

adequate or helpful . . . in describing the dynamics of cross-racial, transformative love” (156). He needs to develop this important insight further.

P.’s book is a breath of fresh air. Among the small but growing number of white Catholics attempting to address racism and white supremacy as theological problems, P.’s work is unique and one of the finest.

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Figure filosofiche della modernità ebraica. By Stéphane Mosès. Translated from the French by Ottavio Di Grazia. Naples: Luciano, 2012. Pp. 155. €16.

Translated from the original French edition, the present work brings together six lectures delivered by the late Stéphane Mosès (1931–2007) at the Institut catholique of Paris in 2006, while he was the holder of the Étienne Gilson Chair in Metaphysics. The authors he treats—Franz Rosenzweig, Walter Benjamin, Gershom Scholem, and Emmanuel Lévinas—reflect his lifelong passion both for these specific thinkers as well as for the larger metaphysical questions about meaning they raise with respect to modern Jewish thought as a whole. Christian readers may detect echoes of the debate between a hermeneutics of continuity versus one of rupture in the central and even more radical distinction guiding the argument of this book: between “normative modernity,” which conserves the resources of tradition all the while bringing it into dialogue with the people of today, and “critical modernity,” which abandons traditional metaphysics altogether.

The final chapter on Lévinas is the high-point of M.’s ruminations. He invites readers to accommodate the two clashing visions of modernity previously mentioned by going back to a layer of tradition we have never visited, through a return that is also a going beyond, where the sound of God is allowed to resonate with a liberating lightness, and without being weighed down by the potential burden of centuries of discourse.

M.’s reflections, which distill the results of a lifetime of thought, could be fruitfully pondered by Christian theologians engaged with modernity, and also usefully compared and contrasted with Hilary Putnam’s decidedly different approach in *Jewish Philosophy as a Guide to Life* (2008).

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Aquinas: On the Beginning and End of Human Life. By Fabrizio Amerini. Translated from the Italian by Mark Henninger. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2013. Pp. xxii + 260. \$29.95.

In recent years many philosophers and theologians have attempted to bring Thomas Aquinas into conversation with contemporary bioethics. So much ink has been spilled

on this topic that one wonders whether anything of interest remains to be said. Amerini manages to do something new by doing something old: he offers a nuanced and careful examination of Aquinas's own claims about the beginning and end of life. Only after his examination is complete does he attempt to apply Aquinas's position to contemporary debates about the beginning and end of life. Even those who find the latter unconvincing will find much of value in the former.

Although the book is entitled *Aquinas on the Beginning and End of Human Life*, the vast majority of A.'s account concerns Aquinas's view of the beginning of human life, that is, the embryo. Scholars of Aquinas will find much that is valuable and little that is controversial in A.'s careful and detailed exposition of Aquinas's embryology. He thoroughly canvasses Aquinas's treatment of embryology, notes changes and discrepancies that occur in various texts, and carefully explains the metaphysical underpinnings of Aquinas's claims. He argues that although Aquinas did not view the embryo and the human being as numerically the same entity, he nonetheless recognized a continuity between the embryo and the mature human being. Such a conclusion is entirely reasonable.

A.'s application of Aquinas's view to contemporary debates about abortion and euthanasia is more controversial. He argues, for instance, that because Aquinas recognized a continuity of subject between the embryo and the mature human being, he would recognize the unique moral worth of even early embryos. Nevertheless, A. also believes that because Aquinas did not recognize a numerical identity between the embryo and the mature human being, he would not necessarily oppose all early abortions, and would perhaps be prepared to make exceptions in cases of rape and incest. A claim like this, it seems to me, needs a more sustained defense than A. offers. Nonetheless, this is an excellent book, which will be of great value even to those who disagree with its ultimate conclusion.

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Dust Bound for Heaven: Explorations in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas. By Reinhard Hütter. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012. Pp. x + 511. \$50.

Hütter, professor at Duke University, positions himself within the new wave of neo-Thomism, including others such as Romanus Cessario, Thomas Joseph White, Lawrence Feingold, and Steven A. Long. This book is a loosely connected series of essays that seeks to advance the argument that Thomas Aquinas is the common doctor of the Catholic Church, and that neo-Thomism is the privileged way of doing theology in the service of "an overdue theological renewal after a dire period of pervasive theological fragmentation and disorientation" (5). H.'s work here presents an accessible introduction to this school of thought, while at the same time evidencing its main weaknesses.

Several sections of the book—in particular, the first section, which offers a MacIntyre-influenced critique of modernity and a later section on free will and