

of ecumenism, inter-faith dialogue, and Catholic dogmatics itself which must be, for a Catholic Christian, the widest of those three circles: the historic revelation and the reflection to which it gives rise is, in Balthasar's own adaptation of Anselm, 'that than which nothing greater can be thought'. Where Professor Thompson's mind is tough, Fr Bede's heart is soft; in their contrasted styles they prepare one for the closing mini-*Summa* which, slightly repetitious though it be, I can recommend as Balthasar-in-a-nutshell.

An appended note by the Scottish-based Irish Carmelite Noel Dermot O'Donoghue, while entering some caveats, lauds Balthasar's 'orchestral imagination' from his own standpoint, somewhere between Cardinal Mercier and Kathleen Raine. It will take, I guess, another half-century of study before that music fully sinks into Catholicism's theological mind.

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VIOLENCE AND RELIGION: ATTITUDES TOWARDS MILITANCY IN THE FRENCH CIVIL WARS AND THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION, by Judy Sproxton, Routledge, 1995. 103 pp. £30.00

Sproxton combines historical, literary and theological insights to offer an overview of the development of thought on war and religion in England and France in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The medieval tradition and the Christian humanism of Erasmus have been left behind, with their trust that the peace of the nations is somehow connected with the peace of God, human justice with divine justice, however imperfectly. Having described Calvin's radical rupture of this connectedness, so that human justice and divine justice become contraries, Sproxton deftly traces the outlines of the rather different theological, devotional and political positions adopted by his heirs: d'Aubigné, the Monomachs, Beard, Winstanley, Cromwell and his poetic hagiographer, Andrew Marvell. She dedicates a chapter to each of them.

As a literary, historical and even psychological study it is fascinating, but as a glimpse of the theological consequences of the radicalism of a Calvinist view of the Fall it is chilling. One may warm to Winstanley, but Marvell's view amounts to little more than a basis for the deification of tyrants. Justice must give way to "valour" and force, because all we know of justice is a human pseudo-justice, a pretentious claim to something which is uniquely God's. At least in violence and war, he suggests, one can sense something of God's power and his wrath against sinful humanity.

The book will be of interest to students of literature, theology and history, and to those in the peace movement who have reflected on the balance between lawful postures of deterrence with avoidance of aggression. My only regret is the price put on it by Routledge. Students, whose grants are being cut by 10% a year, will benefit less from Sproxton's work than they should.

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