

thought of as a primordial event in which all of his properties or features (omniscience, omnipotence, etc.) are together present in the pure act that is God. Just as one event can be described in more than one way – the act of *Booth committing treason* and the act of *Booth killing Lincoln* – so the event that is God can be described as *him being omnipotent* or *him being omniscient*. Both descriptions are true and refer to one and the same actual state of affairs, God himself.

In sum, *Creation* as a whole has a host of positive features which contribute to its overall value. While much of the content might be on the level for an intermediate or advanced philosophy reader, McCann's ability as a communicator allows for the possibility that a lay student comprehend the majority of the content. Further, McCann provides a thorough defence of a medieval conception of God, taking his time to show the coherence of some of the morally difficult doctrines such as timelessness and simplicity. I recommend this book for anyone looking for a defence of the God of Augustine, Aquinas, and Anselm.

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Corey L. Barnes. *Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Thought: The Christology of Aquinas and Its Historical Contexts (Studies and Texts 178)*. PIMS, 2012.

In the stream of scholarship on Thomas Aquinas' thought, Corey L. Barnes' study of the wills of Christ stands out as a good example of historical theology: a careful reading and evaluation of the sources, clear and accessible presentation of the historical influences and opponents, and a comprehensive analysis. The author is now assistant professor of Religion at Oberlin College, Ohio. *Christ's Two Wills* originated at Notre Dame University, Indiana, as a doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Joseph Wawrykow. The book version included more material, notably the last chapter where Aquinas is put in dialogue with Giles of Rome, Peter Olivi and John Duns Scotus.

Central to the whole debate on Christ's two wills is the correct interpretation of Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane (Math. 26:39). Barnes' draws attention to a difference between patristic and medieval approaches to this issue (chapters one to four). Generally speaking the

Church Fathers were concerned with the number of wills in Christ: were there two or one? By contrast, the medieval theologians focused on the nature of the human will; the early medieval theologians (e.g. William of Auxerre), for example, on the non-contrariety of the two wills, whereas from Albert the Great a new departure is evident in the claim that there is a kind (non sinful) contrariety in the two wills often preserving conformity of the human will with the divine (pp. 79 ff.). Barnes' research is valuable for highlighting the subtle differences in nuances and terminology between the various medieval writers. An important development is the distinction between will of sensuality and will of reason in the human will.

Moreover, most medieval theologians had not read the early church councils and formulae and were therefore driven by 'vastly different purposes' than the patristic writers (p. 18). As is well known, Aquinas is an exception since he was able to study the acts of the great church councils and central patristic authorities (around 1260). This profoundly influenced his presentation in the *Summa Theologiae*, as Barnes shows.

Having established Aquinas' relation to earlier theologians, not the least Albert, the scene is set for chapter five which is an integrated reading of the whole Christology of *Summa Theologiae* III, qq. 1-26. The key concept is 'fittingness' (*convenio*), which systematically informs the whole of the larger *Summa*. Qualifying his understanding of fittingness against other scholars (Chenu, Torell, Persson and Corbin) Barnes sides with his supervisor, Wawrykow, arguing that fittingness is modelled on the notion of wisdom (pp. 183 ff.). Wisdom, says Barnes, pertains to the intellect (why?) and the will (how?). In Christology fittingness is used first to show the 'why' of the incarnation in the first three questions and then the 'how' in the rest of the treatment.

Finally, I will make two critical points. First, Barnes' maybe most final and interesting chapter is all too short. Here he juxtaposes (primarily) John Duns Scotus' views with that of Aquinas' on the two wills of Christ. After a brief presentation of Scotus' view Barnes answers an objection of Richard Cross who has argued that Aquinas' view of the two wills results either in causal over-determination or in an impossibility of distinguishing between ordinary human natures' secondary causality and Christ's. Cross defends Scotus' distinction between 'causal' and 'predicative' aspects of incarnational agency which are not, in his view, marked by the dilemma Aquinas ends up in. (The causal aspect locates the causal origin of the *theandric* acts in the natures and these acts are

predicated of the (remote) subject of the Logos.) Having compared and contrasted the two doctors, Barnes concludes by saying that the differences between the angelic and the subtle doctor are not that great after all and that these can be explained by different terminology and starting points. Even though the analysis is careful, the reader is left with the feeling that at least another chapter would have been required to reach such an irenic conclusion.

Secondly, (and one that maybe explains the first point) one detects a somewhat hesitant and overly careful approach to scholastic terminology. The introduction contains some seemingly uncalled for apologies for studying scholastic Christology and engage in metaphysical reasoning. At one point, the author suggests, that by studying the actions of Christ, instead of the metaphysics, we can be freed of from metaphysical speculation. I think this is misleading: Scholastic theology is constantly engaged in metaphysical reasoning and a proper study of Christology needs to stay engaged (as Barnes' *actually* does, despite his apologetic remarks) since scholastic treatments of causal concepts in Christology are entrenched in metaphysical concepts.

Such remarks aside, Barnes' study is exemplary in its depth, clarity of exposition and grasp of the sources. Finally, the author has the laudable desire to have his work stimulate contemporary theological thinking by looking at medieval theological thinking.