visits 1662 from so many directions, before beginning to trace how it was that the
Restoration constituted ‘the first step towards today’s pluralist and multicultural
society’ (p. 28).

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The political strategy of Blair/Mandelson during the New Labour years in Britain has
been called ‘Neo-liberal Triangulation’. It was a methodology of both developing
policies and winning the battle for public support that found its origins in the highly
successful campaigns developed by Dick Morris for Bill Clinton (although the rise of
Christian Democracy in postwar Europe and of Gaulois in France can be seen
through the same prism). At its root it depends upon a caricature of two opposed
positions, represented as opposite and ultimately unreasonable extremes, and
advocating a via media. This middle or ‘third way’ – originally between political right
and left – can then be advocated as the only reasonable position to take. Two US
presidential elections and three UK general elections are testament to its effectiveness
in the political sphere. What is not so clear is whether it is a convincing theological or
historiographical approach. Nevertheless, it is fast acquiring a kind of hegemony in the
field of Newman. Seeking to stake out the middle ground between the liberal-
Newman and the conservative-Newman, the cynical-Newman and the entirely
consistent-Newman, and the latest and most fashionable iteration the Newman of the
iconoclasts and the Newman of the hagiographers, this approach seems unconcerned
with recognizing the complex nature of the subject, be that the man, his curriculum vitae
or his theology. This collection of essays, edited by Frederick Aquino and – if the rush
of publications bearing his name in the last three years are anything to go by – the
clearly industrious Benjamin King cannot be wholly excused from this triangulation.

In among some worthy, if rather unremarkable contributions on largely familiar
territory from Peter Nockles, Ken Parker and Michael Shea, and King and Aquino
themselves, are two very interesting contributions which indicate what might have been
a more fruitful direction for this book to have taken – the first from Keith Beaumont on
‘The Reception of Newman in France at the Time of the Modernist Crisis’ and the
second, Daniel Lattier’s essay entitled ‘The Orthodox Theological Reception of
Newman’. Although the latter has a rather thin conclusion, his examination of the
manner in which four Orthodox theologians – Florovsky, Dragas, Louth and Pelikan –
engage with various aspects of Newman’s work suggests that there is scope for a more
detailed examination of this subject in much the same way as Marcus Plesed’s Orthodox
Readings of Aquinas (Oxford University Press, 2012) has initiated one in that field.
For Anglican readers, the section on Andrew Louth is perhaps of most direct interest and
goes a long way to providing a clear and concise explanation of the two men’s different
trajectories out of the Anglican Communion.
Beaumont’s detailed familiarity with the intellectual life of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century French Catholicism and his capacity to give a lucid account of it makes his chapter easily the most compelling in this book. He makes a number of minor factual errors – for example, the Anti-modernist oath did not remain in force ‘until the early 1960s’ but until 1967 – but its great strength is in how it charts the clear blue water between the developmental doctrinal and ecclesial dynamic of Newman’s theology and the rather more malleable, and ultimately anti-dogmatic, understanding of French Modernists. Beaumont is surely right in asserting that Newman’s use of antecedent probability and the illative sense made him a difficult thinker for his predominantly Cartesian French readers. Indeed it may well be that the essential tidiness of the Cartesian mind may be at the heart of what Beaumont observes is the disabling limitation of the two French thinkers who have had most influence Newman’s reception in France: Alfred Loisy and Henri Bremond – that of failing ‘to see the complexity of [Newman’s] views, and his attempts to articulate all of these different spheres of experience’ (p. 175). It would have been good to hear Beaumont on Danielou, de Lubac and, of course, Congar.

Beaumont’s article begs the question of why this volume contains no consideration of Newman’s reception in German language theological discourse – an absence that seems difficult to explain given von Balthasar’s use of a seriously inaccurate and utterly misleading translation of Newman’s sermons in his hugely influential theology of the descensus and the obvious familiarity with, admiration for and use made of Newman’s thinking in the work of the man who was to beatify him, Josef Ratzinger. Pope Francis has, himself, used quotes from less than obvious, not to say obscure Newman texts that suggests there has been a reception in the Spanish-speaking world, or at least in Latin America, and interest in Newman in Poland grew as John Paul II’s papacy went on. Given the pressures on publishers, a consideration of the reception of Newman in these and other languages – the Chinese former-priest, Joseph Ma Xiangbo (1840–1939) appears to have been influenced by him – may be more productive than going over familiar territory and tired arguments about Newman’s reliability, consistency and bona fides and would certainly offer a consistent scheme of selection rather than the eccentric and eclectic approach of this book.

Newman’s capacity to divide is undeniable: the estrangement between Newman and Manning, largely the mischievous product of acolytes of the two men, is early testament to it. Neither is it in doubt that there is a hagiographical tradition nor yet are the attempts of various iconoclasts from Kingsley to Turner to run a counter-narrative, although one may think that Newman got off lightly at the hands of Lytton Strachey. Nevertheless, just as Skinner’s pungent ‘review of the reviews’ in the Journal of Ecclesial History in 2010 sought to deny to Roman Catholic scholars who come to favourable conclusions about their co-religionists the right to be heard in the academy – an attempt comprehensively refuted by Eamon Duffy in the same journal – O’Regan’s contribution to the present volume attempts the same feat of triangulation, in which ‘history’ is presented the via media between iconoclasm and hagiography. For both Skinner and O’Regan the ostensible target is the Newman biographer Ian Ker, but the former seemed to be engaging by proxy in the debate between the supposedly value-neutral methodological agnosticism advanced by Diarmid MacCulloch and the call for a religious turn in ecclesiastical history argued
for by Sarah Foot. O’Regan hardly helps himself with the extraordinary claim (p. 220) that Meriol Trevor’s undoubtedly hagiographic work is of the same genre as Ward’s dated but important work, let alone Ker’s comprehensive biography. The consideration of the question of sanctity in general and Newman’s sanctity in particular in O’Regan’s essay is strangely two-dimensional nor will it do to misrepresent beatitude as a half-way house to formal canonization in the acknowledgement of a person’s sanctity, rather than as a recognition of the essentially local (as opposed to global) nature of the cultus. O’Regan is a reliable and readable authority on von Balthasar – for whom holiness was very much a four-dimensional notion – and hearing from him on the influence of Newman on the Swiss Jesuit would have been a more valuable contribution.

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