

philosophy for common truths that unify before he looks for the particularities that divide' (p. 47). Yes, Aquinas avails of Aristotle in certain key areas of his thought. Yes, on balance, Aquinas is probably more Aristotelian than Platonic. But that is not to say Aquinas understood himself as an Aristotelian rather than Platonic thinker or that there are not important Platonic elements in Aquinas's thought as well, as many excellent post-World War II studies have shown there to be.

Thirdly, the editors make clear the collection is an 'introductory work' (p. vii) which follows the *Summa Theologiae* (p. xiii). That is understandable, but the collection would have been even stronger if it had offered another essay giving us an introduction to the role of Aristotle in the rest of Aquinas's thought. It need not have been particularly detailed but just have given us an overview of where we might go next. What about the sermons for example? That concern notwithstanding, however, this collection is a worthwhile contribution to an important issue in the study of Aquinas.

DOMINIC RYAN OP

**AUGUSTINE'S EARLY THEOLOGY OF IMAGE: A STUDY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRO-NICENE THEOLOGY** by Gerald P. Boersma, *Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016, pp. xv + 318, £47.99, hbk*

This book represents the author's doctoral thesis, written under the direction of Professor Ayres at Durham (England). Boersma's thesis, stated in barest outline, is that the difficulty which pro-Nicene writers had in affirming that both human beings and Christ are the image of God, following the council of Sirmium in 357, was only overcome by Augustine, who could show that there was no incompatibility between *Gen.* 1:26 ('let us make man in our own image') and *Col.* 1:15 ('He is the image of the invisible God'), by making use of Plotinus's philosophy to show that there is an *analogy* of image in scripture.

Although the scope of the topic might appear to be quite narrow, as Boersma confines himself to the early Augustine, up to 391, the year of the saint's ordination, it takes in a great deal of theology (Trinity, Christology, salvation, anthropology and grace) at a seminal period. The book falls neatly into two equal parts. In the first, Boersma takes us through the background of the Western theology inherited by Augustine in St Hilary, Marius Victorinus, and St Ambrose, all of whom had their links with the Eastern Church, and reaching back to Tertullian. The second part is directly on the theme of the title.

The question facing those who wished to uphold orthodox belief in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century was: How could we be images of God

if Christ was equal with God? Would not equating human beings with Christ as image make him less than God and thus fall into Arianism? Thus Hilary held to the view that an image must be equal with what it is an image of, adhering to Tertullian's exegesis of *Col.* 1:15, that the Son is the *invisible* image of God. This then made it difficult for Western writers to show that the whole human person is the image of God, in body as well as soul. Augustine, however, could point to *Jn.* 14:9 ('Whoever sees me has seen the Father'), where Christ himself implies that we are not just spiritually in the image of God. And the same can be said of Christ's own humanity. At least the human face seems to be an image of God, as the soul shines through it.

Victorinus (c.300-370), like Hilary, resolutely held that image means equality, and Christ's alone is the image of God as he is one with the Father. But Ambrose took a step towards Augustine's solution of the difficulty of the pro-Nicenes by saying that image and likeness are synonymous, because a likeness can be perfect or imperfect. Ambrose, however, still saw the image as primarily a spiritual one of the soul, although Boersma argues that Ambrose defended the unity of body and soul. This is the one weak part of the book, because Ambrose still seems to be quite dualist in his view of the body. We can say, however, that the body too shares in the image of God as it shares in the life of soul.

Boersma's discussion of the image in the early Augustine in the second half of the book centres on just two works, the *Contra Academicos* and the *De Vera Religione*. Against the Sceptics, who thought that images are more or less false, Augustine argued that we can know eternal truth through temporal images of it in the world because we find truth in the incarnate Son. Thus the Truth reveals itself in the world but it is only known by faith, not by reason alone. Boersma seeks to demonstrate that the foundations of Augustine's thought in Plotinus on the world as an image of the One then becomes the means of describing the soul's return to God by ascending to the truth. The *De Vera Religione* continues the conclusion of the *Contra Academicos*, because Augustine maintains against the Platonists that the soul's ascent is not just through *catharsis* and *theoria* but primarily through the grace that comes from the Incarnation. It is an ascent by the humility of Christ and its end is the enjoyment of the Trinity. Boersma concludes that we can never understand human nature by itself but only as an image of the Trinity. This image was later clearly placed by Augustine in the mind that is capable of contemplating God in the *De Trinitate*.

Boersma provides us with a very clear and readable text that also contains a wealth of information in the footnotes about Augustine's exegesis of many passages in scripture and the various views of scholars on many questions of Augustinian studies today. The author presents some interesting insights by the way: for example, that for Augustine dualism of body and soul only entered after the Fall. Boersma also makes us aware that we still cannot be certain in all areas how much

Plotinus influenced the early Augustine. Perhaps one key to determining this influence is to decide how much Augustine owed to Plotinus his theory of divine illumination in the *De Magistro*, another early work of Augustine's: as its subject is rather philosophy of language (how do we learn the meaning of words?), it is less obviously Plotinian than one might think the early theology of Augustine was.

FRANCIS SELMAN

**REFORMING ROME: KARL BARTH AND VATICAN II** by Donald W. Norwood, *Eerdmans, Grand Rapids/Cambridge U.K., 2015, pp. xxi + 263, £23.99, pbk*

In these days when ecumenical projects on any ambitious scale seem to be 'on hold', relations between ecclesial communities have seldom been more cordial. Yet those Protestant and Catholic ecumenical pioneers who bore the 'heat and burden of the day' during the last century, might now conclude that well-nigh insurmountable obstacles remain. Yves Congar OP, one of most ardent and active, eventually came to that conclusion. Much as these pioneers would have applauded today's greater cordiality, they would surely remind us that there remain formidable impediments to Christian unity and to inter-communion. These cannot be surmounted until the issues have been resolutely faced and a true consensus achieved.

The author, a leading United Reformed minister, who has been at the very heart of the ecumenical movement, is passionately committed to the quest for Christian unity. His book presents anew the challenge which the great Reformed theologian, Karl Barth, addressed to all ecclesial communities. If we are serious about our 'sad and sinful divisions', then he poses uncomfortable questions which demand answers from all churches. Barth realized that to engage fruitfully in responding to them, it was essential that Reformed theologians engage in dialogue with the Roman Church. By taking Rome as the major interlocutor, Barth earned the respect of popes and Catholic theologians, a surprisingly large number of Dominicans among them, so much so that, as Dr. Norwood maintains throughout this book, his influence was evident in the deliberations and even in some of the documents of Vatican II.

Donald Norwood confesses to being 'in love with the Council' and Barth, who was not well enough to attend as an 'observer', was ardently interested. He was kept *au fait* with the deliberations by his friend and colleague, Hans Küng. Catholics should remember the debt they owe the latter for an eirenical masterpiece on justification and for persistently raising the question of papal authority. We are indebted to those who compel us to give good reasons 'for the faith that is in us'.