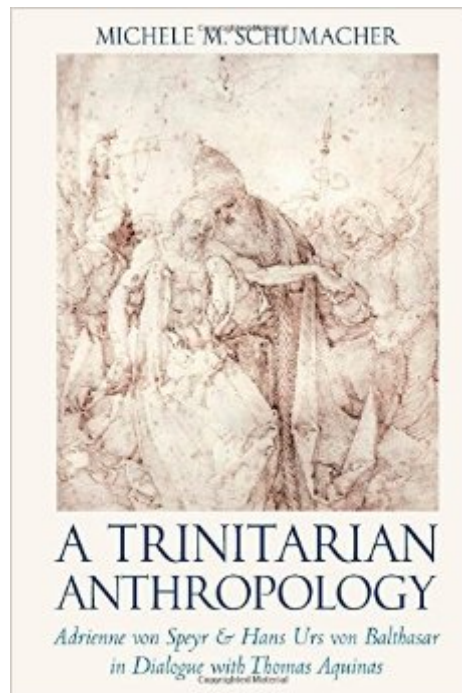


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# A Trinitarian Anthropology: Adrienne Von Speyr And Hans Urs Von Balthasar In Dialogue With Thomas Aquinas



## Synopsis

In this magisterial work, Michele M. Schumacher seeks to promote dialogue between disciples of the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (d. 1988) and those of the church's common doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) on a critical theological question. How are analogies and metaphors from the philosophy and theology of the person (anthropology) rightly used to address the mystery of the Trinity? She does so by considering the specific setting of Balthasar's theology: the inseparability of his work from that of the Swiss physician and mystic Adrienne von Speyr (d. 1967). Most Balthasar scholars have not addressed in any significant manner the figure and influence of von Speyr, perhaps owing to the unsystematic nature of her more than 60 volumes (approximately 15,000 pages) of mystical theology. In addition, there is the even more lengthy work of Balthasar himself. *A Trinitarian Anthropology* explores von Speyr's vast mystically - and biblically-inspired theology, and the significant connections between her teaching and his. Schumacher systematically exposites the Trinitarian theological anthropology of von Speyr, as it emerges through her vast corpus, in parallel with a development of the same theme in Balthasar's work. She uses as the basis for her work a key theme of Balthasar's anthropology: the mystery of "difference-in-unity." Balthasar presents this mystery of the theology of the person in terms of certain *Spannungen* or tensions: the body and the soul; the individual and the community; man and woman; nature and grace; and person and mission. Finally, the volume exposites Aquinas' own doctrine on theological discourse, in view of initiating a dialogue with his disciples. This it does not only by responding to many of their challenges to Balthasar and their criticisms of his work, but also by demonstrating, in a spirit of Catholicism, the congruity (unity-in-difference) between Balthasar's doctrine and that of St. Thomas.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR** Michele M. Schumacher is a private docent in the theology faculty of the University of Fribourg in Switzerland.

**PRAISE FOR THE BOOK** "An admirable display of scholarship. Schumacher shows a thorough acquaintance with all of the writings of Balthasar, von Speyr and the neo-Thomist tradition lately voiced in the literature."

-Edward T. Oakes, professor of Systematic Theology, Mundelein Seminary

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Michele Schumacher has written an incredibly helpful and insightful book. The goal of this book is to present the theological anthropology of Adrienne von Speyr - a mystic - in systematic terms supplied by Balthasar's own theological anthropology (who was Adrienne's spiritual director, editor, publisher, interpreter in his own work, etc.). By doing this she wants to accomplish at least three things: (1) to show that Adrienne's mystical insights have theological value, (2) to help readers of Balthasar be more aware of Adrienne's profound influence on him and to show their unity, and (3) to respond to Balthasar critics (mostly Thomists) and to situate their work within the larger Catholic (above all Thomistic) tradition (while showing the continuity). She is well suited for this work since with the help of Fr. Gilles Emery OP and Fr. Torrell OP she is a diligent reader of St. Thomas and knows him well.

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