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### BOOK REVIEWS

**Luigi Gioia**, *The Theological Epistemology of Augustine's De Trinitate*, Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2008, pbk 2016. ISBN: 978-0-19-877920-9. Pages: xx + 330.

**Matthew W. Bates**, *The Birth of the Trinity: Jesus, God and Spirit in New Testament and Early Christian Interpretations of the Old Testament*, Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2015, pbk 2016. ISBN: 978-0-19-877924-7. Pages: xii + 234.

**Brandon Gallaher**, *Freedom and Necessity in Modern Trinitarian Theology*, Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-19-874460. Pages: xx + 298.

**Michael Gorman**, *Aquinas on the Metaphysics of the Hypostatic Union*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. ISBN: 978-1107-15532-9. Pages: xi + 177.

**George Westhaver, ed.**, *A Transforming Vision: Knowing and Loving the Triune God*, London: SCM Press, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-334-05568-6. Pages: xix + 252.

**Dominic Legge, OP**, *The Trinitarian Christology of St Thomas Aquinas*, Oxford (UK): Oxford University Press, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-19879419-6. Pages: xvii + 261.

<sup>1</sup>Five new books on various aspects of the Trinity, plus a new paperback, reveal a remarkable outpouring of interest in this central mystery of the Christian faith. For their commitment to publishing Christian works, Oxford University Press must surely be thanked first of all publishers, with credit for four of these six works; to which might be added Giles Emery and Matthew Levering, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity* (OUP, 2011). Chronologically, Bates focuses on the early Church, Gioia on Augustine, Legge and Gorman on Thomas Aquinas, Gallaher on the modern period; while Westhaver has brought together a collection that is both historical and systematic.

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<sup>1</sup> This review was first published in Heythrop Journal. It is reprinted in Asian Horizons with the kind permission of the editor.

All these publications maintain the high standards of scholarship and presentation which have come to be expected from their respective publishers.

The works of Bates and Gioia, especially, show how arduous it was for the Christian community to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity which we almost take for granted today. In this, Bates provides a fine blend of Biblical exegesis – in which the dramatic reading of Scripture formed an important element – combined with history and theology; and Gioia gives us a fresh study of the most influential writer on the Trinity from the Latin-speaking West, Augustine of Hippo, and his focus on the primacy of love in this wondrous mystery. Both authors are university professors of theology, Bates at Quincy in USA and Gioia at S. Anselmo in Rome.

Thomas Aquinas is well known for his five ways – or proofs – for the existence of God, but perhaps less so for his teaching on the Trinity. However, Dominic Legge, a Dominican friar like Aquinas, brings his formidable learning to bear on this teaching. The Foreword claims: “This work demonstrates the essentially Trinitarian structure of the Christology of St Thomas. It is the first monograph that treats this in a comprehensive way.” Gorman’s work, with its treatment of Aquinas’s teaching on the metaphysics of the hypostatic union, is more obviously philosophical in addition to being theological. Both authors are based in USA.

The modern era is the focus of the book by Brandon Gallaher, lecturer in theology at Exeter University. He examines the tension between God and the world in the Trinitarian theologies of Sergii Bulgakov (1871-1944), Karl Barth (1886-1968) and Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-88). Present-day questions and concerns are confronted more directly.

The sixth book, edited by George Westhaver and containing some twenty contributions, combines a wide range of topics with a long time-scale and an international group of writers. Beginning with Andrew Moore’s “Tribute” to Professor John Webster, the book moves on to “Eucharistic priority in Trinitarian theology” by Jarred Mercer, and then: “An exploration of Trinitarian space” by Jeremy Begbie; “Theophany as divine hospitality in Origen and Chrysostom” by Hans Boersma; “The gospels on the knowledge of God” by Markus Boehmuel: “Knowing and loving the Triune God: the Pauline epistles” by Jennifer Strawbridge”; “The Trinity in the mystical theology of the Christian East” by Kallistos Ware; chapters on Augustine of Hippo, Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Cranmer, Richard Hooker, Sergei Bulgakov and Hans Urs von Balthasar by,

respectively, Paige E. Hochschild, Richard Conrad, Gavin Dunbar, Gary Thorne, Andrew Louth and Lucy Gardner; three short “sermons” by Johathan Goodall: “Trinitarian communion,” “Caught in the divine net” and “Foretaste of the new creation”; the Gothic revival in Britain, by Ayla Lepine; Trinitarian philosophy, by Lydia Schumacher; “The Trinity and the moral life” by Oliver O’Donovan; and “Conclusion: Knowing and loving the triune God” by Rowan Williams. Readers will be grateful, too, for the indices of biblical references, names and subjects at the end of the book. **Norman Tanner, SJ** (tanner@unigre.it)