

only hope that people like Madar continue to carry Komonchak's torch into the future.

LUCAS BRIOLA
Saint Vincent College

To Be Perfect Is to Have Changed Often: The Development of John Henry Newman's Ecclesiological Outlook, 1845–1877. By Ryan J. Marr. New York: Lexington Books, 2018. xxxviii + 195 pages. \$100.00.

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Let the phrase *De Ecclesia* represent a treatment of the nature of the Catholic Church. Since the Middle Ages, *De Ecclesia* manuals (seminary textbooks) proliferated. The toughest struggle at Vatican II was between the original schema on the church sent to the arriving bishops, drafted largely by Jesuit professor Sebastian Tromp, reflecting the Roman manuals of the 1950s, and what became the final Dogmatic Constitution on the church, *Lumen Gentium*, reflecting the wishes of the majority of the bishops and the important work of theologians, especially Yves Congar, OP, and Gérard Philips of Louvain. St. Thomas Aquinas never wrote a *De Ecclesia*, nor did Cardinal Newman in the nineteenth century, even though in the vast writings of both theologians the nature of the church is operative, especially in Newman. Extended treatments of Newman's ecclesiology, as opposed to studies of this or that aspect of it, have been rare. Willem van de Pol's 1936 *De Kerk in het Leven en Denken van Newman (The Church in Newman's Life and Thought)* seems to be the first, but not many treatments have followed. We welcome Ryan Marr's book to this short list.

Marr brings a distinctive thesis to Newman's *De Ecclesia*. His is not just a single, somewhat static ecclesiology but several ecclesiologies because Newman's thinking changed during his years as a Roman Catholic. During Newman's Anglican years, such a thesis is not surprising. Newman took with him a very evangelical view of the church when he went up to Oxford in December 1816, but when he wrote *Tract 90* in 1841 his view was distinctly Roman Catholic, and between these two periods he underwent significant changes in conceiving the nature of the church. Marr argues that the same reality operates in Newman after 1845, hence the title of his book, *To Be Perfect Is to Have Changed Often*, the famous line from Newman book on *Development of Doctrine*.

To elaborate his thesis depicting Newman's thought, Marr takes the familiar word "ultramontanism" (a defense of papal prerogatives against those minimizing them) and coins two phrases to portray Newman: *moderate*

ultramontanism to describe Newman's own earliest ecclesiology and *neo-ultramontanism* (e.g., Manning and Ward) to describe the opponents against whom Newman directed his mature ecclesiology. In other words, Newman developed from an ecclesiology emphasizing papal and episcopal authority to a more balanced view of the contributions of theologians and experience of the laity in the reception of church teachings. To trace this trajectory, the book's chapters treat the familiar and chronologically arranged periods of Newman's life: as new convert in 1845, as 1859 author of *Consoling the Faithful*, as wary observer on Vatican I, and his "mature view" of the church in his long preface to the 1877 reissue of his 1837's *Prophetical Office*.

Unique to Marr's approach is his use of the heavily epistemological *Grammar of Assent*, calling it "least obvious but the most important," to elucidate a stage of Newman's ecclesiology. It deserves particular mention. It rests on two principles: First, the *Grammar* justifies the reasonableness of "personal religious faith," hence including the "simple faith" of the laity in the church as a teacher; and second, to this principle is added that of "a due recognition of the primary of conscience," not misunderstood however as mere personal opinion. Thus, personal conscience and church authority coexist in a dynamic interrelationship or dialectic. The laity are not blindly coerced by an *ipsa dixit* of the church, to the support of which Newman's *Letter to Norfolk* is enlisted.

Ryan Marr argues that Newman's Catholic-period ecclesiology undergoes "noticeable alterations." The alternative is that the basic principles of his ecclesiology once he became Catholic remained consistent, and aspects of it were called forth as Newman confronted particular issues. Such is the customary judgment. To advocates of noticeable alteration, here's Newman's own characteristic question: Are my views of the church a true or false development, and what tests decide it? The Cardinal Mannings and William Wards of Newman's day, and ours, brook no dissent from any Catholic teaching whatsoever; hence, Newman ended up in error. But if a true development, what tests legitimate it?

No matter on which side a reader of this book comes down, she or he will learn a lot about Newman's ecclesiology(ies). The many elaborate footnotes reflect the book's origins as a doctoral dissertation at St. Louis University.

EDWARD JEREMY MILLER
Gwynedd Mercy University