

PHILOSOPHICAL ENCOUNTERS: LONERGAN AND THE ANALYTICAL TRADITION by Joseph Fitzpatrick, *University of Toronto Press*, Toronto, 2005, Pp. 250, £20 pbk.

Fitzpatrick's book on the Canadian philosopher Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophical Encounters*, is a welcome one. Because of a considerable overlap in vocabulary there would be reason to think that Lonergan merely repeated what Anglo-American philosophers already had done. Fitzpatrick has shown that this is not the case.

The book is written in a clear, simple and pedagogical manner (the author is an educational consultant by profession) by someone who is both knowledgeable and passionate about Lonergan's philosophy. There are three overarching aims of the book: first, to explicate Lonergan's ideas about knowledge, secondly to compare him with some main analytical philosophers (Hume, Needham, Hampshire, Polanyi, Russell, Wittgenstein and Rorty) and thirdly to extend and apply his ideas to a few areas (ethics, language and broadly philosophy of mind). A useful glossary of key terms and a biographical sketch are found at the end of the book. All chapters can be read as separate essays but are best understood as a whole.

In the introductory part Lonergan's basic ideas about cognition and epistemology are laid out to the reader (pp. 13-33). This part serves as a warm-up and not as a complete exposition, since many details are left for the comparative parts in the rest of the book. Though there are striking similarities with classical Thomism as well as the analytical tradition we learn that the Lonergan's philosophy stands on its own legs. Both axiomatic Aristotelian science and logicism are exchanged. Lonergan claims cognition is more akin to modern scientific method (generalized empirical method). Such a cognition theory allows the possibility of warding off the classic polarisations between subjectivism and objectivism, rationalism and empiricism. In this respect there are many affinities with Polanyi (64 ff). Hence Lonergan coined his epistemological project as 'critical realism'. Naïve realism is here being equated with empiricism and rationalism. Still it is a kind of realism since a certain isomorphism is posited between the end of the cognitional process (knowledge or judgement in Lonergan's terminology) and reality. The major difference is that the isomorphism is not between a logical construction but between knowing and reality (116 f.). This comes out in the insightful comparison between Lonergan and Wittgenstein. What caused the later Wittgenstein to despair over any rational foundation of knowledge (naïve realism) was not reason enough for Lonergan since logic is not the measuring stick.

A constant theme (and almost a mission) is to refute the so called 'ocular myth' (p 38 f., 149 f.) – the idea that knowing is looking or just 'taking a good look'. For Lonergan, sensory experience is not equated with knowledge. It serves as raw material in the three step cognitional process which furnishes knowledge: experience, understanding and judgement. We look for cohesion and coherence between facts, known and unknown. The process runs as follows: first we experience something of which we are not sure what it is so we *ask* what it is in order to gain understanding of the experience. At the third level we ask question of ontological importance ('does it exist?') that makes us check, verify or falsify the experienced fact. Only this third step is what constitutes knowledge. So in Lonergan's thinking there is no such thing as a brute fact, only interpreted facts. Nevertheless the interpretation is a part of reality. This is so (contra Kant) because human cognition has a heuristic structure that naturally tries to see connections and meaning in experience. In other words such a theory does say that man is not passive in the process of coming to know something. On the other hand there is spontaneity of this cognitional process. So knowing is conditioned by human nature but not, for Lonergan, in a Kantian way. Surely there are volitional, social

and psychological conditions for knowledge (53f). Still it does not amount to the knower projecting or subverting reality. All the three levels of consciousness are interdependent.

According to Lonergan there is also a fourth level of consciousness where things like decision, action and deliberation takes place. Here normative questions are asked ('What is the course of right action?'). This fourth level is also the centre of the self. Fitzpatrick shows that for Lonergan the self is a necessary ingredient for (objective!) knowledge whereas for the analytical tradition the self (since it could not be defined on the grounds of method) is redundant. For instance the comparison with Rorty shows agreement as to the rejection of the ocular myth but also shows that one can take different routes after that (165-170). Rorty, after dismissing epistemology and the self, surprisingly retains the idea of personhood. The difference is that Lonergan does not, as Rorty, escape to behaviourism and psychologism in order to reconstruct epistemology and personhood; the same is true of Russell and Wittgenstein.

This comparative presentation is the strength of the book as well as its weakness. It provides a good comparative analysis and suggestions for how a Lonerganian solution would help the perplexed analytical philosopher. The basis for Lonergan's thought is a deeper understanding of the human nature without becoming behaviouristic. But there is more to be said. It seems that metaphysics has to enter the discussion at this point. The book is filled with good detailed analysis of the mind and knowledge but barren of metaphysical issues. Unless one is convinced by Fitzpatrick about the structure of human nature and cognition that is portrayed the arguments lose their power. For instance: Why is there no mentioning of Lonergan's theological and theistic views? Surely for such an integrated thinker a serious treatment of his philosophy should imply taking into account his metaphysical assumptions as well (and there are many). The sceptical analytical philosopher, if that is the presumed reader, would in particular need a great deal metaphysics. One might be led to think that such negligence is a remainder of the rejection of everything having to do with metaphysics and religion as nonsense that has survived in the author's perspective of philosophy. This is strange since he starts off (pp. 6-7) by quoting the prominent analytic-Thomist philosopher John Haldane's critique of contemporary catholic philosophers' lack of interest in and knowledge about analytical philosophy. It seems as though he wants to give the impression that this will be a book written in order to educate the Catholic. Sadly this is not the case. There are no metaphysical (catholic or religious) concerns raised at all throughout the book.

One might also wonder what Lonergan has to say to the contemporary discussion about epistemic justification, which has come out of the bosom of the analytical tradition. This is not clearly said in the book. In the terminology of much contemporary epistemology (of which there is nothing in this book) Lonergan is presented as going beyond the classical polarisations of externalism and internalism in terms of justification, and foundationalism and coherentism in terms of the structure of knowledge. But it is up to the reader to see things like a possible openness to intellectual virtues (p. 48) and a certain ambiguity about the issue of foundationalism, since the perspective on the justification and structure of knowledge is not easily caught in the common webs of conceptualisation. The notion of will and a person's activity in the process of coming to know something appeals to Aristotelian ways of thinking about knowledge and agency. Saying that Lonergan's philosophy is merely compatible with such an approach to epistemology does not go very far if it would not in some way contribute to an enhanced understanding of the subject. Taking the analytic tradition seriously would bring with it taking contemporary discussions about epistemology seriously.

Despite these complaints the book is filled with many insights into both the terrain of analytical philosophy and Lonergan himself. Many important things are

discussed in a too-cursory way but do provide a direction for future studies: there are brilliant things said about the nature of logic (pp 187 ff), philosophy of history (p. 142 ff) and the self (pp 206 ff.). Provided that one is persuaded by the book's presentation of Lonergan one has a place to find new food for thought.

STEFAN LINDHOLM

SACRIFICE AND COMMUNITY: JEWISH OFFERING AND CHRISTIAN EUCHARIST by Matthew Levering, *Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2005, Pp. 202 £19.99 pbk.*

When children in Catholic schools and parishes in this country are first taught about the Eucharist, it is very often explained to them in terms of celebration. 'Jesus is inviting us to a special sort of party every Sunday', or words to that effect. This is not something new; parents with teenage children of their own had the same impoverished instruction in the meaning of the Mass, with the result that they are quite unable to answer their children's perfectly reasonable question – especially given the liturgical tendencies of so many celebrations of the Eucharist – 'If this is Jesus's idea of a special party, what's so great about Jesus?'

Matthew Levering encounters essentially the same disastrously bland and enervated approach to the Eucharist, not at the level of child catechetics but in the highest reaches of Catholic academic theology. This book is a vigorously argued, passionate and stimulating attempt to counter what he calls 'Eucharistic idealism', the replacement of the traditional Catholic understanding of the sacrifice of the Mass, and the people's communion in and through it, with 'spiritualizing accounts of Eucharistic communion with God' (p. 8). It is not that Levering objects to the notion of spiritual communion as an essential part of eucharistic theology; rather, he insists that a polarisation between this notion and that of an embodied sacrificial communion, an idea that draws on the Jewish roots of our Christian faith, is a false polarisation: there can be for us, in the sacramental economy, no spiritual communion with God and with one another which is not achieved in *and properly understood as* a real, bodily communion. Though he does not say so explicitly, the heart of Levering's argument is that worship in spirit and in truth is not instead of, but rather built upon, a corporal religion of sacrifice.

To believe otherwise, he argues, is supersessionist as well as lacking in regard for the Church's patristic and mediaeval inheritance. Fear of denying the radical newness of Christ's paschal sacrifice has – ironically – led some to deny its sacrificial nature, at least inasmuch as it is communicated to the faithful through the sacraments, and especially the Eucharist. Thus Levering begins with a brief but extremely helpful sketch of the development of eucharistic idealism 'from Luther to Rahner', in which the latter, along with Schillebeeckx and perhaps even von Balthasar, among other twentieth-century Catholic scholars, are accused of allowing philosophical Idealism to negate the reality of eucharistic participation in the sacrifice of the Cross.

Levering recognises that to make good the damage it is necessary to return beyond the patristic and mediaeval sources of theology to the scriptural origins of the notion of eucharistic sacrifice. It is a particularly gratifying aspect of this book that it represents a rare attempt – and a still-rarer *successful* attempt – to integrate scriptural studies with systematic theology. So often the exegetes seem to live in an isolated world with no recognition of the broader theological context of their work, and it is perhaps a consequence of this that much modern theology seems to have as its canon the latest modish philosophy and to be in ignorance of much that might be of value in scripture. Levering offers a model for another, surely more Catholic, approach, and one which incidentally is not afraid to take seriously