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Book Review: "The Logic of the Trinity: Augustine to Ockham" By Paul Thom

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of dissenting laity. K. mentions that no heretics used the word "Cathar" to describe themselves and alludes to the power differences between inquisitors and suspects, but in the absence of more extensive discussion, the reader is left to assume that K. is describing mere scholarly quibbles, rather than glossing over a body of literature that would contradict his analysis wholesale. Other chapters contain the same or less in the way of methodological and historiographical discussion, often with only a few secondary sources grounding pages of material.

The audience of the volume is unclear: K. uses "we" to describe Christians and intersperses asides about contemporary Roman Catholicism into his historical discussions, but his book does not reflect on its confessional orientation. Finally, the tone of K.'s writing not infrequently becomes defensive, moralizing, or snarky. Regrettably this otherwise accessible volume on an important topic raises many red flags.

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THE LOGIC OF THE TRINITY:
AUGUSTINE TO OCKHAM. By Paul
Thom. New York: Fordham University,
2012. Pp. xvii + 236.

This philosophical study peels back the surface of medieval accounts of the doctrine of the Trinity to reveal the dynamism and variety of medieval thought, as it brought Aristotelian logic into creative engagement with the doctrine's ontological claims. Successive chapters treat Augustine, Boethius, Abelard, Gilbert of Poitiers, Peter Lombard, Bonaventure, Albert, Thomas Aquinas, Scotus, and Ockham, but only after reminding us of the need for precision in the use of prepositions (and the rules of operation for logical sequencing that these undergird) as well as the formal definitions implied by the interplay of such terms as "universals," "accidents," "substances," and "individuals." Thom's own analytic framework provides a helpful point of comparison throughout.

Of particular interest is the ongoing attention paid to the distinction between

person and property, a distinction made problematic by Gilbert of Poitiers's position that divinity is distinct from God. The distinction renders distance between the Persons and their properties, against which Lombard will retrieve Augustine and Bernard. Bonaventure advances Lombard's work by philosophically arguing for a "double aspect" to relations, while Aquinas's use of analogy will be carried forward and modified by Scotus's insistence on divine simplicity, now protected by the notion of the formal distinction. Ockham's struggle to bring this philosophical tradition into conformity with Scripture and doctrine summarizes earlier viewpoints.

T.'s study offers an important analytical tool for specialists. Yet a wider point is implied for systematians who would cite the tradition: all talk of trinitarian theology as "relational" that employs these medieval accounts as warrants—reaching to Aristotle's claim that "relatives seem to be simultaneous by nature" (8)—must be cognizant of the underlying mechanism behind the actual focus, a cognizance that should temper contemporary social appropriations of the doctrine. Thus the broad importance of this slim volume.

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BALTHASAR: A (VERY) CRITICAL
INTRODUCTION. By Karen R. Kilby.
Interventions. Grand Rapids, MI:
Eerdmans, 2012. Pp. xii + 176. \$23.

Kilby is a faculty member at the University of Nottingham where the series that includes this volume arose. She specializes in the writings of Balthasar and Rahner. The first four chapters describe Balthasar's historical context and identify some of his major themes. The last two chapters examine his approaches to Trinity and gender as sample topics within his project. Although Balthasar's *oeuvre* is difficult to critique in a systematic way or from an opposing viewpoint on any one issue, K. aptly questions the mesmerizing quality of his "contemplative" methodology and his supremely confident authorial tone.