

consider the following propositions as being equivalent: (1) the function of the state is to curb wrongdoing and (2) the function of the state is to protect subjective natural rights and its authority is limited by those rights.

More generally, it is legitimate to question whether the model instituted by Wolterstorff does not hark back to the theses of liberal Christianity, in the tradition of Ernst Troeltsch. Mark Lilla, *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West* (Vintage Books, 2008), cited from page 1 of the introduction, gives a very clear treatment of the criticisms that have been made by the “crisis theologians” with regard to the politico-social construction of Christianity, while quoting the judgment offered by Reinhold Niebuhr: “un Dieu sans colère a conduit des hommes sans péché dans un Royaume sans jugement par une consolation sans croix” (248). Karl Barth, in the second edition (1922) of his own commentary on The Epistle to the Romans (Clark, 2014), highlighted the radical disproportion between the social justice implemented by men in the present world and the divine justice promised for a future transcending time and history, located beyond human order. A work such as that by Johannes Baptist Metz (*Theology of the World*, 1973) attempted to elaborate a social project in relation to this “eschatological reserve”—a project not unlike that extolled by Karl Barth himself. From this point of view, the “theory of justice” expounded by Rawls does not constitute an extension or image of divine justice in this world: one has to choose between them.

Wolterstorff’s book is indeed no stranger to this project: referring precisely to Barth, the former is careful to distinguish (129) between (political) justice and (theological) justification; he refers, as does Metz, to the theology of Vatican II (131); in particular, the whole of the second part of the argument (chaps. 11–15) seeks to condemn the various forms of alienation of human beings caused by a political power attempting to reconstitute itself as a religion. It nevertheless remains true that the interpretation of Romans 13 presented by Wolterstorff appears to conceive theology and politics from a conciliatory perspective, rather than considering their relationship from the standpoint of radical opposition.

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James V. Schall, SJ: *Political Philosophy and Revelation: A Catholic Reading*. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of American Press, 2013. Pp. xiv, 281.)

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James V. Schall, SJ, wrote on an astonishing variety of topics over a distinguished academic career that spanned fifty years and included over thirty books and several hundred articles and essays. All the while his heart was focused on his devoted students and readers, who were invariably touched

by his love of truth, his eagerness to share it, his unfailing enthusiasm and encouragement. He conceived of his task as being a gadfly to potential philosophers, waking them up to their need for wisdom and grace by introducing them not only to the classic texts of Western theology, philosophy, and political theory, but also to the perennial great human questions and the ways they have been addressed by the Roman Catholic intellectual tradition.

The book under review is a collection of essays from his mature thought, and any reader or student of Schall will be struck by the continuity and strength of his themes over that long and storied career. The variety of his interests constitutes an ordered harmony whose center is not easily grasped yet which animates the whole. Perhaps, as Schall hints in this book, it is not capable of being written down. To read Schall is to inhabit a fecund and original mind that invites us to view God, the world, and its creatures as one would seek to see afresh the facets of a gem by turning it over and over in the light. That is, to read Schall is to be invited into an education into a way of thought and a way of being.

Schall's ultimate goal is to wake up his readers by inviting us to seek the full height and depth of the human person. The standard of human excellence, he says, is the fullness of what we are capable of becoming. Schall seeks to unsettle our limited view of what we are able to know and love by a paradoxical combination of audacity and humility. He reminds his readers constantly that human beings are not capable of settling with fragmented bits of unrelated technical information, but naturally desire to know and enjoy the truth of everything that is. At the same time, we find joy only in opening ourselves to receive what we might not have originally wanted—our humanity for Schall depends on cultivating a contemplative disposition to receive in joy, celebration, and gratitude.

The centerpiece of his attempt at awakening is ringed about with a set of themes, questions, and authors. It is clear from the essays in this book that Schall loves contemporary authors like Chesterton, Simon, Gilson, Strauss, Voegelin, Benedict, and John Paul II, as well Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Thomas, and Augustine. He loves the great questions of human existence even more: what is the purpose of creation; what are people made for; what is the right social and political order; was the world created in justice; what is the meaning of friendship; how do human beings live and die well; what is truth and how does one seek and affirm it in a context that denies that it exists? Finally, Schall is interested in articulating the ways his chosen field, political philosophy, both includes and is transcended by revelation and philosophy.

For Schall, political philosophy helps reveal the nature of human being and at its best raises the question of ultimate human destiny. Yet the investigation of man it brings into focus is incomplete. Moreover, at its best, political philosophy understands that its investigation is incomplete. Justice is the political virtue. Yet on its own terms, political philosophy cannot know whether justice exists by nature or convention. Christianity addresses political

philosophy's need for answers to its deepest questions by revealing that Christ is the Word through whom the world is created.

Schall believes that the specifically Catholic approach to faith and reason that flows from this encounter with Christ has two dimensions. The first is the subjective aspect: faith purifies reason. In other words, faith collaborates with reason's own nature and assists reason in its own virtue. Second, revelation also proposes truths that human reason would never have discovered, even though they are not inaccessible in reason and in fact are addressed to reason as its ground and completion. Political philosophy should be consistently expanded to encounter the truths that it wonders about but in some cases cannot reach.

In Schall's terms, the universe cannot be rationally proved to be a place where God and man can be friends or where every person is called into eternal life with God. However, Catholic political philosophy is capable of showing that its claims offer internally consistent, reasonable solutions to puzzles that political philosophy is incapable of solving on its own terms, and showing that these claims directly address practical, pressing problems of common life.

For Schall, modern political philosophy rejects the classical and Christian sense of personhood and limits in favor of an active, charitable stance that seeks to liberate us from human limits and assuage our suffering. One problem with modern political philosophy, according to Schall, is that its preferences have shut down the question of what is the best political order (66). It congratulates itself on its open-mindedness, but it is in fact closed in on itself in an attempt to refound the Kingdom of God on a secular basis. A large part of Schall's response to this is to focus our attention on (in his terms) *what is*—a reality independent of our own often fragmented and fragmenting wants and desires. He urges his readers to be open to the full range of human experience, including the experience of grace and revelation as cures for or responses to the contemporary rejection of receptivity and limits.

Political Philosophy and Revelation is divided into seven parts: The Principle of All Reality; On Something or Other Really Existing; Sufficient Understanding to See the Truth; On Finding a Natural Explanation for Mysteries; At the Calling of All Nations; Much that is Fair; and On Following the Pull of the Divine Nous. Each of these sections contains three chapters elucidating its theme. In a charming chapter reflecting on his decades of writing ("On Political Philosophy and the Understanding of Things: Reflections on Fifty Years of Writing"), Schall says that the best chapter of the book is about the death of Plato. In the introduction, he says that the central chapter of the book is "Revelation and Political Philosophy: On Locating the Best City" (x). As Schall says, "Today, political philosophy, at its best, is the discipline strategically located to reflect on how God, cosmos, man, and polity belong together. Philosophical *eros* is indeed what most drives us on. But we are aware from the revelational tradition that both charity, the friendship with God, and grace that guides law to its

particular and highest end unaccountably exist among us. They too guide us to be what we are intended to be and remain, that is, rational beings with a transcendent end" (252).

In this book Schall urges his readers to receive the world with joy as a gift to be celebrated (103). Looking back over his glorious career as a teacher, scholar, and writer, those of us who have benefited from his gifts should remain ever astonished, grateful, and joyful in turn.

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Stanley Hauerwas: *Approaching the End: Eschatological Reflections on Church, Politics, and Life*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. xvii, 251.)

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To be human, Stanley Hauerwas claims in this volume, is to be “in the business of learning to die” (xvii); to be Christian is to learn to die in light of the eschatological promise of the gospel. These are by no means new claims for Hauerwas, but rather represent consistent threads running throughout his extensive work. This new book also finds Hauerwas continuing his decades-long conversation with familiar interlocutors, in particular John Howard Yoder, Karl Barth, and Thomas Aquinas. After reading the lines I have just written, one could be forgiven for concluding that *Approaching the End* is thus simply a rehashing of familiar Hauerwas concerns and tropes, a retrospective look by a scholar transitioning into retirement (not too quickly, as Hauerwas’s recent appointment to a chair in theology at the University of Aberdeen suggests) at the preoccupations that have shaped his career. To be sure, anyone with Hauerwas’s voluminous theological output will find much that is familiar in these pages. Yet those many points of continuity should not fool the prospective reader into assuming that there is nothing new here. Not only does Hauerwas bring new guests like Stanley Cavell and J. M. Coetzee to his theological symposium at which Yoder, Barth, and Aquinas are permanent fixtures—some of these new guests push Hauerwas’s thought in intriguing new directions.

As in most of his books, Hauerwas here collects occasional papers and presentations, loosely grouped under a common theme (in this case the importance of eschatology for Christian discipleship and for understanding the place of the church in the world). Some essays have a predominantly doctrinal focus (e.g., thinking with Barth about the connection between creation and eschatology), while most explore the implications of the church’s calling to witness to God’s apocalyptic action in Jesus Christ for how the church thinks and acts about war making, cloning, disability, dying, and more. Christian discipleship as witness both testifies to what God has done in Jesus Christ and to how that action is the apocalyptic disclosure of a