

of course, has a stake in this, but her presentation of the ‘*Concilium Alternative*’ is charitable and balanced. The dominant metaphor is one developed from Lieven Boeve (pp. 158-164). Thinkers from both *Communio* and *Concilium* groups understand themselves as simultaneously testators and heirs to the Catholic tradition. *Concilium*—with its project of dynamic recontextualisation—emphasises the testator’s role in judging how to apply a theological legacy to contemporary situations. *Communio* thinkers—emphasising a hermeneutic of continuity—tend to stress the need to pass on the theological inheritance intact, without corruption, noting the risk of loss or decay that accrues to each act of subjective recontextualisation. Although Rowland presents *Concilium* as an *alternative* to *Communio*, she has already acknowledged the Catholic imaginary’s capacity for both/and thinking. The two impulses might be reconcilable as dynamic forces, an interplay of centrifugal and centripetal forces that issues in a dynamic movement.

The concluding chapter considers theologies of liberation and Pope Francis’s relationship to them. There is some well-meaning rib-tickling (Boff’s ninety-eight theoretical principles for affirming the priority of praxis over theory, p. 175), apparently grounded by a concern that liberation theology simultaneously repeats the hegemony it seeks to subvert and undermines the integrity of the faith. Feminist theologies could have been given more detailed discussion, but the chapter is most interesting in its methodological assessments and consideration of culture as *locus theologicus*. The question of how to read the Aparecida document is clearly central to understanding Francis’s theological vision, but even such a tentative assessment of his papacy feels premature. In the light of subsequent events, would Rowland focus more on Francis’s engagement with Kasper? We often hear about the doctoral work of (then) Fr Bergoglio, exploring Guardini’s thought (in which a prioritisation of *logos* over *ethos* would resist the elevation of orthopraxis), but has anyone been able to access it and make a careful study?

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ON LOVE, CONFESSION, SURRENDER AND THE MORAL SELF by Ian Clausen, [Reading Augustine Series], *Bloomsbury*, New York and London, 2018, pp. xiv + 140, £17.99, pbk

Clausen’s monograph on Augustine’s early works is short but subtle. After two helpful expository chapters, we are treated to a blow by interlocutory blow account of the future saint’s engagement with the despair of Skepticism (*sic*), the omniscient folly of Manicheanism, and ultimately, his surrender of the will. Roughly speaking, Clausen shows how Augustine recovers trust in (fallible) knowing without despair, true being

without arrogance, and finally comes to accept his own responsibility for moral choice through dependence on God. On reflection, 'blow-by-blow' sounds overly combative as Augustine's quasi-Socratic conversational strategy is to identify points of agreement before gently leading us on. Clausen shows too how Augustine comes to think, read, and reflect in an engaged, participatory way, applying texts to himself. This becomes true for the reader too. As he puts it, 'by reading the early works in this invitational spirit, readers likewise uncover Augustine's fundamental objective, namely, preparation for receiving divine wisdom' (p. 27). Perhaps not surprisingly, then, I began to like this book more and more, and Augustine for that matter, as soon as I abandoned the dispassionate reviewer's stance, and even more having reflected on its reflexive account of my ignorance. Here, I suggest, is where good theology wins over religious studies: it encourages such readerly engagement.

That said, I found this a tricky yet inviting book to review. In part this was because I was unfamiliar with Augustine's early works produced during the short period from his conversion in AD 386 until his embrace of the priesthood in AD 391. My ignorance meant that I was unable to evaluate fully the validity, accuracy, and subtleties of Clausen's original exegesis. I hasten to add that I have no reason to doubt these; it was just that, for this reviewer at least, the frequent, detailed, textual excursions sometimes acted as more of a distraction from the clarity of the excellent storyline that was struggling to shine through at times.

This is a pity as Clausen's thesis is one that I am greatly intrigued by and very positive about. He excavates what in my own original discipline is known as a 'locative' account of the self and uses this to show the dynamics of knowing, being, and willing, both of Augustine's own development and, in principle, of the Christian spiritual journey in general. Briefly, it is commonplace for psychologists nowadays to state that we are embodied, related, and situated creatures. Embodied, in that our bio-psycho-social nature means that we are creatures of matter and flesh as well as spirit, with needs, desires, and relationships with the world and each other. But we are also situated: creatures of place. As such we find ourselves indwelling, and *navigating through* physical, social, and cultural worlds. Where a theological analysis such as Clausen's is potentially ahead of secular moral psychology is in its assumption that such self-positioning is inevitably morally and spiritually weighted, and that true knowing ultimately ends in dependence on God in a 'misty space'. It thus makes perfect sense to speak of a moral-self engaging in a process of re-location to a position of radical dependence, not one of omniscience or false omnipotence. Non-trivially, however, such a re-positioning entails more than a mere psychodynamic re-centring; it crucially places the person in a different moral landscape. Change your position and the world looks entirely different with new action-possibilities; change your position and the mental models in and

through which you deal with reality alter too. For this to happen a new question must sometimes break through.

Clausen exemplifies this clearly in his discussion of *Free Choice of the Will*. From imagining himself as looking outside at all creation and its dependence on God, puzzled by the source of evil, Augustine asks ‘where does evil come from?’, but fails to turn the question back on himself as an agent. Later, after engaging with the Platonists, he comes to ask accept responsibility for and to position himself *within* the problem. Now the world – with all its works and pomps – looks quite different as he begins to take responsibility for the issue. He is then able to revisit Adam’s place and to take as his model the new Adam in a re-envisioned landscape, Christ.

Nit-picking alert: I mentioned earlier my occasional loss of the wood for all the trees. As if reflecting this, the book’s title is seemingly trying to cover all the bases and might have profited from some conceptual pruning. At times I wondered too whom it is Clausen is arguing against, if anyone. What is the standard view against which his thesis is postulated? If this does not exist in any simple sense, all the more reason, perhaps, to emphasise the narrative arc more boldly, and to *illustrate* this with textual exegesis instead of so patiently excavating the story, piece by piece, from the texts. For my taste, more foregrounding of the storyline would have helped, raising the question whether there is a bigger, bolder book to be written building on the present monograph? But again, maybe this is the question of an impatient, modern reviewer, originally schooled in the sciences, too quickly looking for closure. I confess to being unsure.

Questions moderns do legitimately ask, however, are ‘who am I?’, or ‘what is my identity?’, but more telling it seems are the questions ‘where am I?’ and ‘what can I see from where I am?’. In response, Clausen writes, ‘Augustine’s advice to those people on the way is to look up: not turning away from the goodness of creation, but in the sense of taking part in the *same source of goodness*... In this way, he teaches them to dwell in creation by loving what enfolds all of creation into itself’ (p. 128). Following Augustine, he elucidates these issues in a sophisticated way. They are too important to be ignored.

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