

and how they saw themselves in relation to the Catholic and Orthodox communities around them.

The linguistic section examines the use of Eastern orthodox terminology in Polish, an important indicator of deeper religious influences emanating from that quarter. The general conclusion is that Poland owes far more to the Eastern tradition than it has been prepared to recognise.

The section on literature ranges from a study of Christmas carols on the Polish-Ukrainian border (another indication of cultural and religious syncretism) to the way in which the classic Russian authors, Gogol, Turgenev and Dostoyevsky, have been read by Poles. The latter is a particularly interesting article, because it reflects Polish attitudes towards Russians in general, and holds out the hope that relations between the two nations may improve now that ecumenism has entered the Polish church. There is even a study on references to Polish Catholicism in Soviet Russian literature. It turns out that these have been quite frequent, and have set the tone for the Russian approach to Polish nationality and culture. In the current climate, the author hopes that these references may help to bring the two traditional enemies closer together. Oddly though, given that most Poles can understand Russian without much trouble, the quotations, including the poetry, are translated into Polish and not quoted in the original language at all!

Finally, the section on art deals with the tradition of iconography in Poland, the existence of which is another clear sign of eastern influence. Given the growing interest in this subject, it is perhaps a pity that more space was not devoted to it, since popular art is often the surest indication of the real beliefs and traditions of a people.

The Catholic University of Lublin is to be congratulated on producing such a handsome and interesting collection of essays. The spirit of a positive ecumenism is evident throughout, and is to be greatly welcomed in an area of the world where it has not been especially prominent in the past. Specialists in East-West church relations will learn a good deal from this book, and the editors have made the task easier by providing an index, as well as a short résumé at the end of each chapter in German! Perhaps this too is symbolic, and demonstrates a desire for reconciliation not only with the traditional enemy to the East, but with the traditional enemy to the West as well!

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***Philosophical Theology of Austin Farrer*  
Brian Hebblethwaite and Edward  
Henderson (eds.)**

T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1990; 281pp.,  
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**RÉSUMÉ**

Cette série d'études concerne la théologie philosophique d'Austin Farrer. Elles défendent la thèse selon laquelle Dieu agit dans le monde, et soulignent que toute théologie sérieuse a besoin d'une métaphysique.

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

Es handelt sich um eine Reihe von Aufsätzen, die die philosophische Theologie Austin Farrers behandeln. Sie stellen eine interessante Verteidigung der Anschauung vom göttlichen Eingreifen in die Welt dar und unterstreichen die Notwendigkeit einer Metaphysik für jede ernsthafte Theologie.

The topic of divine action appears to be growing in popularity among theologians and philosophers; it is certainly a serious and important one, as the editors make clear in their introduction to this varied but interesting collection. The inspiration by Austin Farrer of its contents is not plenary, but it is marked, particularly by the rather gnomic things he had to say about double agency in *Faith and Speculation* and elsewhere. Richard Harries introduces the essays with a brief portrait of Farrer as a theologian.

It is not perhaps surprising that this reviewer found the more philosophical contributions to be of most interest. Notable among them is a purgative, therapeutic piece by William Alston 'How to Think about Divine Action'. Anyone who believes that talk of God's action must be analogical ought to read Alston, who conclusively shows that such a view rests on two unwarranted assumptions, that bodily movement is part of the meaning of 'action' and that (even if it were) it is impossible to ascribe actions to God literally. 'Even if meanings of human action terms are infected with elements that prevent them from being applied to God, simply shear off those elements and see what is left. It may be that what is left is something that can be intelligibly applied to God, and in the application of which we succeed in saying what we set out to say when we talk about God's action.'

Of the remaining essays, two or three are useful surveys of literature. David Burrell offers a largely exegetical study of Aquinas on divine action; David Brown, who continues his habit developed in *The Divine Trinity* of referring to miracles as interventions, explores the un-



promising Farrerian idea of revelation as the communication of images, and stresses the importance of what he calls natural symbols. I found this over-elaborate and unconvincing. The essays by Forsman, on identifying reference to God, McLain and Tracy (on narrative theology) all had interesting things to say. Diogenes Allen brilliantly summarises Farrer's views on divine action, and the place in them of faith and spirituality, and briefly explores further the place of faith in the recognition of God's activity, laying emphasis upon the overall coherence of the objective and the subjective or receptive features of the Christian faith.

Finally, Jeffrey Eaton, recognising the disdain that liberation theology has for metaphysical

theology, nevertheless insists that if it is to be a *theology* it must have some developed view of divine activity. He proceeds to claim that this lies (unilluminatingly enough) in the idea of God as one who cooperates with us. To try to make a connection between Austin Farrer and liberation theology is carrying the claim of inspiration a little far, I think.

The volume concludes with a curiosity; although it has no index of its own it has indexes to no less than eight other works, Austin Farrer's main writings. These have been prepared by Diogenes Allen – clearly a labour of love.

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