



Reviews

THE MORAL PHILOSOPHY OF ELIZABETH ANSCOMBE edited by Luke Gormally, David Albert Jones and Roger Teichmann, *St Andrews Studies in Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Imprint Academic, Exeter, 2016, pp. x+298, £19.95, pbk

The Linacre Centre for Healthcare Ethics, set up in 1977 by the Bishops of England and Wales, moved to Oxford in 2010 and was renamed The Anscombe Bioethics Centre, in honour of G.E.M. Anscombe, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge from 1970 until she retired in 1986, a thinker whose Catholic allegiance often interacted with her philosophical interests. Thomas Linacre, by the way, Rector of the parish of Wigan from 1519 until his death in 1524, founder and first President of the Royal College of Physicians, physician to King Henry VIII, with Cardinal Wolsey among his patients, is not forgotten. The Thomas Linacre Outpatient Centre has been open in Wigan since 2000, and Linacre College, founded in 1962, flourishes in Oxford itself.

Professor Anscombe's interests went far beyond bioethics. As student and friend of Ludwig Wittgenstein she published his *Philosophical Investigations* in 1953 with her own translation facing the German original. Her monograph, *Intention*, published in 1957, is a classic. Her 20-page article 'Modern Moral Philosophy' (originally in *Philosophy* 1958) broke the grip of the choice in moral philosophy courses between utilitarianism and Kantian deontology (emotivism was not worth discussing at all), by recommending a return to Aristotle, which gave rise to 'virtue ethics'. Admittedly, few practitioners understand why a philosopher drawing on Aristotle's ideas in moral philosophy 'must be very imperceptive if he doesn't constantly feel like someone whose jaws have somehow got out of alignment', as she said in her inimitable way. Perhaps only now, in such works as Talbot Brewer's superb book *The Retrieval of Ethics* (Oxford University Press, 2009), the point of her call for a moratorium on ethical theorizing until we have a better account of human activity and the good, is at last being understood.

The book under review results from a conference held in Oxford in 2013: 14 papers, prefaced by John Haldane, general editor of *St Andrews Studies* (briefly on 'Modern Moral Philosophy') and introduced by David Albert Jones, Director of the Centre (a useful summary of the contents).

The collection opens with a paper by Anselm W. Müller, for many years at the University of Trier. His books, including his doctoral thesis on the ontology of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, have not been translated. In Oxford in the 1960s, tutored by A.J.P. Kenny and Anscombe herself,

he was introduced to a post-Wittgensteinian way of reading Aquinas, complementing his studies at Fribourg, under the legendary Dominican Innocent Bochenski (1902-1995). The lecture, 'The Spiritual Nature of Man', builds on several of Anscombe's papers, especially 'The Immortality of the Soul', originally delivered at one of the Spode House conversations in the late 1950s (first published in *Faith in a Hard Ground* 2002), in tandem with Herbert McCabe's exposition of Thomas Aquinas's theory according to which the 'immateriality' of thought demonstrates the 'immortality' of the soul. Anscombe was unconvinced. Of course she rejected the idea of the soul as 'an immortal sort of substance'. As Müller quotes her, the 'spirituality' of the soul is 'its capacity to get a conception of the eternal', the way that 'human beings are in for a final orientation towards or away from the good'.

Duncan Richter (Virginia Military Institute) has published more commentary on Anscombe than anyone else in the book: Anscombe rightly holds that we human beings have 'a final orientation towards or away from the good', but, so Richter argues, this is not demonstrable on purely philosophical grounds, as she thought. José M. Torralba (Navarre), the principal communicator of Anscombe's work in the Spanish-speaking academy, contends that, on the contrary, practical reasoning alone includes orientation to the good.

Famously, in 'Modern Moral Philosophy', Anscombe wrote off the notion of moral obligation. Matthew B. O'Brien (now working in finance) draws on his recent doctoral research (Austin, Texas) to show that it was only certain distortions of moral obligation that she rejected: what she said elsewhere, he argues (with a little help from what he regards as an unpersuasive argument by Peter Geach), makes it clear that moral obligation is included in practical reasoning. Thomas Pink (King's College London), via lengthy discussion of ideas by Bernard Williams and David Hume, leads us to Francisco Suarez (1548-1617), the great Spanish Baroque Thomist, who, inconsistently with Anscombe's claim, did not need to appeal to divine command doctrine to explain what moral obligations are. In a third paper on the topic, Candace Vogler (Chicago) shows the institution of promising as necessarily related to moral obligation.

There follow seven one-off papers on topics, which Anscombe discussed. Luke Gormally (founder Director of the Linacre Centre, co-editor of the four recent volumes of Anscombe papers), on homicide as injustice, propounds an account of dignity that he develops from scattered remarks by Anscombe. David Goodill OP (Oxford), on just war theory, defends her against philosophers who deny that killing in warfare is ever justified. David Albert Jones argues against her view that, though unjust, abortion might not always be homicide: as if, at an early stage, the human embryo might not be a human being. Kevin L. Flannery SJ (Rome), on lying, defends the great Belgian Jesuit Arthur Vermeersch (1858-1936) against Anscombe. Roger Teichmann (Oxford), author of

The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe (2008), an excellent book, explores what she meant by a person's being in good faith. Mary Geach (her literary executor) discusses Anscombe on sexual ethics, in a culture in which the very idea that sexual intercourse is related to procreation is becoming unintelligible. Edward Harcourt (Oxford) discusses how young children are to be educated in the light of Anscombe's paper 'The Moral Education of the Child' (first published in *Faith in a Hard Ground*).

The volume concludes with a magisterial paper by John Finnis (Notre Dame and Oxford), author of *Aquinas: Moral, Political and Legal Theory* (1998), one of the great books on Aquinas: much too dense to summarize here, he concludes, on the topics of divine creation, human agency and the nature of justice, that what we find in Scripture decisively exceeds anything in Plato and Aristotle, thus rounding off a collection in honour of a thinker whose wide range and influence are splendidly exhibited.

FERGUS KERR OP

THE GLORY OF GOD'S GRACE: DEIFICATION ACCORDING TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS by Daria Spezzano, *Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, Florida, 2015, pp. viii + 390, \$45.00, pbk*

Daria Spezzano offers us a comprehensive and thorough study of deification (or divinization) in the thought of St Thomas Aquinas. She consistently presents his doctrine of deification within the overall context of his understanding of the meaning of human life as a journey made by divine grace to beatitude, such that divinization is identified as the dynamic process by which we are brought to deformity in the beatific vision. Following roughly but not slavishly the *ordo doctrinae* of the *Summa Theologiae*, she thus places 'deification' within a larger picture, which includes Aquinas's theology of the Trinity and the divine missions, creation, the *imago Dei*, grace, the virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (principally charity and wisdom), Christ and his grace, divine adoption and the sacraments, showing how deification is at the intersection of all of these. Her carefully-laid accounts of the divine *ordinatio* by which God manifests his goodness, the non-competitive character of divine and human causality, and Aquinas's appropriation of the notion of participation in creation, helpfully prepare the reader for Aquinas's teaching on deification as a progressive participation in the divine nature.

Among the chief merits of Spezzano's book is that it clearly manifests for the reader the connections between all the different areas of Aquinas's theology, so that the reader can gain a rounded sense of this journey to heavenly beatitude. Admittedly Aquinas himself seems to