

especially, no room for God's freedom to *act*. He also recognises the problem of a fallen world: liberators too easily become oppressors in their own right (compare George Orwell's *Animal Farm*). This is the problem with utopias, as Sobrino acknowledges – they ignore the reality of personal weakness and sin, the need for each person to accept God's gift of healing salvation. Admittedly, Balthasar's emphasis on personal sin and conversion leads him to dismiss the liberationist idea of structural sin: sin is committed by individual people. Walatka responds very well to this – he highlights in Chapter 5 the anti-Black racism in the USA which is so ingrained as to be often unconscious. Perhaps a three-way dialogue would be useful here between Balthasar, Liberation Theology and the concept of the 'sin of the world' in St John.

Walatka believes that Balthasar's apocalyptic needs to be more developed, especially given the latter's strong argument that the danger of evil is in its 'counterfeit' nature (the wheat and the tares). We are, as Sobrino says, constantly faced with the forces of the 'Anti-Kingdom', but, as Kathryn Turner says, the transcendent present of God rules out a complacency which would relegate justice to the next life.

I suggest that Walatka's book succeeds primarily because it is a shining example of intellectual charity, bringing reconciliation between conflicting positions through drawing out more from what their proponents already offer. In a world where debate has turned increasingly uncharitable and hostile – something which has also infected the Church – Walatka's approach is especially welcome. As he says, one must 'dialogue with as many voices as possible and in openness to the presence of the Spirit as one seeks to explore the revelation of God and to transform the world in accordance with God's final Kingdom' (p. 215). Indeed, the possible typo on p. 88 – 'Ignatian Biblical *mediation*' rather than 'meditation' – may be prophetic. It would be interesting to put Balthasar's aesthetics and *Theodramatics* and Walatka himself in dialogue with the community activist turn in contemporary art. It would also be very timely: when the West is experiencing social breakdown and a widening gap between rich and poor, parallel with mass secularisation, Christians might offer a Christ-centred, eschatological and beautiful theology of liberation.

DOMINIC WHITE OP

'BREATHING THE SPIRIT WITH BOTH LUNGS': DEIFICATION IN THE WORK OF VLADIMIR SOLOV'EV by Jeremy Pilch, *Peeters*, Leuven, 2018, pp. x + 249, €78.00, pbk.

Jeremy Pilch's research investigates the concept of 'divine-humanity' in the thought of the great Russian philosopher Vladimir Solov'ev (1853-1900). Pilch sets out a triple objective: first, to show how deification

is the dominant theme of Solov'ev's thought, especially under the term *bogochelovechestvo* (Godmanhood, or Divine Humanity); secondly, to illustrate that the thinking of Solov'ev, rooted in the Eastern patristic tradition, integrates also Western reflection on grace; and finally to demonstrate 'the potential for both the renewal and unity of Christendom through a deeper understanding of Solov'ev's thought' (p. 1) – hence the title of the book: 'Breathing the Spirit with Two Lungs' inspired by an expression used by Pope John Paul II.

The first chapter examines the scriptural and patristic sources of Solov'ev's philosophy, outlining in particular the 'hermeneutic key' of the Christological formula of Chalcedon throughout his thought. The following three chapters delineate the evolution of Solov'ev's thinking through three works to which they are respectively devoted. Chapter II, on the *Lectures on Divine Humanity* (1878-81), while situating the work of Solov'ev in the context of the Russian theological and spiritual renewal of the 19th century, shows how these *Lectures* are inspired by the thought of Saint Maximus the Confessor. Chapter III, on *The Spiritual Foundations of Life* (1882-84), reflects on how Solov'ev deepens his conception of deification by applying it to ecclesiology. The fourth and final chapter, on *The Justification of the Good* (1897) outlines how Solov'ev proposes a moral approach to deification applying the notion of deification to social life and combining, in an unprecedented synthesis, the Eastern paradigm of deification with Western approaches to grace. Throughout his work Pilch presents biographical elements illustrating the evolution of the thought of Solov'ev, who was initially close to the Slavophiles, but who approached Catholicism at the end of his brief life. As the author himself summarizes in the presentation of his book: 'The over-arching thrust of this work is that Solov'ev's concept of deification started as a reflection of the mystical and cosmic expressions of deification characteristic of the late Greek patristic period but develops so to be expressed in the western terminology of grace and focuses on the active implementation of deification in the world, taking the teaching out of its original monastic context'.

Very clear, well-constructed and well-argued, Pilch's study testifies to a very broad knowledge of the recent literature on Solov'ev (although a *status quaestionis* in the current Russian literature would also have been welcome), and more generally on the question of deification and grace, including St. Thomas Aquinas (one notes amiably in passing that the author, referring to the recent researches by Fr. Luc-Thomas Somme and Fr. Antoine Lévy, comments that 'Francophone Dominican life in the twenty-first century remains in good health as in the twentieth century', p. 11!).

A particularly interesting point is the analysis of Solov'ev's ecclesiology – often apprehended from another of Solov'ev's works, *Russia and the Universal Church* (1889), but little on the basis of *The Spiritual Foundations of Life* or on *The Justification of the Good*. Pilch shows

convincingly that *The Spiritual Foundations* develops an ecclesiology based on the Christological notion of divine-humanity, which he places in the context of the beginnings of the Catholic ecclesiological renewal and the thought of Johann Adam Möhler. One could have wished that Pilch had emphasized to a greater degree the role of Solov'ev's contemporary Russian ecclesiologists, who also applied the notion of divine-humanity to the Church, such as Alexander Katanskij (1836-1919) and especially Evgenij Akvilonov (1861-1911), who was one of the first, in the circles of the Russian Theological Academies, to define the Church as a 'theandric organism'. But the interest of Pilch's research is above all to show the evolution of the notion of deification in Solov'ev's thought, and its application at the social level (state and ecclesial) in his fascinating – and often disregarded – book, *The Justification of the Good*.

Pilch's research is not only an excellent introduction to Solov'ev's thinking from the key notion of deification, but also a remarkable and original effort to show how his thought is deeply 'ecumenical'. One can only hope that Pilch will continue his research in this area. His study testifies once more that Russian thought is never so fertile, and never so Russian, than when it embodies the fruitful meeting of the West and the East.

HYACINTHE DESTIVELLE OP

CONSCIENCE BEFORE CONFORMITY. HANS AND SOPHIE SCHOLL AND THE WHITE ROSE RESISTANCE IN NAZI GERMANY by Paul Shrimpton, *Gracewing*, Leominster, 2018, pp. xxi + 304, £ 15.99, pbk.

What makes a nation great? Faced with this question in 1808, when practically the whole of the German-speaking world was under French control, Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria created the Walhalla, a temple of German-ness towering over the Danube. Historian Neil MacGregor called this building the 'highest form of passive resistance', a bit like a National Portrait Gallery created as a first step to national liberation. Among the many busts of emperors, politicians and poets, one finds a bust of the young student Sophie Scholl, a 21-year old student of biology and philosophy who, together with her brother Hans, was executed in 1943 for urging fellow students at Munich University to oppose the Nazi-regime by means of illegal leaflets. The story of Sophie and Hans has been subject of at least two films *The White Rose* (1982) and *Sophie Scholl. The Final Days* (2005) and many TV-adaptations. Every German town and village seems to have a street or a school named after Sophie and Hans, and every bookshop seems to stock books by and on them. Interestingly, these books can often be found in the spirituality section, and not in the history section where you might have expected them.