

feminist historians exploring the religious, lay teachers, pupils, and adult learners alike. Another omission is Scottish Catholic seminary education and Scottish Catholic elite education, neither of which, admittedly, were directly related or relevant to the Education (Scotland) Acts discussed. A volume on Catholic education and schooling in Scotland might have, however, mentioned a key development in the education of Scottish Catholic priests: the junior seminary of St Mary's College, Blairs, founded in 1829. These minor oversights by no means diminish the value of the collection, but instead signal the need for a further volume on the history of Catholic schooling and education in Scotland with a complementary focus. It is entirely possible it simply comes down to the need for further research in this vast field.

Overall, *A History of Catholic Education and Schooling in Scotland: New Perspectives* is a fantastic collection of world-class research with cross-disciplinary appeal. It manages to both successfully deepen the relatively specialised field of Scottish Catholic history and to simultaneously broaden its appeal by expanding its wider relevance to scholars of education. It also addresses broader themes of interest to the social and cultural historian: teaching and education, national identity and religious identity. The title of the volume has been carefully selected 'to reflect the historical importance of Catholic schools for the Catholic community in Scotland and also to acknowledge the breadth and scope of Catholic education that extended beyond the schools' (p. 1). Based on the varied nature of the chapters, the volume goes well beyond this. It promises a reinvigoration of research activity into a broad field that would benefit from a further focus and renewed enthusiasm, especially among the next generation of academics.

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Aidan Nichols, *Alban and Sergius. The Story of a Journal*, Leominster: Gracewing, 2019, pp. xii + 514, £25, ISBN: 978-0-85244-937-0

Rare in the scholarly literature are what one might call 'biographies' of periodicals, but *Sobornost*, the subject of this useful and important study, is no ordinary academic journal. Founded in 1928 as the *Journal of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius*, it provided a channel through which Orthodox writers and (usually, but not only) Catholic thinkers in the Church of England could interpret themselves to each other. The author, the theologian Aidan Nichols, a Dominican of Blackfriars in Cambridge, has himself written extensively on two of the towering figures of Russian Orthodox theology—Vladimir Lossky

and Sergei Bulgakov—and this book will surely establish itself as indispensable to those interested in the theological history of England in the twentieth century, and of the ecumenical movement in particular.

The narrative arc that Nichols traces is easily summarised, and is given briefly in the introduction, and then at slightly greater length in the first chapters of each of the book's two parts. Those two parts cover two periods: the first from the beginnings until the end of the 1960s, and the second, the period from that point to the present. As outlined in the first part, between the wars, exiled Russians and Catholic Anglicans found things of benefit in each other. In the Anglicans, the Russians found sympathy and a willing audience. As well as that, given the apparent strength of Anglo-Catholicism in the 1930s, the idea of an organic reunion between the churches was not entirely fanciful, and any hope of such reunion (from an Orthodox point of view) was contingent on the strength of that part of the Church of England. For their part, Anglicans were in need of ecumenical partners, caught as they were between an apparently aloof Rome on the one hand, and ecumenical advances to the Free Churches on the other. In the Orthodox they found an episcopally ordered church, organised nationally, with strong traditions in spirituality and liturgy. In its attempt to balance and place in dialogue voices from both traditions, *Sobornost* provided what Nicholls calls 'a spiritual and intellectual feast' (p. x). The majority of the dominant figures in Anglican Catholic theology were either involved with the Fellowship or at least wrote for the journal. Michael Ramsey, future archbishop of Canterbury, was among them; Gregory Dix, Gabriel Hebert, Lionel Thornton, Eric Mascall all make their appearances.

From the late 1960s, as the second part of the book shows, the character of the journal changed, to one that was much more univocal, broadcasting from east to west, and which also shifted from Russian to Greek. This shift Nicholls attributes to changes on the Anglican side. The change was gradual, and to an extent masked by the official, and highly visible, Anglican-Orthodox dialogues that began in the 1970s. But the Anglo-Catholicism of the late 1960s and onwards lacked the confidence of the earlier period, having been profoundly unsettled by the Second Vatican Council. The impact of the radical liberal theology of the Sixties, added to the apparent relaxation of Anglican sexual ethics and the impending ordination of women, all combined to make ecumenical conversation with Anglicans seem less promising. Anglicans had, it seemed, taken too many wrong turnings to be reliable as ecumenical partners. Though one might want to question the accuracy of all this as a depiction of the real state of the Church of England, as a periodisation of perceptions it is certainly convincing enough.

Following the two chronological chapters at the beginning of each part there follow a sequence of thematic chapters, in which Nicholls characterises the content of the journal, pausing for moments of direct theological dialogue with its contributors, and to draw out that which he considers to be of continuing value. It is of these chapters that criticism can be made, at least from the point of view of the historian reader. What certainly emerges is a rich and detailed picture of the contents of the journal, which is very valuable. However, the account is often rather too full, as Nicholls makes extensive use of extremely long paraphrases of certain articles, of three or four pages or more at a time. For this reader, these are both wearying and arguably unnecessary, since the articles themselves are widely available in print. As it is, these chapters could well have been drastically shortened without any loss of impact.

More widely, what is often obscure in Nicholls' account is the wider historical context. The names of authors flash by, but are too often not fully placed in their context. How accurate is the picture of their churches that these authors paint? How representative are these authors, and of which strains of thought in their churches? How do these authors come to be published, and not others? What can be known of the networks of individuals that lie beneath the public output? To be sure, it would be too much to ask that this study answered these questions exhaustively, but more was required nonetheless.

These cavils aside, Aidan Nicholls has provided a valuable study which will form part of the infrastructure for future research on ecumenical relationships in England and beyond. The absence of an index is a grave defect in a work so full of individuals, but the book is generously produced and reasonably priced. It deserves a wide readership.

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