

a study of the implications of Anselm's changing standing in the move from Bec to Canterbury and a useful enquiry by Sally Vaughn into the subsequent careers of the known students at Bec.

From these articles on the various contemporary 'communities' to which Anselm belonged, the collection moves on to 'twelfth century perspectives', concentrating on topics of theology and intellectual history, then to 'thirteenth and fourteenth century perspectives', including a valuable analysis by Michael Robson of the process by which interest in Anselm as an authority moved out of the cloister into the universities.

Part Four includes two papers on 'vernacular visions', containing studies of the Middle English tradition. With Part V the collection moves into the twentieth century, where there are eight papers. Several of these deal with the way modern thinkers (including Karl Rahner; Hans Blumenberg; Hans Urs von Balthasar; Michael Ramsay; Jean-Paul Sartre) have engaged with the thought of Anselm. Others make fresh attacks on problems which interested Anselm: God's goodness (Marilyn McCord Adams), arguments for the existence of God (Martin Lembke). Sara L. Uckelman contributes an important review of the legacy of the work of D.P. Henry in the reception of Anselm's logic.

It is difficult to form the contributions to a conference into a coherent volume. The papers included here have been selected from those presented and the authors given time to expand and develop them. The result includes some important items, though in terms of the proportion of topics covered, it leans towards Anselm's 'legacy' rather than adding to our understanding of Anselm in his times.

G.R. EVANS

METAPHYSICS: THE CREATION OF HIERARCHY by Adrian Pabst, foreword by John Milbank, *Eerdmans*, Grand Rapids MI, 2012, pp. xxxv + 521, £ 35.99, pbk

Adrian Pabst has written an astonishing first monograph that would have been almost unimaginable thirty years ago. *Metaphysics*, precisely because of its hierarchies, was then the bogeyman of the academy, restrained by Kant, killed by Nietzsche, deconstructed by Heidegger and Derrida as the sinister and hubristic project of 'ontotheology', 'phallogocentrism', or whatever. As these labels imply, theology was usually implicated in this conspiracy, so that many theologians, from Barthians to postmodernists and phenomenologists, rushed to plead their innocence by showing how anti-metaphysical they were. Not so Pabst! This lecturer in politics at the University of Kent does not deny the linking of metaphysics with particular political philosophies, but seeks rather to recover and extend, not least for political and ethical reasons, the Christian Neo-Platonic metaphysical tradition which has been at best marginalised in modernity. At a number of points Pabst clearly links this proposal with the intellectual and political project of Pope emeritus Benedict XVI, as summarised particularly in his controversial Regensburg lecture of 2006. Here Benedict linked both aggressive secular rationalism and religious fundamentalism with the voluntarist and dualist separation of faith and reason which impoverished both. Against this Benedict called for a 'rehellenisation' of Christianity according to the patristic and medieval model of Christian philosophy.

Pabst develops this argument about the relationship between theology, philosophy, and politics to include the claim that the secularisation of metaphysics and politics coincides with the rise of notions of anti-relational individuality. What makes something a unique individual? Is this some sort of self-identity, or is it rather to be found in terms of the gift of a particular relational situation, both

'horizontal' and 'vertical'? These questions of identity and difference arise in various contemporary debates in logic, metaphysics, and politics. 'Fundamentally' Pabst writes, 'my argument is that the individual, understood as a constitutive category in both philosophy and politics, is a modern invention that can only be understood as a shift within theology that eschewed the patristic and medieval vision of relationality in favour of abstract individuality' (p. 448). This brings him to his conclusion that 'only a theological metaphysic can overcome the perennial problem of individuation' (p. 445).

Pabst develops this argument through a genealogy of extraordinary sweep from Plato to Deleuze. He begins by exploring the problem of the one and the many in Plato and Aristotle, arguing that Aristotle already shifts away from Plato's relational individuation by the transcendent Good towards immanently self-individuating substances and autarchy. Yet Plato's account of the role of matter in relationship to individuation is also problematic, so that Pabst concludes: 'Aristotle's account of matter as pure potency is philosophically superior to Plato's idea of matter as formless chaos, but Aristotle's indifferent God is theologically regressive compared with Plato's vision of an ecstatic Good that infuses all things with goodness.' (p. 52) Pabst then discusses the patristic development of this problematic, paying particular attention to Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa, Boethius, and Dionysius to see how the doctrine of the Trinity and the metaphysics of creation *ex nihilo* develop Platonic accounts of hierarchical individuation in a more radically relational direction. In this section Pabst follows recent interpretations of Augustine and Boethius that reject the view of them as 'proto-Cartesian', thus questioning the supposed opposition between Western and Eastern theology.

Chapters four to seven cover the Middle Ages and are the heart of the argument, delineating the conflict between a logicised, 'mathematical Platonism', influenced by Aristotle, which pictures individuation in terms of immanent monads, and the more realist relational Trinitarian account of individuation which has already been described. Pabst describes three key shifts in medieval philosophy, which together pave the way for the rise of immanentist individualism: the Avicennian primacy of essence over existence, the Scotist rejection of analogy in favour of univocity, and the Suarezian priority of metaphysics and *natura pura* over theological metaphysics (p. 386). As Pabst acknowledges, this is not an original genealogy of modernity, but the scholarship he draws upon (Gilson, de Lubac, de Mural, Courtine, Boulnois, and Dupré) is still not so well known in the Anglophone world, with the possible exception of theological circles. Part of the originality of Pabst's account however is the emphasis given to the early twelfth-century author Gilbert of Porreta. This is important in terms of the controversy that surrounded the Regensburg address, for Pabst argues that while some of these shifts are certainly related to the influence of Arab philosophers such as Avicenna, this sort of Aristotelian 'logicised Platonism' in fact predates the introduction of Arabic philosophy into Christendom, just as there are resources within the Islamic tradition to resist this dominant formalism and its corresponding voluntarism. Pabst's genealogy then presents Aquinas as the hero of relational accounts of individuation, consolidating recent readings of the Angelic Doctor as renewing Christian-Platonist realism, rather than paving the way for Aristotelian modernity. Here again Pabst's command of the technicalities of scholarly debate is very impressive as he offers a reading of Aquinas that is clearly opposed to Neo-Scholastic and Transcendental Thomists, but also more subtly distinguished from the existential and participational Thomists. The Porretan counter-Thomist story continues with the rise of voluntarism and the individual through Scotus's account of *haecceitas*, Ockham and Buridan's nominalism, and Suarez's transcendental realism, which only appears to restore the Thomist position. The final two chapters bring us into modernity, focusing mainly on Spinoza's immanentised individuation, but with brief accounts of how this relates to Descartes and

Leibniz, Hobbes and Locke, and Wolff and Kant to shape all of modern metaphysics and politics.

Intellectual historians may well take issue with particular details of this genealogy, and certainly the transition from metaphysical to political accounts of individuation could have benefited from more illustration. More fundamentally it seems likely that many will resist the more substantive theological critique and proposal of an 'alternative modernity that is far more theologically orthodox and politically radical' (p. 384), although one hopes they might at least admire the ambition, lucidity and control of the argument. For Pabst, like Benedict XVI, these are not simply historical questions; they concern living traditions and their relation to truth, so that he is unafraid of making critical judgements and constructive proposals. His subsequent tendency to look for patterns and trajectories of thinking does not lead him to ignore those moments when an author's work seems contradictory or not quite to fit his placing in the genealogy. Those theologians who are inclined to dismiss this as 'just another Radically Orthodox genealogy' seriously underestimate both the depth and subtlety of Pabst's scholarship and the unavoidability of genealogies, whether explicit or implicit, to constructive proposals. It is significant in this respect that Pabst resists epochalism by pointing to many figures in 'modernity' which continue the earlier tradition (the Neapolitan Enlightenment, Hamann and Jacobi, Kierkegaard, the Russian sophiologists, the French Nouvelle Théologie, amongst others).

Finally some will be anxious about the attempt to rehabilitate the language of 'hierarchy' as imagining a return to 'the rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate'. Why did Pabst not choose instead a more fluffy subtitle such as 'The Recovery of Relationality'? Pabst might have said more here to explain his language of 'station' and 'virtuous guiding elite' (p. 441), but it is clear that his primary sense of hierarchy is the Dionysian one: 'a state of understanding and an activity approximating as closely as possible to the divine' (p. 142) and secondarily meritocratic (p. 442). Likewise there are enough hints here to guide the reader to his work elsewhere which indicates that Pabst's theo-political vision is not theocratic or autocratic but mutualist, democratic, and distributivist, an economy of gift exchange and the common good not unlike that pictured in Catholic Social Teaching, including 'universal education and healthcare' and 'a wider distribution of assets' (p. 455). This book establishes Pabst as one of the most significant contemporary political theologians and deserves to change debates in the history of political thought.

JOHN HUGHES

THEOLOGICAL METHOD : A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED by Paul L. Allen, T & T Clark, London , 2012, pp. ix + 262, £14.99, pbk

The title of this book is reminiscent of Bernard Lonergan's *Method in Theology*. Its purpose is to look at the methods in theology used by writers from St Paul to Cardinal Ratzinger, with Bernard Lonergan's method as presented in his book constantly in the background. Method means for Lonergan and Allen, and for everyone else now, a sort of system. That is not what Aristotle meant. For Aristotle, method is the pursuit of something. It is the road after something and as such is governed by the end which is desired. The modern idea of method suggests that we should follow the path of least resistance, and go where we can, not where we would like to go. Aristotle followed Plato in seeing philosophy as being a pursuit of the good, driven by love. The *Nicomachean Ethics* begins. 'Every skill and every investigation (method), every action and every choice seems to aim at some good'.