

word of Christ" (150). While *sacramenta sunt propter homines* is certainly axiomatic, it does not exclude the obligation to discuss the sacraments *in se*, an enterprise M. would consider meaningless.

As is clear from beginning to end, M. assumes that modern Catholics find the doctrine of transubstantiation "embarrassing at the present time" (231). His first book intends to remedy this situation. Perhaps we should ask, in the spirit of Lonergan himself, Is it so? And if it is the case that many Catholics find eucharistic theology to be mortally deficient, is this because of a genuine deficit in theological acumen and expression or because the Eucharist necessarily transgresses the limits of reason? In either case, if the intention is to make the Eucharist more intelligible for the popular imagination, it is not clear how transposing traditional metaphysical terms into Lonergan's critical-metaphysical vocabulary will alleviate the situation.

Perhaps the key issue to ask of M. is how he perceives the relationship between philosophy and theology, for it often seems, at least methodologically, that for M. the latter is ancillary to the former (for which he criticizes Chauvet). Thus in his use of Lonergan's philosophy, M. comes to view the Eucharist primarily as Christ's "meaning." Is it so? Is "meaning" a faithful interpretation of "body and blood," or is it a sanitizing of the church's faith? Whether M. convinces his readers or not, his challenging book, with its patient and focused scholarship, deserves serious attention by Lonergan scholars and sacramental theologians alike.

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Partakers of the Divine: Contemplation and the Practice of Philosophy. By Jacob Holsinger Sherman. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014. Pp. xi + 283. \$39.

"Is it possible," Sherman asks, "to have not just a philosophy (or theology) *about* contemplation but to have instead a genuinely *contemplative* philosophy?" (2). S. argues for the renewal of such an approach to philosophy, that is, philosophy as grounded in the living practice of contemplative activity. His thought comes mostly out of the medieval Christian contemplative tradition, especially Nicolas of Cusa and Anselm, although he also reaches back to Plato and the ancient Greek understanding of *theoria*, as well as forward to thinkers such as Pierre Hadot, Jean-Luc Marion, William Desmond, and some contemporary philosophers of religion.

By "contemplation," S. means a species of knowledge that knows its object by acquaintance, that is, through participation in its object. More specifically, he interprets the practice of the contemplation of God as a philosophical practice. Rather than understanding mystical experience as an affective experience detached from knowledge of its object, S. argues that contemplation is a way of knowing, but one suited to an object (God) unlike other objects. God is the source of both the contemplator's possibility of knowing and being, such that even the intellectual experience of knowing into darkness is still a form of knowledge made possible through participation.

S.'s main sources are Christian thinkers who prayed, thought, and wrote in the context of monasticism. I found his nuancing of Anselm's and Nicolas of Cusa's thought in terms of their contemplative context to be especially illuminating. For example, S. argues persuasively that Anselm's *Proslogion* is best understood in terms of taking his reader through a transformation of what he names the "adorative intellect," an aspect of reason that both seeks to know and to love its object. Anselm offers not a detached argument for the existence of God but rather describes the journey of a person of prayer who begins with "faith seeking understanding" and ends with contemplative enjoyment (89). The *Proslogion* exhibits the path and fruitfulness of the monastic practice of spiritual exercise for a reader who is still on the path.

Two chapters on Nicolas of Cusa address the question of whether the modern world can accommodate and integrate contemplative practice. S. is optimistic that we can read Nicolas as both modern and medieval. Nicolas offers an ontology in which all being, even the self who seeks to know God, is iconic. Everything that is can be known as an icon of God, and the self that seeks God is also iconic and participates in God by its very being, thus making possible the self's finding what it seeks even as what it seeks is beyond the reach of our categories.

S. also engages a variety of contemporary thinkers in the philosophy of religion. His acute critique argues that Marion's thought universalizes the purgative part of the contemplative journey but never develops the illuminative for which the purgative prepares. While no vision or understanding of God is perfectly adequate, the path of contemplation moves toward "increasing adequacy" (64). S. argues that a genuinely contemplative philosophy will posit neither a naïve and immovable metaphysics nor the end of metaphysics, but rather affirm a metaphysics that changes the knowing subject as he or she continues on the journey of contemplation. S. also takes issue with philosophers of religion who argue that religion is primarily about ritual practices, arguing persuasively that such accounts build an insurmountable divide between the praying person and God in a way that is foreign to the experience of union.

I was left wondering, however, what S. would say to those who find themselves outside his Christian theistic standpoint (and I offer this criticism as a Catholic who actively practices contemplation). How can one invite into this conversation atheists and agnostics? Would they find a contemplative philosophy of the sort that S. envisions as hospitable to their concerns, or are such persons merely contemporary versions of Anselm's fool? While the unknowing of union is a kind of knowing, it is an opportunity not only for knowledge of God but also for a deepened humility and as hospitality. I wondered what S. would think of Richard Kearney's work on anatheism, or of, say, Buddhist practices of contemplation in which the object of contemplation is not understood theistically. Similar experiences can produce quite different metaphysical explanations.

Nonetheless, I found S's argument that the contemplative journey can and should be a part of the practice of philosophy to be engaging and persuasive.

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