

book, I was reminded of the Methodist dictum that for creative Christian theology there is needed not only the testimonies of Scripture, tradition and reason but also Christian experience. Pattison's Christian experience has been so subjectively disappointing and objectively impoverished that he is not able to achieve his ambition of promoting a dialogue between psychotherapy and Christian theology. This comes out particularly in his interpretation of forgiveness: 'if God has the power to forgive and reconcile, shall this also be seen as a kind of distortion and defence that sets God apart or alienates God from creation? In which case, does our understanding of God need fundamental reconstruction to acknowledge that God's saving work is ultimately a relinquishing of the power to forgive?' (p.201). This relates to his early experiences: 'my own early experiences of Christian ideas and practices did little to dissipate my own sense of shame and defilement and much to reinforce it' (p.230). A God who does not forgive, or who cannot forgive, would simply not be the Father of Jesus whom we know from the New Testament. And if somebody, belonging to a Christian community, finds that the good news of forgiveness is really bad news, then there is something very wrong with them or with the community.

My own intention in writing thus is not to insult Stephen Pattison. I should be delighted if this review provoked him, or someone else, to write another book, better informed on, and more sympathetic to, the Christian tradition.

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***SPES SCOTORUM: HOPE OF SCOTS: SAINT COLUMBA, IONA AND SCOTLAND*, edited by Dauvit Broun and Thomas Owen Clancy, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1999. Pp. xv + 314, £15.95 pbk.**

This fine collection of ten essays forms part of the Scottish Catholic Historical Association's marking of the 1400th anniversary of St Columba. Six have earlier published versions in *The Innes Review* and *Journal of Church Architecture*.

Part 1 explores historical developments surrounding Columba's *paruchia*. Thomas Owen Clancy traces the growth in Scotland of Columba's cult, reviewing the rare posthumous miracles. He suggests Adomnán himself helped to promote interest, partly in an attempt to underpin his own authority. We see the heavenly Columba variously called to intercede, and the use of his relics, including poems and hymns, which celebrate, invoke, and impersonate the saint, the latter in a distinctively Gaelic manner, and from early in the seventh century.

Simon Taylor surveys abbatial place names which trace the routes along which the mission of Iona progressed. He includes Fergna's nephew Commán and Adomnán's bishop Cói. 356

Occurrences are rare from Baíthéne to Cumméne, three are absent altogether, perhaps reflecting a diminution of Iona's influence. The problem of identifying the earliest use of the names remains except for the latterly insignificant such as Cóeti who sometimes appears in place of Adomnán. Taylor's call for, and personal activity in, the preparation of a Scottish place names database holds promise for further illumination.

John Bannerman seeks to 'amplify and confirm' the growing consensus that the Irish annexed the Pictish kingdoms, asserting that the process was planned over 60 years. Cinaed took the south in 842/3 and marked his conquest of the whole in 848/9 by moving Columba's relics to Dunkeld. Discussion of the terms *rex Fortrenn*, *rex Pictorum*, and *rí Alban* concludes that the first refers to the four southern Pictish kingdoms, the second both to a united Pictavia and Dál Riata's hegemony, and the third to the new name for the kingdom in use by 900. He thus facilitates a reconciliation of Pictish and Dál Riata king lists, and elucidation of the genealogy of Cinaed's dynasty.

Dauvit Broun follows on, tracing the demise of the designation 'Pict', and the existence of a lost Dunkeld chronicle. He sees the loss of identity not as engineered by Cinaed, but caused by his son's betrayal, the consequent destabilisation to which the Norse invasions contributed, and perhaps by a simple linguistic switch. The outstanding question remains what the nature of Alba was.

Part 2 examines Adomnán as a writer. Gilbert Márkus explores Adomnán's 'mental map...of Scotland', distinguishing monastic, pastoral, and missionary/conflict theatres in the *Vita Columbae* using stories of animals and angels. The scheme yields interesting results, including confirmation that Adomnán's focus was upon Iona's mission, and that Columban monks were not always vegetarian animal lovers. The stories chosen reveal three (or perhaps more) theatres: Holy Iona; 'Scottish' Christian Dál Riata, divided as Iona changes her familial allegiances (from animal stories); Ireland (for the angels); and hostile pagan Pictavia under evangelisation. A few animal incidents await consideration: choke-causing, and tumorous cattle, and grave-walking sheep, in Ireland (i.38, ii.4, i.20); hostile Hebridean whales and spiky far-north sea creatures (i.19 & ii.42), pork not quite eaten, and cattle stolen in Dál Riata or S. Pictland (ii.23 & i.46). As here, locations are not always certain: in the Erc incident (i.41), Columba is on Iona and Erc both on Iona and wider Dál Riata; the River Shiel (ii.19) may be in Ireland (Sharpe, Adomnán n.251). From other *topoi*, Iona/Hinba may not be so peaceful (demonic attacks, i.24, iii.8).

Thomas O'Loughlin seeks to elucidate the exegetical skill of Adomnán, discerning the patristic tetrad method of seeking type, time, place and person. He sought to fill the gap in the market, identified by Augustine, for an empirically based ethnology of the

Holy Land in *De Locis Sanctis*, seeking to resolve apparent biblical contradictions. Using the example of the apocalyptic discourse (Mk 13 & parallels), O'Loughlin compares Adomnán's solution with that of Augustine, finding them peers in skill, and complementary if not exhaustive in solving the problems. Interest amongst modern scholars in such questions may be seen e.g. W.L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans NICNT: 1974), ch.13.

Jennifer O'Reilly exposes a number of profound influences on Adomnán as he paints the image of Columba the scribe, teacher of wisdom. She investigates the portrait's resonances amongst contemporaries. Cassian sketched the obedient practitioner of wisdom, pure of soul, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, one teaching the written word while transcending books. The Psalter Columba copies is a rich repository of exposition, a primer for life lasting for ever if written by one sufficiently holy. In a profound exegesis of the story of the missing letter 'i' (i.23), O'Reilly herself paints an intricate picture of spiritual life as understood on Iona, with the Bible as alphabet providing the language of this life, needing spiritual understanding. Columba passes on his mantle to Baithéne, but only when he is ready, and we are shown the steps he and others may take. This paper alone makes the book worth buying twice.

Part 3 investigates Columba's legacy into the 20th century. Jerry O'Sullivan surveys the state of Ionan archaeology over the last 120 years. He reviews the problems of interpretation of archaeological evidence, where mythologies can obscure as in the literary world. Major problems include Iona's intensive development over 1500 years leading to enormous complexity, and the rather haphazard and poor methodologies adopted so far. He calls for a 'concerted programme of excavations conducted within a comprehensive research design.'

E. Mairi MacArthur provides a fascinating comparison of the celebration of the two anniversaries of 1897 and 1997, and their impact on the local Iona community. She notes especially the 19th century denominationally segregated, dignified religious observances which included local folk and their native Gaelic, and the hectic round of mostly secular cultural events of the 20th century celebration, almost devoid of either.

Donald E. Meek investigates the interface between the modern 'Celtic' folklore industry which surrounds saints such as Columba, and the faith which they originally represented. Although reconstructed often through the centuries, the modern versions of the saints owe almost nothing to who they were as Christian missionaries and ascetics, and almost everything to how they can be turned to make a monetary profit for the local and national economies. Their Christianity is replaced by a secularised 'spirituality' more acceptable to modern *mores*, based on the eclectic *Carmina Gadelica*; their language is forgotten; their sanctity sacrificed 'on the altar of economic expediency.' Meek calls for a return

to the early sources, a rejection of the notion of separation from the continental mainstream, a restoration of Christian context, else Columba may continue to 'rattle in his reliquary', wherever that is.

So the collection completes a circle as Meek's lament meets the concern of Clancy to see through the smoke (incense or special effects) to the 'real' saint. Cults ancient and modern share financial profit as products. However, to hold these outer brackets against the expository genius Adomnán, concerned to show his patron as a truly Christocentric wise man of the Word, practising the fear of God, shunning material wealth, leads us to ask a question. How was it that Adomnán came to be the one who promoted this cultic activity, leading to the exploitation of the human dead, when so much of what he says about Columba celebrates his remarkable, Christlike life.

Some minor errors might be noted: bibliographical details for Alexander Mylne, *Vita Episcopatum Dunkeldensium* (footnote, p. 29) are missing, p.157; 'instead of II.lxxvii, and with II.lxxvii,' should read, '...and with II.lxxviii', p.263; the misplaced marker to footnote 21 should come at the end of the previous sentence.

JAMES BRUCE

DISPUTED QUESTIONS ON VIRTUE by Thomas Aquinas, translation and preface by R. McInerny, *St Augustine's Press, South Bend, Indiana, 1999. Pp. xix + 140, £16. 00 pbk.*

This new translation by Ralph McInerny of St Thomas's *Disputed Questions* on the virtues in general and the cardinal virtues is to be welcomed as a contribution to the present revival of the 'ethics of virtue'. These two single questions, composed during Aquinas's stay in Paris 1269-72, form a prolegomenon to his moral theology as a whole. As in the questions *De Veritate* with truth, St Thomas first asks what is virtue, then where do we find it. From the start he makes clear that he is going to work with two traditions: those of Aristotle and Augustine. Another favourite source is St Gregory the Great, *Morals on Job*.

St Thomas locates the virtues in the sensitive appetite (temperance and fortitude), will (justice and charity) and intellect (prudence) as their subjects. Articles 4-6 form the core of the question on the virtues in general. Of particular interest for its discussion of the emotions is art. 4, in which Aquinas follows Aristotle in maintaining that the irrational sensitive appetite too can share in reason. Here we see that Aquinas's Aristotelian ethics are founded on human nature, as the distinction of the virtues corresponds with various powers of the soul. Indeed it is difficult to give an account of his ethics without the soul, for he frequently talks about the powers of the soul, rarely of powers of the body. As the word 'virtue' implies, virtues are perfections: they perfect the powers of the soul under the command of the will.

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