

non-Muslim outsider, a foreigner and Catholic priest. He also taught French and Philosophy at the Lycee Istiqlal which gave him some financial independence. This allowed him to create a 'compound' in Kabul for the numerous orphans who found themselves homeless and valuable in a modernizing economy which had attracted poor rural peasants into the city. Many of these orphans came from the Persian-speaking or Shiite minorities who often felt outside the Sunni establishment of the country. Beaucueil was expelled from Afghanistan by the Soviet authorities in 1983 - the story of these years are told in his three volume *Chronique d'un témoin privilégié: Lettres d'Afghanistan* (1979-1983).

Fr. Serge was aware that his itinerary was uncommon and looked for sign to guide his path. Louis Duprée, the well-known American historian of Afghanistan, records six months later one of these sign-moments when Serge had been in Herat in May 1976. The 50 or so people milling about the shrine gave Serge no chance to meditate with the Pir of Herat. He waited until all delegates had departed for the hotel, and talked for some time with the brotherhood. The Ansari brotherhood has great respect for Père de Beaucueil and his learning. Sensing his desire, they discreetly departed. In the brilliant red sun of early evening, which so often bathes Herat in an unearthly light, Serge sat before the tomb of Ansari and closed his eyes to meditate. 'As reported later, he asked the questions which plagued him and demanded of Ansari: 'O Pir-of-Herat, you brought me to Afghanistan. But what should I do now?' As he meditated, Serge became aware that all the sounds of man and nature had died away. Silence! Then he opened his eyes. Sitting before him were two little boys, huddled together, contemplating this strange *khareji* (foreigner) who sat so respectfully in front of the tomb of Ansari. One of the boys, it turned out, claimed to be a direct descendant of the Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, Pir-i-Herat'.

Dalh's work is at its heart a dialogical study in mysticism and scholarship in the life and work of Beaucueil centred on the discovery of Anṣārī of Herāt. *The Sufi and the Friar* is an excellent account which profoundly expresses a Dominican outreach to the modern Muslim world written by a practitioner himself.

ANTHONY O'MAHONY

THE STANDARD BEARER OF THE ROMAN CHURCH: LAWRENCE OF BRINDISI & CAPUCHIN MISSIONS IN THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE (1599-1613) by Andrew J. G. Drenas, *Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2018, pp. xvii + 246, hbk*

Lawrence of Brindisi's missions to protestants in the Commissariat of Bohemia-Austria-Styria between 1599 and 1613, in the last years of his

life, are important in a number of ways, for he was a man of many parts. He rose to recognition as a Doctor of the Church in 1959 and in his lifetime he became prominent as a diplomat, military chaplain, administrator and preacher as well as a missionary.

This definitive study, the first in English to rely on a comprehensive search of the archive sources begins with a brief biography and a discussion of his continuing influence after his death. The first of its main chapters provides a history of the creation of the Commissariat, with its first three friaries in Graz, Vienna and Prague. The meat of the book lies in its chapters on the way Lawrence tackled the task of persuading the 'heretics' he encountered in this part of the Holy Roman Empire that they were in error. In Saxony and the Palatinate Lawrence could and did engage with both Lutherans and Calvinists, but most of his efforts were directed towards the Lutherans who dominated protestant thinking in the lands of the Commissariat.

First comes a description of his preaching, which witnesses described as energetic, and as involving impassioned argument both against the errors he was challenging and for the true faith. He did not work alone but accompanied by other Capuchins, though it seems to have been his own preaching which was remembered. The published written record of some of his sermons survives as evidence of the arguments he advances, but contemporary descriptions of how it struck observers, his strength of feeling and fierce concentration, communicate something of his famously confrontational style of delivery.

Chapter 4 deals with the 'Theological Disputations' he held with in Prague in 1607. The *Disputation* with the Lutheran Polycarp Leyser concentrated on the topics of Justification and 'good works'. Three years later he disputed with another Lutheran whose name does not survive, on veneration of the Virgin Mary. Chapter 5 explores Lawrence's treatment of Lutheran 'hypotheses' in his *The Express Image of Lutheranism*. This was a result of an order by the nuncio Caetani to refuse Leyser's teaching.

The Jesuit Neubauer was involved in Leyser's attacks as well as Lawrence and matters were complicated by the fact that Leyser and Neubauer naturally used German while Lawrence preached in Italian. Leyser described how Lawrence would throw books from the pulpit in his energetic homiletic denunciations. Lawrence's rebuttals as he began to write his 'Image' pointed to a disorderliness and personal spite in the points Leyser made. He did not complete it as speedily as he began it and was still working on it as his health started to fail. It was not published in his lifetime. But read now, it provides an invaluable post-Tridentine resource to supplement the corpus of debate Counter-Reformation between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. He relied more heavily on patristic sources than he tended to do in his sermons, where he mostly cited Scripture, but to the modern eye and ear the polemic

is the less persuasive because of what would in a modern social media age have to be described as ‘trolling’.

The conclusion asks whether Lawrence’s preaching to the protestants brought about any conversions. There is evidence that there were some. Perhaps that is not where his influence lay in the long-term. Drenas suggests that his great achievement lay in his effect upon the landscape of the Roman Empire. This is a book of profound scholarship, though sometimes less than felicitous in style, with a Bibliography, a Chronology and a list of the ‘polemical themes addressed’ in Lawrence’s homiletic works.

G. R. EVANS

THE SEDUCTIVENESS OF VIRTUE: ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL AND JOHN PAUL II ON MORALITY AND PERSONAL FULFILLMENT by John J. Fitzgerald, *Bloomsbury, T and T Clark*, London, 2017, pp. xii + 213, £85.00, hbk

Is it good to be good? In this book, John J. Fitzgerald explores this question through a comparison of two charismatic religious thinkers of the twentieth century: the rabbi, philosopher and civil rights activist Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) and Pope St. John Paul II (1920-2005). In chapter one Fitzgerald carefully specifies his question. He sets out to examine:

‘whether doing good (or evil), in particular, leads to increases (or decreases) in happiness, meaning, freedom, and/or personal fulfilment’ (p.3).

Fitzgerald then goes on to specify exactly what he means by happiness, meaning, freedom, personal fulfilment and so on in this context. One of the strengths of this book is its clarity and precision: Fitzgerald’s prose is economical and accessible, the argument is always well sign posted and Fitzgerald is careful to acknowledge where, due to the nature of the comparison he is attempting, he has felt obliged to diverge in his understanding of key concepts from one or both of his interlocutors.

With these foundations in place, Fitzgerald moves on in chapters two and three to introduce the thought of Rabbi Heschel and Pope St. John Paul II (including his pre-papal writing) in a little more detail. Here Fitzgerald is constrained by space: I am unfamiliar with Rabbi Heschel’s work and found Fitzgerald’s exegesis piqued my interest in several directions which space did not allow Fitzgerald to develop. I am more familiar with the writings of the pope and on occasion regretted that the need to distil some very precise and concise answers from a wide and sophisticated body of work led to a loss of nuance and perhaps on occasion a misplaced emphasis. But such disagreements