

proclamation and community activity in Barth's theology, showing persuasively that this is another consistent route that Barth could have taken.

This new account is given substantial ecumenical purchase, as McMaken suggests that infant baptism does not have to be a required practice but might only be deployed in certain cultural contexts in which it would be properly fitting (pp. 264–6). Credobaptists and pedobaptists could thus come together in agreement about the meaning and purpose of baptism, as infant baptism would neither be absolutely necessary nor prohibited. McMaken argues that the New Testament's silence on the topic of infant baptism allows the church this freedom on the matter.

Is McMaken's constructive proposal persuasive? That depends in part on how much the reader accepts the Barthian soteriological principles that undergird the proposal. However, the primary purpose of the comparisons in chapters two and three is not exactly to persuade the reader that Barth is right. McMaken's focus here is on baptism, not on providing a lengthy defense of Barth's understanding of salvation. He seeks 'to demonstrate the close relation between Barth's doctrine of baptism in general and his rejection of infant baptism in particular', and 'to raise awareness of the significant questions that Barth puts to these traditions' (p. 276). On both these counts McMaken's work here is a success. He compellingly argues that renewed attention should be given to Barth's doctrine of baptism, and also provides his own unique voice to the wider conversation. In doing so he provides a fruitful contribution to the ongoing dialogue on baptism.

Albert L. Shepherd V  
University of Aberdeen



**The One Christ: St Augustine's Theology of Deification**, David Vincent Meconi, Catholic University of America Press, 2013 (ISBN 978-0-8132-2127-4), xx + 280 pp., hb \$64.95

David Meconi of Saint Louis University has written what he claims is the 'first book-length study of Augustine's theology of deification' (p. xvi). Since the publication of Gerald Bonner's seminal article on this theme ('Augustine's Concept of Deification', *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 [1986], pp. 369–86) deification has been a topic of discussion within Augustine studies. It is often assumed to distinguish 'Eastern' from 'Western' theology (the East has it, the West lacks it),

but Bonner and a handful of other scholars (e.g. Gerhart Ladner and Henry Chadwick) have dispatched this rumor with aplomb. Among other things, Bonner's 1986 article has provided the humble total of eighteen proof texts for the doctrine of deification, as well as the theological narrative that is necessary to excavate this theme in Augustine's thought. The theme of deification has proven to be an animating theme in historical, systematic, and philosophical theology, and this is particularly true for British theology of the last two decades. A study such as Meconi's *The One Christ: St. Augustine's Theology of Deification* is thus a welcome contribution from an able Augustine scholar.

According to Meconi, deification is not only a concept that connects with many other important themes in Augustine's writing (e.g. creation, Christology, sanctification), but it is also central to Augustine's soteriology. Meconi's study, which began as a DPhil thesis at Oxford University, is divided into five chapters, though a sixth is mentioned (I will return to this ambiguity below). The first two chapters are, by and large, prolegomena. Meconi outlines an account of the relationship between the Creator and creature in the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* (from nothing) in the first, and moves on to how this is reflected in the human as *imago* or image (broken and restored) in the second. This sets up the third chapter on the Son's 'descent', where the author addresses the major questions regarding deification in Augustine's thought: the explicit references to *deificare* (to deify), Augustine's soteriology of recapitulation and divine adoption, the 'great exchange' ('For your sakes the one who was the Son of God became the Son of man, in order that you who were the sons of men might be turned into sons of God . . .'), and the ethical implications of deification. In the following chapter, Meconi addresses his most substantial contribution – the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within the human soul as 'an indispensable component of Augustinian deification' (p. 135). In this chapter, Meconi rightly puts the lie to the supposition that Augustine's christocentric deification is opposed to trinitarian deification. The fruit of this chapter is harvested in the fifth chapter on the 'Ecclesial Reception of Divine Life'. A believer 'puts on' Christ in the sacrament of baptism and is held in union through the sacrament of the Eucharist. Following the judgments of Karl Adam and Bonner, Meconi posits, 'The unifying power of the church and the sacraments celebrated therein cannot be overemphasized for Augustine' (p. 176). Meconi thus (rightly) draws the reader back to the much-discussed doctrine of the *totus Christus* (the 'whole Christ' composed of both its body, the Church, and its head, Christ). The union of Christ and humanity is articulated in the *totus Christus*, a doctrine that is just as much a way of reading Scripture (particularly the Psalms) as it is a statement about the ontology of *deificatio*. In his brief conclusion, Meconi reiterates that human deification is 'Augustine's

supreme image of Christian salvation', but weakens this claim by suggesting that deification is a theme that the Bishop of Hippo neither 'disregarded' nor an image that 'begins to exhaust how he sees Christian salvation' (p. 236). Extending this soteriological line, Meconi offers two possible advantages of his study: it provides an outline of how 'Augustinian justification' might be reenvisioned (pp. 237–9), and it has 'ecumenical potential', particularly between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy (p. 239).

There is much to commend in Meconi's account of deification in Augustine's thought. Meconi is a reliable interpreter of a diverse set of texts. But beyond the reliability of Meconi's account two interrelated aspects of *The One Christ* deserve to be highlighted. First of all, Meconi does not tie himself down to a narrowly philological rendering of a diffuse and diversely articulated theme in Augustine's thought. A strictly philological approach to deification in Augustine's theology presents significant challenges, for the 18 references must be embedded in Augustine's constantly developing terminology. In the Greek theological tradition, this might be otherwise, for the terms themselves are standardized, and are thus more readily analyzable according to the philologist's methods. But this does not seem to be true for the Latin theological tradition in the late fourth and early fifth centuries: Augustine is at the forefront of the *formation* of the Latin theological lexicon, and as such cannot be subjected to a strictly terminological analysis to the extent that his heirs in the Latin theological tradition can be. Related to this implicit rejection of the philological approach is a second feature: Meconi offers a thoroughly *theological* account. To some, this will no doubt be a demerit, but in light of the complex web of doctrines in which deification is found in Augustine's thought, no serious account of deification can be anything but thoroughly theological. As I indicated in my summary above, Meconi offers an account with a richer understanding of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer than has hitherto been achieved. One payoff for Meconi's account might be that it indicates how Pneumatology is, for Augustine, the 'link' between christological and trinitarian doctrines. In recent years, it has become standard to highlight the anachronism of the separation of the doctrines of Christ and the Trinity, but Meconi's study takes this one step forward by indicating how one might conceive of the implied inter-dependence between trinitarian and christological doctrines in Augustine's thought. This is no insignificant benefit of Meconi's account, but a penetrating reader will be left wondering whether the theological account is a delicate side-step of philological analysis, a resolute methodology, or a counsel of despair in dealing with an oeuvre that is over five million words. That these important (and contested) methodological queries arise from Meconi's study is a testament to its value.

There is, unfortunately, this matter of a sixth chapter. In two instances Meconi explicitly mentions a sixth chapter: in the introduction he promises a 'brief examination of the heavenly life' (p. xx); and in chapter four he suggests that his sixth chapter will explore 'the supposed unity between humanity and divinity in Augustine's understanding of the *totus Christus*' (p. 131). No doubt, this will be a matter for the author and his publisher to consider. It seems that the reference on p. 131 refers to a previous draft of chapter five, but what of this examination of the heavenly life mentioned in the introduction? This ambiguity is rich considering the topic at hand, and indicates a feature of Meconi's account that deserves more consideration. What, indeed, can one say about the 'heavenly life'? In *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 86.9 Augustine warns his congregation of the temptation to discern heavenly bliss from their highest pleasures. This would amount to nothing short of avarice, according to Augustine, for one would desire to know that which one cannot possibly know. But is it not necessary to say *something* about it? Perhaps all that one can say about the eschatological *telos* of deification is found in the preliminaries of deification that make up the Christian life in this world. To put this matter a bit more provocatively, is chapter six simply *un-writable*, or is it somehow adumbrated by the prior five chapters that track the doctrine through its mundane stages, from creation to the Church? If the deification of the human is eschatologically achieved, does it make any sense to attempt to describe its pre-eschatological career without an account of its fulfillment? This is more than a sophisticated way to highlight a major textual problem with Meconi's work: one needs to recognize that, for Augustine, deification is a concept that cannot be analyzed according to its fulfillment, knowledge of which could only be avaricious. Although Meconi highlights that deification is eschatologically fulfilled, he seems to carry on *as if* it were not, that is, *as if* heavenly bliss is an extension of the temporal and physical in which its preliminaries are marked out. There are many matters that must be attended to in Augustine's theology of deification, but if one ignores this most fundamental puzzle the account is anything but complete. There are hints of this puzzle in Meconi's account of the doctrine of creation in the first chapter, but the reader is left without an indication of whether the radical distinction between created and heavenly order infuses the entire account, especially its fulfillment, or is simply another theological head-nod to the ontological difference implied in creation *ex nihilo*. Maybe Meconi did in fact realize this, and the sixth chapter is but the silence of what we cannot speak about.

*The One Christ* makes a worthy contribution to an area of scholarship that offers little space for innovation or originality, and Meconi's work deserves to be read by all Augustine scholars, as well as those more

broadly interested in the theme of deification. Any revised edition will likely include excising the references to the sixth chapter. But I wonder, would not such excisions simply render *The One Christ* a book with a rather mundane mistake?

Jonathan D. Teubner  
Trinity College, University of Cambridge



**Richard Hooker and the Vision of God: Exploring the Origins of Anglicanism**, Charles Miller, James Clarke, 2013 (ISBN 978-0-227-17400-5), 349 pp., pb \$50

This volume attempts to contribute to recent revival of interest in the thought of Richard Hooker among specialists. The book also aims to address a perceived corresponding decline in the use of and familiarity with Hooker among theologians generally and Anglican students of theology in particular. In order to address such a situation, this book introduces students and theologians alike to the theological contours of the thought of Richard Hooker. Charles Miller (Team Rector of Abingdon-on-Thames and Vicar of St Helen's Church in the Diocese of Oxford) believes that this is a valuable enterprise because Hooker's theology exemplifies so many important traits that he believes will prove constructive for the contemporary church. In particular, Miller believes that Richard Hooker teaches us to think in an orderly theological manner, that Hooker exemplifies how Christians should conduct themselves in religious controversy, that Hooker's writings exemplify a dialogic approach to theology in which the theologian interacts with the broadest sources possible, and that Hooker's theology displays a responsible and inspiring interplay between theology and spirituality (p. 12).

In order to bring readers to a new appreciation of the ideas and mode of thought of Richard Hooker, Miller surveys Hooker's main writings under more or less traditional systematic doctrinal loci. That is to say, Miller examines questions relating to Hooker's thought on the Trinity, Christology, the church, and the sacraments, but also questions as to Hooker's spirituality, liturgics, political theology, and theology of ordained ministry. Each individual chapter provides a comprehensive and expertly written overview of the main contours of Hooker's thoughts on each particular issue. The majority of these are taken from a close reading of *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* and are supplemented by references to Hooker's extant sermons and other writings. What is