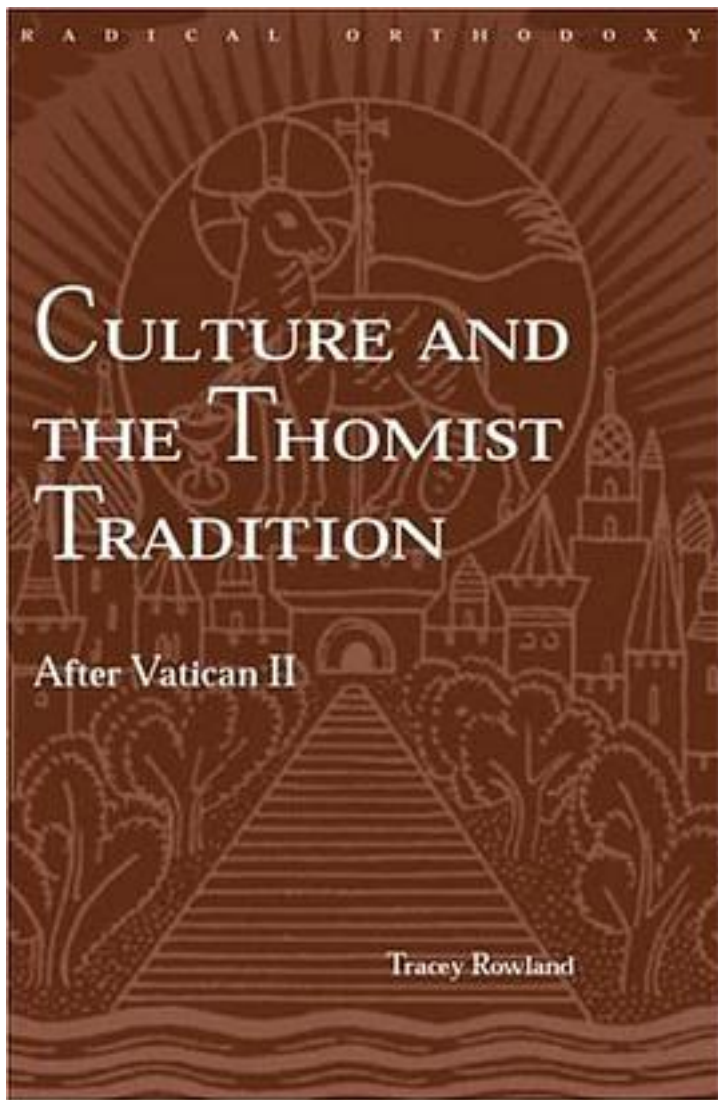


Culture and the Thomist Tradition



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Thomism's influence upon the development of Catholicism is difficult to overestimate. A Thomism that fails to specify the precise role of culture in moral formation is inadequate in a multicultural age, where Christians are exposed to a complex matrix of institutions and traditions both theistic and secular. The ambivalence of the Thomist tradition to modernity, and modern conceptions of rationality, also impedes its ability to successfully engage with the arguments of rival traditions. Must a genuinely progressive Thomism learn to accommodate modernity? In opposition to such a stance, and in support of those who have resisted the trend in post-Conciliar liturgy to mimic the modernistic forms of mass culture, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition* musters a synthesis of the theological critiques of modernity to be found in the works of Alasdair MacIntyre, scholars of the international 'Communio' project and the Radical Orthodoxy circle. This synthesis, intended as a postmodern Augustinian Thomism, provides an account of the role of culture, memory and narrative tradition in the formation of intellectual and moral character. Re-evaluating the outcome of Vatican II, and forming the basis of a much-needed Thomist theology of culture, the book argues that the anti-beauty orientation of mass culture acts as a barrier to the theological virtue of hope, and ultimately fosters despair and atheism.

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