

So God allows art to be itself. The artist allows the world to be itself – and not what she or her audience might like it to be. So divine creativity and human creativity are alike in that they are both activities of love – a love that attends to what the other is, and allows it to be itself, and reveals its true self to it, and helps it to be itself. In other words, this book could be seen as an application to art of N.T. Wright's plea for an 'epistemology of love'. It has the feel of a cross-section – a salami-slice – of a monumental conception of Reality, with love at its heart. It made this reader drool at the prospect of the Archbishop's promised work on the Trinity.

As befits such a view of art being allowed to be itself, Rowan Williams attends to what artists and writers have actually said about what they do. In Chapter One, the Archbishop expounds Jacques Maritain's writings on aesthetics, and the following chapters show how various Catholic artists and writers were influenced by his thinking, and indeed developed it in fresh ways. Chapter Two looks at Eric Gill and, more extensively, David Jones. It is fair to say that the first two chapters do not make easy reading, but perseverance will be richly rewarded. Chapter Three focuses on the work and reflections of Flannery O'Connor, and Chapter Four engages theologically with what has been learned in dialogue with these artists.

This beautifully-produced book is a book of theology, with an indirect apologetic intent: 'I don't intend to argue that only Christian theology can make sense of art; but the tradition I have been examining would claim that theology has, as we might put it, a story to tell about artistic labour which provides a ground for certain features of it and challenges it to be faithful to certain canons of disinterest and integrity. That this helps to foster art which is intensely serious, unconsoling, and unafraid of the complexity of a world that the secularist too can recognize might persuade us to give a little more intellectual house-room to the underlying theology than we might at first be inclined to offer.'

I have a question to ask of this stimulating and engaging work. Flannery O'Connor is expounded (approvingly?) as believing that 'the artist takes the risk of uncovering the world within the world of visible things . . . confident because of her commitment that what is uncovered will be the 'reason' in things, . . . a coherence and connectedness always more than can be seen or expressed.' But does this take the brokenness (i.e. fallenness) of our world seriously enough? Is it not the case that, even below the level of the visible, there is a profound and tragic incoherence and disconnectedness to our world? Are meaning and harmony there already, but just deeper than we usually reach and waiting for the artist to reveal them? Or are they yet to be? Are they only to be had at the renewal of all things? Aren't meaning and harmony not a matter of depth but of time? Are they not so much ontological as eschatological?

If the quality of a book is to be assessed by the questions that it induces in the reader, then this is a very fine book, which will repay the sort of careful attention and engagement that artists (and the Artist) give the world.

MICHAEL LLOYD

THEOLOGY IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE: CHURCH, ACADEMY AND NATION by Gavin D'Costa, *Blackwell, Oxford, 2005, Pp. 264, £22.99 pbk.*

University theology has been taken into a Babylonian captivity by modern determinations of knowledge, its ecclesial nature crushed by the ideological authoritarianism of a sloppy liberalism. We must pray for release and, when and where possible, reconstruct an academic environment which proudly re-establishes theology as 'queen of the sciences'. This is the core of D'Costa's fiery contribution to

the contemporary debate about theology's place in the Western secular research university.

This is not just the rhetoric of an eccentric prophet, however. D'Costa carefully outlines the way in which the late modern university has failed to offer genuine methodological pluralism, being guided instead by an anachronistic trust in the neutrality and objectivity of scientific Reason. This has resulted in an intellectually stultifying and socially irresponsible homogeneity which, where it has not utterly eradicated theology from the universities' curricula, has compelled its retreat into the secular study of religions. This 'escape from ideology' is correctly identified as ideological itself; a truly liberal university will, in its awareness of the many competing means of faithfully describing reality, privilege no single voice but provide for authentic diversity, even if this invokes the charge of sectarianism. It is in this context that he makes a plea for a Roman Catholic university where the various disciplines, and in particular theology, are accorded their uniqueness.

D'Costa is aware of his critics' charge that such a post-liberal university thrusts scholars into linguistic bunkers, limiting inter-religious and inter-disciplinary discourse. Certainly, he replies, if theology is true to its object, then its primary activity will be prayer and its method will be shaped by the 'dynamism' of Trinitarian love, all naturally located within an ecclesial context. Unlike the *wissenschaftlich* shaping of theology as typified in the University of Berlin in 1810, this theological enterprise is 'appropriately focused, intellectually and practically, upon worship of the triune God who reveals Himself in the particularity of a complex narration of the life of Jesus and his companions, the Church' (p. 144). Nonetheless, this 'particularity' does not necessarily exclude the engagement with other religious traditions. Instead, a 'theological religious studies' is advocated where the methods of enquiry are tradition-specific. A detailed comparison between a Christian martyr and a Hindu *sati* demonstrates how this might look in practice (chapter five) and the result is indeed more informative than the 'neutral' scientific observations of many contemporary religionists.

What of the other academic disciplines, however? Might not D'Costa's Roman Catholic university send us back into an era of magisterial oppression of theologically unsettling scientific discoveries (Copernicus, Galileo *et. al.*)? Exploring the relationship between cosmology and theology, he employs the thought of John Paul II to show how a Christian university might allow for the legitimate autonomy of both the sciences and theology whilst seeking their unity through a dialogue over their methods and presuppositions. This conversation is girded by the shared truth that all disciplines are bounded within God's creation, 'whose proper object of study is finally and only finally understood within the light of God's overall purpose for all creation, the coming of God's kingdom' (p. 214). So governed, the anthropocentric instrumentalism which has driven the modern university is replaced by the broader vision of humanity, society and creation elucidated by the church; the Christian university would thus be an institution of enviable freedom and vision, providing an authentic forum for conflicting worldviews in an ethical context.

D'Costa's vision of a post-liberal university is radical and, as he himself admits, possibly utopian. Indeed, the pragmatist will probably ask whether the academic space has really been so defiled by an atheistic secularism as to make genuine public dialogue impossible. Might it not be preferable in our present situation for Theology to start enthusiastically *conversing* with the other university faculties, encouraging the many worldviews there represented to clash constructively, rather than hiding behind the walls of a Christian university. When modern Christian thought is commonly represented to consist of nothing more than creationism and a peculiar obsession with sexual ethics, the need for this kind of continued engagement with 'secular' thinking seems pressing. We may even be surprised by the willingness of others within the secularized academy to work for that kind of

diversity which D'Costa so desires; the appeal of Richard Dawkins's worldview is clearly limited.

Such questioning may be nothing more than the tired whingeing of one still committed to the Enlightenment project and evidently others will be more sympathetic to D'Costa's assessment of modern academic behaviour. Certainly, even if his manifesto is finally thought to be impracticable in the sluggish worlds of church and university, this book remains a thought provoking and valuable contribution to a deeply emotive issue and, as a powerfully articulated call for an authentic pluralism in the public square, is worthy of a wide readership.

DANIEL D. INMAN

IN DEFERENCE TO THE OTHER: LONERGAN AND CONTEMPORARY CONTINENTAL THOUGHT edited by Jim Kanaris and Mark J. Doorley, *State University of New York Press*, Albany NY, 2004, Pp. 187, £22 hbk.

DEVELOPING THE LONERGAN LEGACY: HISTORICAL, THEORETICAL, AND EXISTENTIAL THEMES by Frederick E. Crowe, *University of Toronto Press*, Toronto, 2004, Pp. 400, £45 hbk.

More than twenty years after his death, the Canadian thinker Bernard Lonergan refuses to be categorised: priest, Jesuit, theologian, philosopher, medievalist, methodologist, dogmatician, Thomist, teacher, essayist – all are fair but variously partial descriptions. At first sight, then, it might be regretted that Lonergan's work has attracted so devoted but so particular a following. The sheer breadth of his work is one reason – there is a lifetime's study in his output, as Frederick Crowe's collection makes clear. Another might be Lonergan's emphasis on the way things are done – the ways in which human beings come to know and understand things, the ways in which they apply those understandings to religious and philosophical discourse, and Christian theology specifically. Those who find persuasive the epistemological and metaphysical arguments of *Insight* and/or are attracted by the bold programme of *Method in Theology* find in Lonergan a map which enables them at least to be able to trace a path through the endless developments in theological, philosophical and theoretical thinking. Any such school will always be more adept on its home turf than when engaging with other schools and other grounds. Lonergan himself, though far from being a writer one would call easily accessible, was nevertheless appropriately concerned with the need for theologies and philosophies to speak both beyond their particular adherents and beyond the academy itself.

These two books testify to nothing if not the enduring interest of Lonergan's work. In the case of *In Deference to the Other: Lonergan and Contemporary Continental Thought*, that testimony comes in the form of a collection of dense but highly readable essays which set Lonergan's work alongside that of some of the giants of recent thinking in the Continental tradition. In his neat Foreword, John Caputo describes that thinking as a 'philosophical scene with which Lonergan's conception intelligence as a dynamism toward God, of the mind's relentless work of questioning, and of God as the totality of answers to the totality of questions. . . can undertake serious dialogue.' That dialogue is the substance of the book.

The editors are to be congratulated for assembling a nicely varied collection both in terms of subject matter – the list of thinkers considered in one hundred and sixty pages is almost intimidating: Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Derrida, Foucault, Levinas, Kristeva, Eco, Charles Taylor to name some – and in terms of style; the essayists complement one another, James L. Marsh's discussion of his own engagement with Lonergan, and the latter's 'invitation to