

Anselm's writings and (re-)read them. That was certainly the effect on me. The frequent references to Anselm's works would be better captured in the text or in footnotes, rather than in endnotes.

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**NEWMAN AND THE ALEXANDRIAN FATHERS: SHAPING DOCTRINE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND** by Benjamin John King, *Oxford University Press*, 2009, pp. xvii + 289, £50 hbk

One of the most frequently quoted (and abused) citations from Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* has it that 'In a higher world it is otherwise; but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often'. The citation is much abused because Church-progressive critics fail to note the preceding sentence. There Newman explains how the change in question takes place is in order that some great idea may 'remain the same'. What Newman held was true of the narrative of revelation as carried through history by the Church – namely, its substantial identity over time – he would not, of course, have claimed was true of the history of his own opinions. So much is clear from what he termed the withdrawal of 'arguments' against Rome in the 6 October 1845 'Advertisement' for the *Essay on Development*. Benjamin John King's subtle and carefully crafted study takes further Newman's retractions by showing how his view of the Fathers – and above all the Alexandrians in whom he most delighted – itself changed in interestingly significant ways in the course of his life.

Here is the story, somewhat simplified. In the 1830s, in the heady days, then, of early Tractarianism, Newman's ideal was the pre-Nicene Alexandrian pair, Clement and Origen, whose mystical view of Scripture appealed to his Romantic sensibility and enthusiasm for a moral and spiritual renaissance in the Church of England. Not surprisingly, he was relatively indifferent in this period to conciliar definitions of doctrine: for the oldest of the Alexandrians there had been none (unless we are to count the condemnation of Paul of Samosata by a mid third-century synod at Antioch). Newman did, however, begin to see the need for a greater lucidity of doctrinal outline which the later Alexandrians, Athanasius and Cyril, and indeed the Byzantine doctors up to Damascene, would eventually provide.

After the rejection by the Anglican authorities of Tract 90, with its plea for a catholicizing interpretation of the Thirty-Nine Articles, Newman became much more interested in the process, or act, of dogmatic definition whereby the Church took firmly articulated possession of the contents of her own mind. Hence the replacement of Clement and Origen in his affections by Athanasius the Great whose importance for him subsequent students of Newman's patristic learning and inspiration have, thinks King, emphasized too unilaterally and with insufficient attention to the diverse ways in which Newman appealed to him at different points in his life.

In the 1860s, deeply hurt by the adverse reaction of the Catholic hierarchy (successors of Athanasius!) to his *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*, Newman looked again at his former heroes, and found much to praise in, especially, Origen, who was an 'ecclesiastical writer', according to Catholic terminological usage, rather than, strictly speaking, an authoritative Father of the Church. In King's words, he 'glosses' Origen, who died, after all, in the peace of the Church, so as to save him from the imputation of being a 'father of heresy'. Newman's struggle to come to terms with the Scholastic theology alien to him as an Anglican enabled him to find some 'loopholds' in a presentation of Origen

that could pass (just about) the test of orthodoxy – as, we might say, Newman himself had just managed to do in escaping the ecclesiastical penalties sought by the Benedictine bishop of Newport, Thomas Joseph Brown.

After the passing of the ‘cloud’ with his naming as a cardinal by Leo XIII in 1879, Newman began to warm to the theology of the Roman schools, and a renewal of interest in Athanasius – as ‘pope’ of Alexandria in some sense the hierarchical predecessor of Pope Leo – shows him re-interpreting the theology of that figure in the idiom of the Latin tradition (ancient, mediaeval, modern). There emerges at Newman’s hands a Latinate and indeed Scholastic version of the Greek-speaking Egyptians of the first five centuries, Athanasius above all. Newman was reconciling the outstanding patristic enthusiasm of the period of his conversion to the Catholic Church with his final coming-to-terms with the ecclesiastical culture and policy of the late nineteenth century church of Rome.

This summary will make it plain that, for King, Newman’s likes and loves (the question of hates does not arise in this context) rose and fell according to his own fortunes in the two communions to which, in sometimes turbulent fashion, he belonged. Is it too neat? I have said that my summary would be ‘somewhat simplified’ and the inevitable price of clarifying King’s story-line in this review is to accentuate the impression that it is too symmetrical for its own good. Still, Newman’s famous sensitivity makes such a general outline, biographically speaking, not implausible. The only convincing way to substantiate it, though, is by detailed comparison of Newman’s comments on this or that writer from the ancient Church at this or that point in time. This is what King does so well, with an enviable grasp not only of Newman’s corpus but also of his Anglican and Catholic contemporaries and of the Fathers themselves.

Students of Newman’s perennially fascinating figure, and admirers of his prose, will, if they are serious, want this book for the light in throws on his spiritual journey, especially in this Beatification year. But the wider story King has to tell concerns the impact on patristic studies, at any rate in the English-speaking world, and notably at Oxford, of the lead Newman gave. As his Conclusion explains, English (and the word here is effectively synonymous with ‘Anglican’) patristic study continued to highlight the Alexandrians. It sought to rehabilitate Origen’s exegesis. It treated Athanasius as *the* doctor of the Trinity, in whose works all subsequent patristic Triadology, whether Oriental or Latin, could recognize its true source. Even so egregious an heresiarch as Maurice Wiles, former Evangelical, patrologist, Regius Professor, could not escape the agenda Newman had established, much as he disliked the doctrinal outcomes which Newman espoused.

This review has not done justice to the extraordinarily detailed scholarship of this book. Read, and be amazed.

AIDAN NICHOLS OP

**FROM HERMES TO BENEDICT XVI: FAITH AND REASON IN MODERN CATHOLIC THOUGHT** by Aidan Nichols OP, *Gracewing*, Leominster, 2009, pp. vii + 254, £14.99

This new book grapples with an ancient issue – the interplay between faith and reason. Since pre-Socratic philosophers and even before, thinkers whether they be religious or otherwise have debated whether or not and in what manners religious faith might relate to human reason. Commenting on such a debate depends a great deal on what is meant by ‘faith’ and ‘reason’. Tertullian, the North African theologian of the second and third centuries, is still remembered for asking ‘What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?’ In other terms, do the arguments of the philosophical academy impinge on the faith that motivates worship? Aquinas,