

desiring creature, the feeding that is the Eucharist, and so on. Catherine's language is clearly more sensuous than that of Thomas, her recorded engagement with the divine mystery obviously more holistic. It illustrates well how the patriarchal systems imprisoned men as well as women albeit in different ways: Thomas felt he had to choose between 'what I have now seen' and the lifetime's work he dismissed as 'so much straw'.

Although the argument gets a big ragged in places, and her account of Thomas's thought needs correction and completion at many points, this book is interesting and stimulating throughout, encouraging many thoughts and associations along the way. Whether there is to be such a thing as a Lacanian Thomism, who knows. At the end one feels that it is Catherine of Siena, believer and lover, mystic and activist, Doctor of the Church, who holds out the best hope for a feminist Catholic theology

VIVIAN BOLAND OP

RICHARD HOOKER, OF THE LAWS OF ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY: A CRITICAL EDITION WITH MODERN SPELLING edited by Arthur Stephen McGrade, *Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013, Vol. I, pp. cxiv + 242, Vol. II, pp. viii + 334, Vol. III, pp. viii + 418, £275.00, hbk*

Last November, on a visit to St Stephen's House Oxford, I met an American called Hooker who said he was a descendant of Richard Hooker; a relation of whom he was deeply proud. *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* is the best known work of Richard Hooker (1554-1600). Books I-IV of the *Laws* were published in 1593, Book V in 1597, Books VI and VIII in 1648-1651, and Book VII in 1662. This monumental treatise (which draws greatly on the work of Aquinas, Calvin and others) not only represents a defence of the system of governance being developed for the established Church of England at this time (subject to royal supremacy), but also an immense contribution to Anglican thought generally, theology (particularly ecclesiology), political theory (it was relied on by such thinkers as John Locke and Edmund Burke), and, indeed, English prose. It has a very special place, therefore, in the scholarship of Anglican theologians today and was used recently in debates about possible adoption of an Anglican Communion Covenant. However, remarkably, its profound insights into the place of law in ecclesial life, do not generally make an appearance in the scholarship of modern Anglican canon lawyers nor in that of historians of English ecclesiastical and canon law: there is no mention of Hooker in the index of either the seminal study of John Baker (on the English canonists 1300-1900) or that of Richard Helmholz (in his recent book on the English ecclesiastical jurisdiction 597 to the 1640s). Though Hooker was a cleric, not a lawyer, perhaps this is in part due to the impenetrability of the *Laws'* language, particular prose style, and very long sentences (which carefully unpack propositions). But things have changed.

For the first time, Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* is presented in an accessible modern English-language edition. This is a result of painstaking and meticulous work by the distinguished Hooker scholar Arthur Stephen McGrade, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Connecticut. McGrade's interest in Hooker derives from what he considers an 'extraordinary' treatise in 'its range, both intellectual and historical', in the breadth of sources used (from biblical and classical, through patristic and medieval, to Renaissance and Reformation), its 'striking combination of wide perspective on human nature and history with intense engagement in the issues of its time and place', in the 'coherence of [its] argument', 'original organization', and its provision of 'the template for the English high style, for Gibbon, Burke, and Ruskin'. Another function is to build on previous

editions: the Oxford editions begun by Keble in 1836 and completed in 1888, with revisions by Church and Paget, and the critical Folger Library edition of Hooker's works (1977-98) produced by a group under the general editorship of W. Speed Hill. However, whilst the latter edition in particular has stimulated much valuable research on Hooker, McGrade proposes that 'neither it nor Keble's editions make the *Laws* readily accessible to the wide range of readers whom it might interest. Such accessibility is the special goal of the present edition', an edition which 'is meant to be useful for all but the most specialized scholarly purposes' and to present the treatise 'as clearly and directly as possible for other readers as well' (Introduction). These purposes A.S. McGrade has admirably fulfilled in a magisterial fashion.

Volume I consists of a substantial introduction, a statement of the principal dated events in Hooker's life and works, a note on the edition (spelling and references), and the modern language version of Books I-IV of the *Laws*. The Introduction (90 pages) is masterful; it addresses six themes. It looks first at how Hooker came to write the *Laws* - the political and religious context, of Catholic threats and Puritan attacks, and the life of Hooker. Next it deals with changing situations and lasting problems - the difficulties faced by English Christians living under the Elizabethan Settlement, particularly their 'disintegration' into three factions - supporters of the Settlement, Puritans oriented towards Geneva, and Catholics oriented towards Rome. Then the editor discusses Hooker's intended readers. Hooker wrote for the Puritans (who opposed his view of ecclesiastical polity), 'pastorally, in English, for his own church, not in the Latin of international discourse', and, given that 'many English Christians were loyal to the papal church, we can scarcely doubt that Hooker also wrote with them in mind. References to Rome are pervasive . . . The English church should follow Rome in better practices rather than those "we much more affect" in worse' (I, xxv-xxvi); Hooker's style is then studied - 'Hooker himself rightly foresaw that the work would strike some readers as "perhaps tedious, perhaps obscure, dark, and intricate"' (Bk. I); some of his contemporaries derided the style similarly but later generations have been kinder (C.S. Lewis praised the style 'for its purposes [as] perhaps the most perfect in English', its beauty 'functional'). Indeed, McGrade recommends reading Hooker aloud to help understand the style. McGrade then provides a 'Tour of the Laws', with a synopsis of each Book. This is followed by discussion of its intended readers (Puritans, the Reformation world, Rome, the not so skilful, and Hooker himself), and exploration of the fact that 'Hooker recognized that his motives in writing the *Laws* may be questioned, that readers might suppose he upheld the establishment in order to profit from it' (I, xcix), and posterity. Then follows the edition of the *Laws*' Preface (setting out the purpose of and background to the treatise), Book I (a theological and philosophical account of the nature of law, the law of nature, and the law of scripture), Book II (on scripture and the laws of reason with a critical analysis of the Puritan position), Book III (on scripture and church polity), and Book IV (on polity and ritual in ecclesial life).

Volume II contains Book V which is on the public duties of the Christian religion and their exercise by those with the power of 'Ecclesiastical order', godliness, atheism and superstition, principles for assessing liturgy, places for public worship, preaching, prayer, incarnation and the sacraments, occasional services such as marriage and burial, ministry (nature, structure and problems). Volume III carries Book VI (on the nature of spiritual jurisdiction, penitence as its aim, and the discipline of repentance), Book VII (on the authority of bishops) and Book VIII (on the church and commonwealth in a Christian kingdom, including kingship and its lay character, the royal supremacy, the crown and the creation of ecclesiastical law). Volume III also contains a glossary (based on that in the Folger edition), a guide to Hooker's sources and persons mentioned in the *Laws*, a bibliography, and indexes

of scriptural citations, persons, and subjects. However, whilst modernisation of the Hooker's prose is greatly welcomed, McGrade retains much of Hooker's style, in, for example, long sentences, huge paragraphs, italics – sometimes running for page upon page – and ancient usage (such as 'us-ward' and 'God-ward'). These retentions may be thought to overcomplicate what is already a difficult text to read and comprehend.

This new modern language edition of Hooker's *Laws* is a remarkable achievement; and that one person (and not a team) has produced it is of itself extraordinary. The three volumes will be of enormous value to historians, theologians, political philosophers, and anyone with an interest in church governance. In particular, it is hoped that making Hooker more accessible will stimulate scholars and practitioners of Anglican canon law to rely more on the wisdom contained in the *Laws*: to be critical of legal arrangements; to be circumspect over change for its own sake; to be clear on the reasons for propositions; to be alert to theological dimensions of church law and polity; and to recognise the value of articulating complex legal materials as general principles, with a strong theological dimension of weight, for the digestion of law.

NORMAN DOE

GOD, SEXUALITY, AND THE SELF: AN ESSAY 'ON THE TRINITY' by Sarah Coakley, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013, pp. xxi + 365, £18.99, pbk

To say that *God, Sexuality and the Self* is an ambitious book is not intended, as is so often the case, to flatter to deceive, but to suggest something of the depth and diversity of this paradoxically 'new type of case for the doctrine of the Trinity'. In the first of four projected volumes of 'unsystematic systematics', Professor Sarah Coakley, who self-identifies repeatedly as a feminist theologian, engages with a quartet of Patristic authors – Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius – who have often enough been indicted in sometimes wearily unsophisticated accounts of the allegedly baleful effects of developing Christian 'orthodoxy' on the status of women. Instead, she finds in them resources to freshen and nuance contemporary debate about both gender and the Christian doctrine of God precisely by recovering the connections perceived by the Fathers themselves between sexual desire and contemplative prayer seen as the privileged matrix for the emergence of Trinitarian consciousness.

In addition to this unabashed – and, as she implies, profoundly traditional – linking of themes now more conventionally assigned discretely to the history of 'spirituality' and to that of the development of doctrine, Coakley excavates in two fields even less routinely expected, perhaps, to yield theological treasure.

First, she uses the social anthropological tools of qualitative research, in critical dependence on Ernst Troeltsch's sociological typology of ecclesiological form, to interrogate the continuing validity of her own provisional conclusions drawn from the Patristic sources, by means of fieldwork undertaken in two worshipping communities – one Anglican, one an independent Protestant fellowship group – shaped by their involvement in Charismatic renewal.

Secondly, she offers for our reflection a gallery of Trinitarian images, ranging chronologically from the Roman catacombs to late 20th-century London. Her purpose in so doing is, strikingly, not simply to provide visual aids to illustrate an achieved