

intersectional way of interpreting religious texts and appreciating African culture which I believe is constructed to appeal largely to the group they are meant to liberate, something often overlooked by theologians and ethicists. Further, her use of multiple sacred texts, mythologies, and cultural traditions, along with her critical skepticism toward the function of narratives in society, provides a unique theological perspective—not to mention that her engagement with postcolonial theory and narrative criticism provides a robust framework for understanding and addressing the complexities of gender, culture, and politics in Africa. Multifaceted, diverse, equitable programs for reform like Lushombo's seem to be one of the only ways to ensure that a society uplifts all its members.

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The Personalism of Edith Stein: A Synthesis of Thomism and Phenomenology. By Robert McNamara. Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2023. vii + 297 pages. \$75.00.

One might wonder what a review for a book on the metaphysical differences and similarities between Edith Stein and Thomas Aquinas is doing in the *Journal of Moral Theology*. What, after all, do such seemingly esoteric ontological and phenomenological debates have to do with theological ethics or the moral life, with contemporary moral theological discourse and scholarship? Quite a lot, it turns out!

In *The Personalism of Edith Stein: A Synthesis of Thomism and Phenomenology*, Robert McNamara argues: “Stein’s engagement with Aquinas represents a fundamental ‘personalization’ of Thomistic anthropology, a personalization that is worked out differently in [the areas of human nature, human individuality, and the human relation to God]” (248). According to McNamara, “Stein mounts an increasingly compelling case that the personal I is indeed the predominating formative feature in the structure of human nature, and she thus reconsiders all received teachings by passing them through this personalizing lens” (258). Given the Second Vatican Council’s call for a more person-centered moral theology, the post-conciliar turn to Thomistic virtue theory and natural law as well as Pope Francis’s recent teachings in *Dilexit Nos* on the heart as the core of the person in her unique identity, Stein’s phenomenological innovations and “rereading of Thomistic anthropology” are deeply relevant to contemporary discourse in Catholic moral theology (259).

For this reason, Stein’s personalism has the potential to act as a bridge in moral methodological debates and bring a richer clarity to the continuity of post-conciliar pontificates. *The Personalism of Edith*

Stein is thus not only a profound contribution to Stein scholarship but to Catholic moral theology and theological ethics in general. This work, although technical and scholarly, is accessible to non-Stein experts and graduate students. McNamara includes his “Prolegomenon: A Preparatory Analysis” at the beginning of the work prior to entering into the substance of the text. This prolegomenon serves as a helpful philosophical grounding. It gives readers who are new to Stein’s thought some sturdy scaffolding on which to hang McNamara’s subsequent argument. As such, this chapter would act as a good, short philosophical introduction to Stein for a seminar. Although some Stein scholars, like myself, might not fully agree with all of McNamara’s descriptions or interpretations of her thought—his choice at times to modify the word “experience” with the term “conscious” comes to mind—this work, nonetheless, gives the reader a clear, robust, and compelling portrait of Stein’s philosophy and theological anthropology.

The Personalism of Edith Stein is divided into three parts: (I) Human Nature, (II) The Human Individual, and (III) The Human Being’s Relation to God. Each part is composed of two chapters. The first chapter, “Point of Departure in the ‘Life of the I,’” discusses how Stein’s philosophical starting point of the human person uniquely shapes her thought. It evaluates the extent to which Stein’s personalist understanding of the structure of the human person is ultimately consistent with the traditional Thomistic conception of a person as a substance of a rational nature. The second chapter, “Human Unity and Bodily Formation,” investigates Stein’s conception of the unity and constitution of the human person through the spiritual soul and the extent to which this differs from the Thomistic conception of the rational soul. The third chapter, “The Material Individual,” sets out Stein’s critique of Thomas’s conception of material individuation, explaining her conception of form as the source of individuality. The fourth chapter, “The Human Individual in Particular,” goes on to explain Stein’s conception of human individuality and personal being given her alternative conception of individuation. The fifth chapter, “Philosophical Knowledge of God,” discusses Thomas’s analogy of being and Stein’s assessment of it. The sixth chapter, “The Personal Form of the Analogy of Being,” gives Stein’s positive personalist account of the analogy of being, wherein “divine simplicity is best understood from the perspective of the personal ‘I am’” (255).

To the great benefit of the reader, each chapter concludes with an assessment of one of Stein’s original contributions: (1) the personal “I” as bearer, (2) the spiritual soul as substantial unifier of human nature, (3) individuation, (4) personal, individual human being, (5) the problem of the proportion of essence to being, and (6) the cataphatic, personal analogy of being. Towards the end of the book, McNamara

notes, in an insightful act of summation, that in Stein's personalism, "not only does the objective structure of human nature recapitulate the whole of the hierarchically ordered cosmos but each human individual has the potential to progressively encompass the whole of the created cosmos . . . as a finite personal representative of the divine in the created cosmos, a finite personal analogue of the infinite personal Creator" (259).

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Perspectives on Psychic Conversion. Edited by Joseph Ogbonnaya. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2023. xxvi + 378 pages. \$29.00.

Joseph Ogbonnaya's edited volume *Perspectives on Psychic Conversion* offers a rich and multifaceted exploration of the concept of psychic conversion, building on Bernard Lonergan's triad of intellectual, moral, and religious conversions. The collection of seventeen essays provides a comprehensive examination of the role and implications of psychic conversion across various fields, making it a pivotal read for scholars and practitioners interested in theology, psychology, and social transformation.

The volume is divided into four parts, each addressing different dimensions and applications of psychic conversion. Part one lays the theoretical groundwork, with M. Shawn Copeland's opening chapter highlighting the potential of psychic conversion as a therapeutic tool for addressing social biases and injustices, particularly those related to race and gender in American society. Copeland's engagement with Kelly Brown Douglas's work on Black bodies and justice provides a compelling case for the necessity of integrating psychic conversion into social transformation efforts.

Joseph Ogbonnaya's own contribution in chapter 2 underscores the indispensability of Robert Doran's functional specialties for accessing Lonergan's cognitional theory and existential conversion. Ogbonnaya argues that recognizing the intrinsic connection between the psyche and the mind is crucial for a holistic understanding of meaning and value. This recognition complements Lonergan's intentionality analysis, bridging the gap left by his earlier work.

In chapter 3, John Dadosky further connects Lonergan's ideas to psychology, arguing for the legitimacy and necessity of Doran's concept of psychic conversion. Dadosky asserts that this fourth level of conversion finds its basis in Lonergan's discussions of affective