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Jordan Hillebert, ed.

T&T Clark Companion to Henri de Lubac. New York: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2017.

Pp. xx + 492. Ebook, \$136.80.

Newcomers to the study of Henri de Lubac will be able to pass for experts after reading this excellent collection of essays, and experts will find their understanding enriched by fresh and challenging insights. This book succeeds in the two ways that a companion volume should: it introduces, and it elevates. While drawing in the uninitiated, it also advances the scholarly conversation. Although this is a pricey volume, which may not be affordable for many individuals and perhaps not even for some smaller academic libraries with limited resources, those that can afford it or manage some access to it can rest assured that it is of the highest quality.

The first five chapters, gathered together under the heading, “Henri de Lubac in Context,” go far beyond the standard biographical sketches or bibliographic summaries that one might expect to find in such a section. They situate de Lubac within a detailed historical picture of significant shifts and tensions in French Catholic theology, philosophy, and politics from the start of the nineteenth century through the end of the twentieth. Jordan Hillebert contends that the post-conciliar, anti-Joachimite de Lubac, who is sometimes deemed more “conservative” because he bemoans the putative emergence of a new age of the spirit disconnected from ecclesial tradition, is engaged in defending the same paradoxical relationship between natural desire and supernatural grace that he had defended in his earlier, ostensibly more “progressive” work. Tracey Rowland sensitively treats de Lubac’s conflict with “neo-scholasticism of the strict observance,” not as a story of heroes and villains, but as a story of different theological dispositions and personalities, which continues in Anglophone theology today. Francesca Aran Murphy makes the intriguing case that, notwithstanding his love for patristics, de Lubac can be read as a genuine if unconventional (because Blondelian) Thomist. Jacob W. Wood illuminates the nineteenth century pre-history of *ressourcement*, arguing persuasively that Dom Prosper Guéranger, Jean-Baptiste Lacordaire, and August Gratry antici-
pated the main contours of de Lubac’s so-called “new theology.” And Aaron

Riches discloses the subterranean yet profound influence that de Lubac had on the Second Vatican Council, especially *Lumen gentium* and *Dei Verbum*.

The second part of the volume, “Key Themes in the Theology of Henri de Lubac,” contains masterful treatments of de Lubac’s socially engaged ecclesiology and sacramental theology (Gemma Simmonds, C.J.), his much-disputed views on nature and grace (Nicholas J. Healy, Jr.), his recovery of the spiritual senses of scripture and its influence on other areas of his theology (Kevin L. Hughes), his confrontations with atheist humanism and proposal of a Christian humanist alternative (Patrick X. Gardner), his little-known arguments regarding the meaning of non-Christian religions including but not limited to Buddhism (David Grummet), his theological epistemology which is connected to but distinct from the nature-grace disputes (D. Stephen Long), his theology of history which flows from a resolutely non-Joachimite meditation on the economic Trinity (Cyril O’Regan), his somewhat hidden and dispersed mystical theology (Bryan C. Hollon), and his omnipresent yet inchoate Christology (Noel O’Sullivan).

A great gift in the third part of the volume, “A Theological Legacy,” is Oliver O’Donovan’s translation of Jean-Yves Lacoste’s essay on the natural desire for supernatural grace, which sets de Lubac in relation to the existential phenomenology of Martin Heidegger and the preoccupations of modern philosophy more broadly. Kenneth Oakes’s study of de Lubac’s engagements with Protestant theologians, Simon Oliver’s account of the reception of de Lubac in radical orthodoxy, and Joseph Flipper’s reflections on the significance of de Lubac for political theology are also not to be missed. The volume comes to a satisfying conclusion with Nicholas M. Healy’s chapter on de Lubac and the Christian life, which reveals the practical implications of all the philosophical and doctrinal discussions that precede it.

All in all, this book is a very high-level commentary on Henri de Lubac’s theology, which will be well received by both novices and specialists. It leaves hardly a stone unturned in his vast corpus of writings, in their historical context, and in their ongoing reception. It promises to stimulate renewed interest in his work, as Christian communities continue to search for better ways to understand the meaning of their faith amid a host of modern intellectual and political crises.

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