natural theology, and thus not a repudiation, but an admittedly significant reconfiguration of the conventional systematic theological map. The impetus thus to 'begin all over again' lies not in a desire to capitulate to some putative set of