

liturgy of the sacraments and indulgences; the analysis and interpretation of altarpieces and paintings of chapels and halls; and the revisions of liturgical books and the veneration of saints in the urban space of Rome. Without a doubt, this synopsis of the most diverse perspectives is one of the strengths of the book; unfortunately, a clear argumentation is not always obvious. *Multum, non multa*, one might sometimes beseech the author.

This already has something to do with the title and the leading question about the preconditions of Baronio's historiography. In several chapters, the reference to Baronio seems rather superficial and artificial, although at the same time Malesevic establishes quite conclusive connections between (controversial) theology, liturgy, ceremonial, and art. The question arises whether the author would not have been better advised to place these connections not only quantitatively but also conceptually at the center of his study: asking first about the dependence of liturgy and ceremonial on controversial theological issues and presenting the corresponding effects on Baronio's historiography later might have made the argumentation easier to comprehend. At the very least, however, summaries of the individual chapters would have been advisable in order to make it easier to grasp the respective yield for the leading question.

Furthermore, there is a surprising carelessness with regard to language throughout the book: not only does the text teem with errors in spelling and grammar (in all languages used and cited), but there are also some hasty or overstretched conclusions, and above all a not negligible conceptual vagueness: Malesevic uses the terms *liturgy* and *ceremonial* almost synonymously, thus ignoring the crucial difference: liturgy refers to worship as an action in which people communicate with God, while the broader term *ceremonial* also includes actions without metaphysical reference.

All these points of criticism tarnish the impression of a book whose courageous formulation of the topic and multi-perspective approach certainly deserve all respect. The author has clearly invested an enormous amount of work in collecting his source base and has drawn an undoubtedly accurate picture of the preconditions for a Roman church history in the second half of the sixteenth century. It seems likely, however, that he wanted more with his project than could be packed into a single book.

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Nicholas of Cusa and the Aristotelean Tradition: A Philosophical and Theological Survey. Emmanuele Vimercati and Valentina Zaffino, eds.

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At least until the contributions made by Meredith Ziebart, especially in 2008, the influence of Neoplatonism on Cusanus's philosophy has been the main focus among scholars of his work, and the influence of Neoplatonism, as in the cases of Proclus,

Pseudo-Dionysius, and Augustine, continued to be the main subject of study, while the matter of the relation of Cusanus's thought to Aristotelian philosophy has revealed fewer attempts at investigation. The fact that Cusanus has been characterized as a Neoplatonic thinker and that Aristotle has not been considered to play an important role in his philosophy is partly responsible for the lack of attention received. The subject of Nicholas's own reflections and criticisms of Aristotelian philosophy had been largely overlooked or treated as a simple rejection.

The new contributions encourage us to pay attention to the numerous references to Aristotle in Cusanus's work, especially in *De docta ignorantia*, *De beryllo*, *De non aliud*, *De venatione sapientiae*, and in the sermons, showing that Aristotle is not only referenced to criticize him, and that the criticisms that fall on him often also fall on Plato. Although the later production period of Nicholas of Cusa is associated with a growing interest in Platonism, it has been shown that Cusanus texts from *De beryllo* onwards are also accompanied by an intense interest in Aristotle, especially thanks to the translation of the *Metaphysica* carried out by Besarion, which the cardinal receives in 1453. However, while Cusanus's reading of Aristotle's work is empirically evident from the many marginal notes in Aristotle's writings, he does not always present the Stagirite doctrines in a systematic way, but must be painstakingly searched through isolated references and, as Ziebart has noted, molded according to his own philosophy.

Nicholas of Cusa and the Aristotelian Tradition is an attempt to continue this line of research through a work dedicated for the first time to showing the relevance of the influence of Aristotle and Aristotelianism in the work of Cusanus. Most of the articles included in this volume have been the result of two workshops held at the Kloster Neustift (Abbazia di Novacella, 30 November and 1 December 2017) and at the Pontifical Lateranense University (Rome, 25 June 2018), organized by Emmanuele Vimercati and Valentina Zaffino. Other contributions were added, dealing with different relevant aspects, with the intention of providing a complete treatment of the relevance of Aristotelianism in Cusanus's work.

The reader should not, however, expect a unitary work, but rather a series of independent articles (in English and German) with a heterogeneous method and mode of quotation. However, the volume retains a certain systematicity. Based on this, it is structured according, to a certain extent, to the different Aristotelian disciplines. An introduction that deals with the tradition of Aristotelian work in antiquity and the Middle Ages is followed by various articles dedicated to logic (and its relationship with theology), natural philosophy, psychology, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, and politics. Each article attempts to present the manner in which Cusanus received these disciplines.

In chapter 1, Philipp Roelli gives an overview of the transmission of Aristotle's works, showing the editions that Nicholas may have known or that were available to him. Chapters 2 and 3 deal with Aristotelian logic and its theological implications; in chapter 2 Luca Gili focuses on the principle of non-contradiction and logic of the

intellect, while in chapter 3 Alexander Spieth focuses on the issue of mystical theology. In chapter 4, Arne Moritz addresses Aristotle's natural philosophy on Cusanus's notion of infinity and the coincidence of opposites. Chapters 5 and 6 deal with Aristotelian psychology and epistemology: Matthias Perkams presents the theory of the soul and knowledge in the Aristotelian tradition, while Christian Kny thematizes the role of ideas in Cusanus's thought. Chapters 7 and 8 deal with the reception of Aristotle's metaphysics: Andrea Fiamma discusses the theory of substance, while Davide Monaco focuses on the notions of act and potency in *De posset* and *De apice theoriae*. In chapter 9 Isabelle Mandrella offers an approach into Aristotelian ethics, while in chapter 10 Gerhard Krieger explores Aristotelian politics. Finally, in chapter 11, Valentina Zaffino explores the reception of Aristotle in Cusanus's sermons.

As a whole, the volume assumes a task which is difficult to deal with exhaustively, but it invites a change of perspective in Cusanus's studies, opening a debate that will undoubtedly be the appropriate context for future contributions, especially among new researchers of Nicholas of Cusa's thought.

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Revelation and the Apocalypse in Late Medieval Literature: The Writings of Julian of Norwich and William Langland. Justin M. Byron-Davies.

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In this intriguing study, Justin M. Byron-Davies demonstrates that late medieval vernacular spiritual writing owed considerable, and still underacknowledged, debts to the defining work of Christian apocalypticism, the biblical Book of Revelation attributed to Saint John of Patmos. Working in an exegetical vein, Byron-Davies explores the influence of John's Apocalypse upon the poetics and theology of two canonical Middle English texts, Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Love* and William Langland's *Piers Plowman*. A major strength of *Revelation and the Apocalypse* lies in its attention to the complex ends of apocalyptic thinking within Middle English religious writing. As Byron-Davies shows, Apocalypse foretold not only a final judgment for believers and nonbelievers alike, but also a new beginning, or *repristination*, instantiated in the New Jerusalem. This restoration completed the soteriological narrative of Christianity, from the Fall through the Redemption and beyond, and thus carried profound implications for how writers understood the nature of sin and the prospect of salvation.

Bracketed by an introduction and an epilogue, the book consists of four chapters divided between the two authors. In the introduction, Byron-Davies surveys medieval