

circumstances before Marxism won over the revolutionary population. In the next essay Matthew Brown says that Adam Smith's 1776 inquiry was about the nation, which situates Smith in contemporary discussions that use the nation-state as a relevant unit for discussion, but critics assert that use of the nation-state in this way leads to a limited scope for analysis. Establishing different units of account can broaden the available data and allow for a more equal footing for analysis, but Smith's original point still holds for Brown: "nations made stuff with the stuff they had and from that stuff they made more stuff" (203). Finally, Alberto Garín argues that liberal history does not impose an ideology upon its scientific inquiry into the past. Other forms of history serve the function and end of the state. Liberal historians "study history to better understand ourselves, and to understand how to promote freedom in our time" (210).

This volume is a sophisticated consideration of a method of thinking historically in the best traditions of Western thought, realistically taking into account human freedom and dignity with the recognition of inherent limitations. Students of history ought to seriously engage with these essays, no matter their ideological persuasion.

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Aquinas and the Market: Toward a Humane Economy

Mary L. Hirschfeld

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Mary L. Hirschfeld's studies and interests make her especially apt to adequately perform the task of developing a "Thomistic economics." She holds a BA, MA, and PhD in economics (Harvard University, 1989); she had been a professor of economics for fifteen years before receiving her PhD in theology (University of Notre Dame, 2013). Today, she teaches economics and theology in the department of humanities at Villanova University.

As I see it, a key factor for a good interdisciplinary study, such as the one conducted by Hirschfeld, is to avoid starting with particular topics such as just price or usury or themes that would naturally crop up when looking for an intersection between Aquinas and economics. Instead, Hirschfeld goes to the root of economics and its underlying anthropological conception and compares it with Aquinas's notion. Economic agents look for their preferences. For both economists and Aquinas, Hirschfeld notes, "human desires cannot be satiated by finite goods" (xv). However, while economics' underlying anthropology is limited, Aquinas's conception of human nature is broader and comprises the former as a part of it. This part, however, is not the best: the often immoderate human behavior. For Aquinas, God is the infinite, true good, and our desire of finite goods is limited, while for economists, the infinite good is an unending desire of finite goods, which is a mistake even from a metaphysical point of view. Aquinas's anthropology can explain why economics' rational choice theory works, but it can also explain why

human beings sometimes behave in ways that do not fit with economic logic. Moreover, Aquinas's anthropology serves as the basis for building a fully humane economy that, in essence, cannot be value neutral as current economics attempts to be.

In the first chapter Hirschfeld reviews the various ways in which theology and economics may come together. She chooses to develop a theological, Thomistic appraisal of economic premises in order to arrive at a Thomistic theological economics. Chapter 2 deals with rational choice theory in an updated manner, recognizing all the new elements considered by it and highlighting its problems: the difficulty of dealing with incommensurable ends that hinders an ethical perspective, the ill-defined economic concept of preferences where all motivations fall into a single metric, and economics' critical assumption of an infinite desire of finite goods. Chapters 3 through 5 explain Aquinas's understanding of happiness, comparing it with the corresponding economic notions. The metaphysical bases, decision-making models (practical wisdom versus constrained maximization), and the role of material goods, money, and profits are different for each perspective. The philosophical analysis is thorough, fine, and faithful to Aquinas's thinking. The concept of analogy emerges as relevant for the conception of happiness and our appraisal of finite goods. Chapter 6 deals with private property and its different notions: for Aquinas, it is legitimate, but ordered and consequently limited. Self-interest should be virtuous.

Chapter 7, "Toward a Humane Economy: A Pragmatic Approach," attempts to indicate how to design policies in a nonvirtuous society in order to subordinate property rights and markets to the goal of human flourishing. Economics needs the insights of other social sciences to understand and try to manage economic behavior in the right way. Efficiency is laudable but it is not all. The logic of well balancing finite goods differs from the logic of efficiency but takes it into account.

Finally, I would like to add that I felt very much at ease reading Hirschfeld's book. It was enjoyable to read, and I fully appreciate her ability to effectively present her arguments, with which I completely agree and which have served as the basis for much of my work. I have regularly built the ideas that I share with Hirschfeld on Aristotle's thoughts. When analyzing these same concepts in Aquinas's writings, I have discovered that he, too, builds on Aristotle's ideas, albeit more completely. Besides, it is also clear that Aristotle's god is not Thomas's God and this is significant because this (great) difference has consequences for their conceptions of human nature, human happiness, and also freedom. Consequently, I think using Aquinas's thought as a basis for a "humane economics" will prove the best option.

However, I wonder whether this will be too great a demand in today's secular world: to ask for Christian faith, theologically interpreted in a Thomistic way. I recognize, I repeat, that there are metaphysical differences between Aquinas and Aristotle, rightly noted by Hirschfeld, and that these differences are relevant. I wonder, though, are these differences really relevant when aiming to build a humane economy? This is why in my case—though completely in agreement with the Christian faith and Aquinas's theology (he is also my hero)—I have decided to base my proposals on Aristotle's philosophy. This approach is perhaps "second best," but I find it more easily reachable through reason,

with no demand for a religious faith, when this faith is minimally necessary to obtain the best option: a pragmatic decision.

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Corporate Spirit: Religion and the Rise of the Modern Corporation

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Corporate Spirit looks at the relationship between the modern corporation and Christian ecclesiology. The book is divided into two sections, with the first focusing on ancient and medieval Europe, and the second on North America from the colonial era to the present.

The early church, Porterfield argues, stood out on the corporate buffet of the ancient world because of its virtues of charity, humility, and accountability. Specifically, it was the apostle Paul's teaching about Christians as members of the body of Christ that introduced this shift in corporate thinking. As antiquity gave way to the medieval era, the church's corporate virtues found expression in penance, monasticism (along with trade guilds in the late medieval period), and Christian kingship. After the Black Death killed one-third of Europe's population, the resulting labor shortage afforded survivors higher wages and greater mobility. Some guilds morphed into merchant groups. New approaches to incorporation fueled international trade that birthed a new social class: the middling capitalists.

When Porterfield turns to the colonial period, she notes that the enterprises and charters of North America were relatively less lucrative, and so men of modest means were able to invest in them. Simultaneously, a crackdown on religious dissenters in England produced an influx of theologically attuned colonists. Consequently, all New England communities had strong commercial and ecclesial hues. As in all times, social cohesion was fueled as much by defining who was *out* as who was *in*. This spurred a religious entrepreneurship that challenged the established order. While burgeoning economic ties bound the colonies together in a way that would ultimately spawn a revolution, tensions remained between the rhetoric and reality of Christian corporate identity. How could New Englanders, who placed great importance on willing agency, yoke themselves to Southerners reliant on slave labor?

In the absence of a king, the infant republic sought cohesion through the imagined sanctity of contract law. Porterfield critiques the elevation of rationalist natural rights philosophy at the expense of collective memory in decision-making. She asserts that this laid the legal basis for corporations being considered "persons with standing," while *real* persons could be bought and sold. Meanwhile, established churches were losing their formal political status. Consequently, the old order faced increased competition.

After the Civil War corporations became more hierarchical in some senses. Yet there remained many shared convictions between laborers and owners, which provided the