

participation in social life is a way of life that draws from our faith in Jesus Christ: to be formed by the presence of God in worship, to be shaped by the story of scripture, and to join together in imaginative ways to allow God's love to animate our roles in social life" (91–92).

Although none of the authors explores his topic in-depth, the essays are nonideological, balanced, informative, and hold together well. Thus, the collection is well worth the read. Undergraduates in CST courses would be an especially good audience for the book. While not everyone will agree with all of their judgments (e.g., some of the authors' understandings of capitalism or Hochschild's notion that the new natural law theory is more Kantian than Thomistic [204 n.18]), the authors do strive to be faithful to the vision of CST. One factual error was the reference on page 119 to *Centesimus Annus*' having been promulgated in 1981; it should be 1991.

—Mark S. Latkovic (e-mail: Latkovic.mark@shms.edu)  
*Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit, Michigan*

## Christian Theology and Market Economics

**Ian R. Harper and Samuel Gregg (Editors)**

Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar, 2008 (245 pages)

Jesus Christ had much to say about money and the role that “treasure” plays in our lives. Ironically, as the contributors to this volume correctly point out, theologians have generally avoided pecuniary topics or have portrayed money as a necessary evil—perhaps even a continuing symbol of the Fall. The contributors acknowledge that many theologians have focused on the injustices of capitalism, both real and imagined. Rather than rejecting those criticisms out of hand, the authors suggest that these negative views of free-market capitalism suffer from excessive simplicity as they fail to account for the unintended consequences (both seen and unforeseen) of their anticapitalistic views and neglect the positive ways businesses contribute to the common good.

The text's overall purpose, as explained in the introduction, is “to reach out to those of our professional colleagues who know little if anything of the Christian faith, let alone Christian theology, and at the same time to those of our Christian brothers and sisters who evince deep suspicion or at least puzzlement over our involvement with the ‘economic.’” Broadly speaking, those goals are accomplished, although the book does a better job of enlightening Christian theologians to the role economics plays in moral theology than to educating non-Christians. It would have been preferable for the authors to focus on engaging Christians or non-Christians, rather than both. Reaching out to non-Christians is a worthy goal, and the authors do make progress in that area but not sufficiently to remove readers' ignorance of Christian doctrine as well as to correct various misunderstandings regarding the faith.

Economics is a vast topic that can easily overwhelm uninitiated readers simply with the volume of specialized terminology and statistical information. The editors smartly

address that problem through a superbly lucid introduction and by organizing the articles from the ten additional contributors under three main headings. The articles collected under Christianity and the History of Economic Thought, the first heading, argue that Christians and Christian theology played an important role in the development of economic theory before and after the Enlightenment. The writers argue that, parallel to the relationship between science and religion, while much of contemporary economic theory is profoundly secular, economics was raised in an environment of faith. Ricardo F. Crespo's chapter, "Aristotle's Science of Economics," is particularly helpful for its explanation of the difference between theoretical and practical knowledge (the former leads to truth and the latter to action). Too often, academics and ethicists accuse practical sciences, such as politics and economics, of inconsistent principles, when the nature of these disciplines is antithetical to the strict application of rules. Crespo's purpose is not to proffer an intellectually lazy version of situational ethics but to ask us to recognize that policymaking is inherently temporary and context-specific. The fact is that a policy that achieved ethical goals in the past may not work in the future and, therefore, may be in need of modification.

The second heading, Christianity and Economic Theory, delves into the thorny topic of the nature and identity of man. The authors question the construct known as the "economic man," which holds that humans are simply creatures whose decisions are governed by the rules of desire and scarcity. The authors are careful not to demonize their opponents. Rather, they present the issues with care—and sometimes humor—to help the reader consider how their Christian beliefs relate to, differ from, or even conflict with contemporary economic thinking.

The final section, Christianity and Modern Business, contains articles addressing practical economic issues such as the role of business, the problem of excessive wealth, fair trade, and fighting poverty. Although each of the four chapters make important contributions, two are worthy of special attention. Michael J. Miller's chapter, "Business as a Moral Enterprise," is essential reading for those wishing to reflect on what it means to have a Christian business. Despite my being a former business owner and sympathetic to the business community, Miller's article quickly revealed how shallow my understanding regarding the moral effect of business actually was. In a similar way, Peter S. Heslam's chapter, "The Role of Business in the Fight Against Poverty," provided a needed corrective to the view that business must be stifled in order to achieve economic justice for the world's destitute. Heslam does not argue that business will save the poor. Rather he asserts that Christian leaders must see business as something more than a source of financial support; it is an integral part of Christian activity. Heslam suggests that business should be transformed and incorporated into the mission of seeking the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33), observing that many countries that exclude missionaries will nonetheless accept entrepreneurs.

Theologians wanting to start the journey about what it means to think Christianly about economic issues will find this text a useful introduction. Protestants, unfamiliar with Catholic teaching on economics, will benefit from the mature reflection exhibited by

the Catholic Church's long ecclesiastical memory. The authors deftly avoid controversies that presently divide Christians into different communions. As a biblicist, I would have preferred more attention to scriptural teaching. At times, I also wished for specific guidance on issues such as how a person could determine whether the moral evil of "affluenza" had afflicted him or her. I found it strange that in these times of fear over the future of our environment, the book lacked a chapter on that topic. These weaknesses aside, the authors are to be commended for their lucid call for theologians to engage in the complex world of money and markets.

—Stephen M. Vantassel (e-mail: [stephenvantassel@hotmail.com](mailto:stephenvantassel@hotmail.com))  
*Kings Evangelical Divinity School, Wales, United Kingdom*

**Rethinking Rights: Historical, Political,  
and Philosophical Perspectives**  
**Bruce P. Frohnen and Kenneth L. Grasso (Editors)**  
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One of the most oft-heard and powerful criticisms of modern liberalism is that it is unable to foster the stability and longevity of communities. Priding itself on the protection of rights, the modern liberal regime fails to understand that the individual can only flourish within a supportive and nourishing community. Thus, so the criticism goes, "rights talk" must be replaced by, or at least supplemented with, the language of duty, virtue, and community. The authors of *Rethinking Rights* are sympathetic to such concerns, yet they reject not rights in and of themselves but modern liberalism's hegemonic control over the usage of the term. Rights must be central in any regime, yet respecting them requires "grounding [them] properly in a full view of the person's inherently social nature and proper goals" (4). *Rethinking Rights* is a bold and largely successful attempt to understand the context in which rights have taken a central role in modern politics (part 1), and to provide a robust metaphysic that will allow rights to serve as a support to human flourishing (part 2).

In "Historical Roots of Modern Rights: Before and After Locke," Brian Tierney challenges the view (targeting Straussians) that Locke is the father of individualism. On Tierney's reading, Locke rejects Hobbes's view that individuals have rights but no attendant duties, and reasserts the late medieval teaching "that the political community was a corporate association and that individuals had rights within it" (39). Locke's concern with individual consent to government harkened back to Giles of Rome, Scotus, and Suarez *inter alia*; Locke's focus on self-mastery was not a rejection of God's dominion over man but a formulation of the traditional view that all men are equal before and *under* God; and, finally, Locke's emphasis on natural rights was a continuation of a movement dating back at least to the twelfth century, which developed a legitimate space for free actions within the broad boundaries of natural law.