

strongest) the erroneous content of the faith of the two; the ecumenical imperative to take other Christians seriously requires re-thinking here, lest the proper desire to affirm the validity of their marriages leads us to question whether they really have faith. A sustained reflection on the ecumenical position might enable a deepening of his position in regard to the sacramentality of marriages where faith is weak, as at the moment his position can leave one thinking that it is a question of *ex opere operato* being heaped onto *ex opere operato*. The practical exclusion of the life of faith from a couple's relationship needs the sort of personalist analysis that Mgr Burke deploys elsewhere – especially since one of the pastorally interesting consequences of the law on canonical form is that inter-church situations are those in which this tends to arise in a canonical context.

However, it is fair to conclude by pointing out that even the defects in this book are ones that provoke further reflection. If nothing else, it should re-assure those who are not canon lawyers that the discipline is sensitive to the deepest spiritual good of marriage in its deliberations – even if these do not always attain to the profundity of the reflections in this book.

LUKE BECKETT OSB

LOGIC, TRUTH AND MEANING: WRITINGS OF G.E.M. ANSCOMBE edited by Mary Geach and Luke Gormally, [St Andrews Studies in Philosophy and Public Affairs], *Imprint Academic*, Exeter, 2015, pp. xix + 317, pbk

G.E.M. Anscombe was, by any reckoning, one of the most important analytic philosophers of the 20th century. Her topics ranged widely, with significant contributions to action theory, metaphysics, and ethics. She was a friend of Wittgenstein's, and both translated and commented on his works, playing an indispensable part in their reception by the English-speaking world. As a deeply Catholic thinker who engaged fully with the mainstream of 20th-century philosophy, helping to craft it in the process, her work is inevitably of interest to readers of this journal.

Much of that work has been published over the years in a series of collected papers. In the early 1980s, volumes appeared covering her work in ethics, the philosophy of religion, metaphysics, and the history of philosophy. More recently the *St Andrews Studies in Philosophy and Public Affairs* series has done a great service to the philosophical public by publishing more volumes. *Logic, Truth, and Meaning* is the fourth of these.

As the title suggests, the contents are of less obviously widespread appeal. In part this is owing to an ambiguity in the word 'logic'. Many

of the papers here belong within that ill-defined yet central part of philosophy known as *philosophical logic*. This is distinct from, although not unrelated to, *formal* or *mathematical logic*. Anscombe's competence in the latter areas is evident in several of the chapters, but those with an aversion to formalism need not be put off the volume on that account. Philosophical logic concerns itself with questions around truth, meaning, and reference. How does our language and thought succeed in representing that reality? Does it do so, for that matter, and if it does not in some cases, what function does it serve? How may we move from one thought to another by inference, so as to be assured that the second thought is true on the condition that the first is likewise? These questions are not only interesting in their own right, but are also foundational for philosophical studies of more immediate human concern.

That this is so was a central insight of the 'linguistic turn' that Michael Dummett took to be characteristic of the analytic tradition. In particular, Anscombe learned from Wittgenstein that the attempt to study any reality – our own actions, for instance, or the most general structure of the world – whilst bypassing the language by which we talk about that reality is doomed to failure. Similarly, many apparently intractable philosophical dilemmas arise from linguistic mistakes, and can be solved, or better dissolved, by attending to these. This commitment to the priority of language is often misunderstood by those outside analytic philosophy (and some within it). So, to cite a recent theological example, Francesca Murphy's attack on Herbert McCabe in her *God Is Not A Story* seems to be premised on the thought that McCabe is advocating replacing talk about God by talking about talk about God. In fact, McCabe, a Wittgensteinian thomist (and not uninfluenced by Anscombe), holds that the latter is the route to the former. Indeed, given the tentative and peculiar nature of theological language, the quest to do otherwise risks descent into either nonsense or idolatry.

Anscombe's answers to the central questions of philosophical logic are developed under the recognisable influence of Wittgenstein. She remains, however, very much her own philosopher. Ironically, this is most evident in the book's cornerstone, a complete reprint of the 1959 *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*. Unlike more recent interpreters of Wittgenstein's early work Anscombe, who took the Tractarian Wittgenstein seriously during a period when English philosophers were focusing on the *Philosophical Investigations*, understood him as a metaphysical realist, presenting us with an account of the world, logic, and language. This does not mean that Wittgenstein is neatly boxed into the unproblematic mainstream of analytic development. Anscombe takes seriously the so-called 'mystical' elements of the *Tractatus*, concentrated towards the end of the work and frequently an embarrassment for those who would read the work as a positivist text, and writes engagingly about Wittgenstein's debt to Schopenhauer.

The *Introduction to the Tractatus* reprint is followed by a number of papers organised under the headings ‘Thought and Belief’ and ‘Meaning, Truth, and Existence’. Some are previously published, others not, and this is reflected in a variation in the extent to which the pieces feel ‘polished’. Amongst the reprints are papers, notably Anscombe’s review of Kripke’s book on Wittgenstein and rule-following (popularly dubbed ‘Kripkenstein’), which it is good to have available in book format. It would be a mistake, though, to think that the more provisional unpublished works are of less interest than the previously published papers. If anything, the opposite is the case, both as a matter of intellectual biography and also because in several papers we can read Anscombe as contributing to questions currently debated within philosophy. Two examples will suffice to make the point. In ‘Thought and Existent Objects’ Anscombe discusses intentionality, the capacity of thoughts to be about things in the world. Meanwhile, in two papers on existence, Anscombe contributes to the now flourishing subdiscipline the goes by the ugly title ‘meta-ontology’: what is being said when we claim that existence exists? How is existence related to truth, to naming, to linguistic expressions such as ‘there is’, and their formal equivalents? Her approach displays a subtlety often lacking in more recent discussions.

This is perhaps not the best initiation to Anscombe’s work for those without a background in philosophy. Her writings on ethics and the philosophy of religion are undoubtedly more accessible, and will clearly appeal to the present readership. Roger Teichmann’s excellent *The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe* would provide a useful companion to the reading of primary texts. Nonetheless: *Logic, Truth, and Meaning* will be a valuable resource for philosophers, and the editors are to be congratulated for making it available.

SIMON HEWITT

THE ETHICS OF PREGNANCY, ABORTION AND CHILDBIRTH: EXPLORING MORAL CHOICES IN CHILDBEARING by Helen Watt, *Routledge*, New York, 2016, pp. x + 157, £85.00, hbk.

This is not an easy book to read. Nearly every sentence seems to have at least one endnote, often much longer than itself. These notes, however, do contain valuable documentation, and interrupting one’s reading to look at them is eminently worthwhile. Helen Watt is addressing urgent moral issues in a highly competent way. Her argumentation is calm and persuasive. And she supplies some very disturbing facts about how pregnancy is treated in today’s Western world.