

discussion of the essential characteristics of these traditions, the role of ecumenical dialogue, and the place of religion in the twenty-first-century North American context.

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Catholic Theology after Kierkegaard. By Joshua Furnal. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. xvi + 255 pages. \$110.00.

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Among the many useful secondary sources produced on Kierkegaard in recent years, this book fills a unique role by examining Kierkegaard's reception by Catholic *ressourcement* theology in the mid-twentieth century. Originally developed as a Durham University dissertation, the book makes two moves. First, it provides a "more ecumenical" perspective on Kierkegaard by showing that his theological anthropology and nonhistoricist theology are closely aligned with the aims of *ressourcement* theology (chaps. 1–2). Especially useful here is Joshua Furnal's persuasive thesis that Kierkegaard's *Works of Love* presents a "parody" of Luther's extrinsicist theology of grace, replacing it with a theological anthropology quite compatible with Catholicism (19–28). Second, it examines the contact between Kierkegaard and three *ressourcement* theologians—Henri de Lubac, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Cornelio Fabro—in order to demonstrate Kierkegaard's ongoing importance for Catholic theology (chaps. 3–5). Readers primarily interested in *ressourcement* theology may wish to turn immediately to these deeper engagements.

Perhaps the most intriguing argument of the book (yet also the most questionable) is Furnal's claim that Kierkegaard "distinctively shaped" de Lubac's confrontation with modernity. Furnal's assembly of arguments is impressive: their theological foci are similar (nature and grace, paradox, interiority, "infinite qualitative difference" between God and humans); de Lubac lauds Kierkegaard as "the herald of transcendence" in a "century carried away by immanentism" (see *The Drama of Atheist Humanism*); de Lubac adopts Kierkegaard's "pedagogical strategy" of enticing readers to think for themselves (for other arguments, see 111–33). Why did de Lubac not document his dependence on Kierkegaard? Furnal theorizes that Pius XII's condemnation of "existentialism" in *Humani Generis* forced de Lubac to conceal his use of Kierkegaard after 1950. The chief difficulty in evaluating this creative thesis is the absence of substantive discussion about Maurice Blondel, who was explicitly a source for many of de Lubac's theological themes. Though Blondel

likely never read Kierkegaard (158 n. 30), deep similarities exist between them (the necessity of human action, the inability of philosophical reason to grasp faith, the preservation of paradox), and it is difficult to decide which philosopher should be credited with supplying de Lubac's theological categories (it seems significant that where Blondel and Kierkegaard disagree—i.e., on the role of tradition and the communal nature of Christianity—de Lubac sides with Blondel). Yet even if Furnal's argument is not completely persuasive, he is surely successful in promoting further engagement with Kierkegaard.

Furnal engages Balthasar's criticism of Kierkegaard on the nature of anxiety and the "hiddenness" of Christ's divinity, to contend that (1) Balthasar should have regarded Kierkegaard as an ally, and (2) Kierkegaard provides useful correctives to Balthasar's anthropology and Christology (this first contention may prove more persuasive than the second). As Furnal sees it, Balthasar's designation of anxiety as a consequence of sin causes Balthasar to unnecessarily bifurcate anxiety into a "sinful" form that distances persons from God and a "mystical" form that can be "venerated as ... participation in Christ's passion" (145–55). Much simpler to say, with Kierkegaard, that anxiety is a universal human constitution that serves as a catalyst for movement either toward God (in faith) or toward sin. Also much simpler is to consider Balthasar's sharp criticism of Kierkegaard's Christology (in which Christ's divinity is unrecognizable apart from faith) unfounded, since Balthasar himself must admit that recognition of Christ's divinity is "a *limited* capacity available only to Christians" through faith (165–72, emphasis in the original). While readers may still find Balthasar's position more convincing, Furnal effectively demonstrates that Kierkegaard's theology is much closer to Balthasar's project than Balthasar himself believed.

Finally, Furnal enables readers to envision a "Kierkegaardian-Thomism" by presenting the work of Cornelio Fabro for the first time in English. Most surprising is Fabro's use of Kierkegaard's ecclesiology as a response to Rahner's "non-explicit faith." Fabro compares John Henry Newman and Kierkegaard to show that their similar understandings of the "church militant" and "primacy of revelation" locate their ecclesiologies together nearer the mainstream of Catholic theology and offer better models for resistance to secularization than Rahner's ecclesiological model.

Overall, this book's combination of original research, creative thought, and clearly developed arguments make it a valuable scholarly contribution to both Kierkegaard studies and *ressourcement* theology.

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