

Divine Causality and Human Free Choice: Domingo Báñez, Physical Premotion, and the Controversy De Auxiliis Revisited. By Robert Joseph Matava. Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 252. Boston: Brill, 2016. Pp. xi + 365. \$194.

It was about time that a theologian would try to tackle the controversies on grace again. It is all the more exciting that Matava does so not merely by a detailed historical analysis of Báñez's concept of physical premotion which he contrasts with Molina's solution, but also by a profound systematic discussion of their merits. It is hardly surprising that scholars have shied away from the topic, because Báñez's work is not translated and his Latin not easy to penetrate. Moreover, this study illuminates the Thomistic tradition by showing how and why Báñez arrived at the concept of "physical promotion" and also that he insisted on absolute faithfulness to Aquinas. The basic question of the scholarly debate between Báñez and Molina is of course that over grace and human freedom, and M. shows with amazing mastery of the sources how interpreters have misunderstood Báñez (especially the term "physical") while also noting his limitations. This becomes obvious in the discussion of Lonergan's solution to the grace/freedom problem (213–242), which hitherto scholars have seen as the last word on the topic. It is indeed fascinating to see that neither Báñez nor Molina could foresee Lonergan's critique that the physical promotion creates a *res media* between God and human action which means that either the human action doesn't follow with infallible certainty and is free, or follows with certainty and isn't free, or as M. summarizes it, "God, as transcendent creator, does not use means in causing. Strictly speaking, there is no *res media* between God and his effects, just the dependence of God's effects on God" (222). Yet, M. is not happy with Lonergan's solution either and subjects it to a thorough critique, also in the light of recent scholarship on Aquinas, and argues that the "total personal creation" view of human freedom was first suggested by Antonin Sertillanges, David Burrell, and Germain Grisez (278–319).

M.'s book is no easy read; it is highly technical and it demands careful reading. Yet the reward is that one is masterfully guided through the "battlefield" of one of theology's most exciting controversies. After reading this book, one better understands why the controversies on grace were the last time Catholic theology held the center stage in a worldwide intellectual debate.

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Homo Sapiens: Die Krone der Schöpfung. Herausforderung der Evolutionstheorie und die Antwort der Philosophie. By Martin Rhonheimer. Wiesbaden: Springer, 2016. Pp. 287. \$59.99.

The number of books that deal with the challenges evolution poses to tradition, philosophy, and anthropology are legion; yet, there are not many books that offer a sound defense of the full compatibility of evolutionary biology and the Christian philosophical

tradition without falling into the traps of either (so-called) Intelligent Design, creationism, or a confused metaphysics.

Rhonheimer defends in his clearly structured book the independence of the natural sciences to explain natural phenomena and their methodological naturalism. In an overview of modern evolutionary theory he shows (15–38) that “unpredictability” is no longer the centerpiece of its concern, but rather the aimless accumulation of complexity through selective adaptation, which leads to the existence of the human person. In this section he also clarifies the misunderstandings of contemporary biologists about the concept of teleology. In the next chapter he treats the questions the sciences hitherto have not answered successfully, such as the coming into existence of life itself. Yet, R. sees philosophically no problem in accepting chemical evolution as the reason that brings the first life into being, but sees an inherent difficulty to explain the mental sphere of the human person naturalistically (39–52). It is refreshing how he refutes in the following chapter (53–91) the thesis that modern evolutionary theory implies materialism and atheism, but also the metaphysically confused attempts to develop a theological evolutionism. The fallacious arguments of creationism and Intelligent Design are treated in the fourth chapter (93–123); Intelligent Design and creationism fail not only because they mingle metaphysics and science, but also because of their inherently weak concepts of nature and God.

With chapter 5 the book reaches its climax as R. develops here a robust defense of Aristotelian-Thomistic teleology while refuting masterfully the fallacious anti-teleological arguments of Hume, Kant, and Swinburne (124–162); it is in my view the best and clearest outline of teleology published in a long time. Chapter 6 attempts to bridge evolutionary biology and anthropology by offering a defense of *hylomorphism*, which avoids the pitfalls of monism and dualism (see also William Jaworski, *Structure and the Metaphysics of the Mind: How Hylomorphism Solves the Mind/Body Problem*). The last two chapters wrestle with how philosophers and theologians should approach evolution. He rejects the idea to interpret the process of evolution as creation because the latter is to be understood as the relation of the world to transcendent being (248), and demonstrates how the hylomorphic idea of a person strengthens the concept of human dignity instead of diminishing it (252).

This very readable, witty, and intellectually stimulating book is a must-read for everyone interested in how Christian theology can approach the sciences and evolution.

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