

Richard SCHENK, *Revelations of Humanity. Anthropological Dimensions of Theological Controversies* (Thomistic Ressourcement Series, 20). Washington D.C., The Catholic University of America Press, 2022, xvi-461 p., 14,5 × 22,2 cm, ISBN 978-0-8132-3552-3

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que les non-dominicains qui liront ce texte splendide y trouveront sûrement une encourageante inspiration.

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Richard SCHENK, **Revelations of Humanity. Anthropological Dimensions of Theological Controversies** (Thomistic Ressourcement Series, 20). Washington D.C., The Catholic University of America Press, 2022, xvi-461 p., 14,5 × 22,2 cm, ISBN 978-0-8132-3552-3.

Although Richard Schenk is an American – a member of the Western Province of the Dominican Order –, he lived in Germany for several years and he wrote in German all the articles that now constitute this book and that were translated into English by Michael J. Miller under Schenk's supervision. His Acknowledgments make us aware of his personal and intellectual solidarities, especially in the Dominican and Thomistic networks.

His Introduction states that divine manifestation in our history is not only a revelation of God, but also a revelation of the human person; hence the author's title and subtitle, "Revelations of *Humanity: Anthropological Dimensions of Theological Controversies*" (emphases added). Thus the recurrent and unifying leitmotiv in this collection of articles is the question of whether the (biblical) covenant can be matched with the hope it generates, or continually disappointed in our unstable world.

Part I, titled "Omnis Homo Mendax?," asks "what falsity can tell us about truth" (2-3). Part II, titled "Gaudium et Spes, Luctus et Angor," "investigates each of the four elements that the Second Vatican Council in the opening sentence of its Pastoral Constitution *On the Church in the World of this Time* identified as constitutive of the common space of today's church and today's world" (4). And Part III, titled "Ecumenical and Interreligious Encounters," "deals with revelations of humanity as they appear in the context of ecumenical and interreligious encounters, where, too, the limitations of the partners involved come to light and yet can, if recognized, also become *loci gratiae*" (5).

The book is part of a series called "Thomistic Ressourcement." This raises the question of whom the author addresses himself to: can this writing reach an audience that would be larger than the Thomistic one? From time to time Schenk uses untranslated Latin words or phrases and regularly, almost on every page, unexplained conceptual terminology and excessively long sentences, which bring together too many ideas. The result risks being a discouragement felt by numerous readers who are cultured without being familiar with philosophical and theological concepts, and who desire to drink from Thomas Aquinas's well of wisdom but can hardly drink from it as offered in this volume.

Nonetheless, all in all, this volume is full of relevant philosophical questions and nuanced comments that considerably matter for theologians (and philosophers alike). It has the merit of being ecumenical-minded, while its expositions of numerous

sources – Greek, medieval, modern and contemporary – are impressive. This collection of essays can be situated in the genre of “historical theology”; at the end of each chapter, it offers us the definitions and principles that constitute a sketch of the solution to a basic issue, albeit not the solution itself.

Actually historical theology, although it differs from systematic theology or systematic philosophy, is indispensable in a collaborative endeavour. We can count as systematicians both Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan; however, while Rahner is present in 24 passages, Lonergan is never mentioned (see the “Index of Names”).

The entry “Schenk” in the Bibliography, which contains a long list of his articles in German and English, and where no volume in English by himself is mentioned, seems to indicate that *Revelations of Humanity* is his first one in English. Whatever is the case, this book surely demonstrates that Richard Schenk is a significant voice in Christian philosophy and theology.

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