

- “Augustinian” tradition taken up in various ways by writers like St Anselm, St Bonaventure, Pascal, Newman, and Maurice Blondel
- 16 *Absolute Value*, pp. 84f.
 - 17 *ibid.* p.89.
 - 18 *The Basis of Belief*, p. 100.
 - 19 *Mysticism and Theology*, p. 25.
 - 20 Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, Vol.1, discussed in *The Absolute and the Atonement*, pp. 153ff.
 - 21 *Mysticism and Theology*, pp. 47ff.
 - 22 For the notion that the awareness of God which is had in faith might not be recognized for what it is, see *Mysticism and Theology*, pp. 46 ff.
 - 23 *The Scale of Perfection*, by Walter Hilton, abridged and presented by Illyd Trethowan (London, 1975), pp. 5f. The quotation is part of Dom Illyd’s introduction to Hilton.
 - 24 *Mysticism and Theology*, p. 76.
 - 25 In the *Posterior Analytics* Aristotle taught that there must be some non-derivative knowledge to serve as a foundation to all other knowledge and opinion.
 - 26 J.O. Urmson, “Prichard and Knowledge”, *Human Agency* (ed. Jonathan Dancy, J.E. Moravcsik, and C.C. Taylor), Stanford, 1988, pp.14 f.
 - 27 Urmson brings this point out well in the essay cited above.
 - 28 I try to defend it in a section of a commentary on the new Universal Catechism (forthcoming from Geoffrey Chapman). I also try to defend it in “God and Some American Philosophers” (forthcoming from Tulane University Press). See also my *Thinking About God* (London, 1985).
 - 29 As we have seen, Dom Illyd disagreed with Aquinas on the question of arguments for God’s existence. In my opinion, his various discussions of Aquinas (and comparable writers) on this matter need serious correction. The same, I think, is true of his views on God and human freedom. But this is not the place to try to defend such judgements.
 - 30 A.J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (2nd edn., London, 1946).

Reviews

AQUINAS: SELECTED PHILOSOPHICAL WRITINGS. Translated and edited by Timothy McDermott. *Oxford University Press*. 1993. £7.99 (UK). \$12.95 (USA).

Some people have held that Aquinas never wrote any philosophy — either because he was not prepared to follow wherever the argument might lead (as Bertrand Russell suggested) or because the philosophy in Aquinas is indistinguishable from the theology, (as Etienne Gilson held). But the importance of Aquinas as a philosopher is becoming more and more acknowledged. You might say that it has been acknowledged for a long time in Catholic circles. And so it has. But we are now witnessing a change of climate when it comes to Aquinas and philosophy. For, as never before, Aquinas is being taken seriously as a philosopher in the world outside that of the Catholic community.

Note, for instance, the recently published *Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, edited by Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (soon to be reviewed in *New Blackfriars*). This volume is part of a series published by the Cambridge University Press. According to C.U.P. blurb, the series is intended "to provide expository and critical surveys of the work of major philosophers". So the Cambridge University Press acknowledges that Aquinas is a major philosopher. And a publishing house like C.U.P. knows what it is talking about. I do not mean that C.U.P. is in any position to evaluate Aquinas (it isn't, of course). I mean that it has, as a good publishing house, and with an eye on sales, taken account of the signs of the times. It has noted that Aquinas is marketable as a philosopher. It has noted that he is now taken seriously as a philosopher.

Should he be taken seriously as such? The question is worth asking and those who know Aquinas will have answers to it. But it cannot be answered by people who lack access to a good selection of Aquinas's philosophical writings. A defender of the Gilson theory (everything in Aquinas is theology) will say that it therefore cannot be answered. If everything in Aquinas is theology, then there cannot be any question as to the worth of Aquinas as a philosopher, for he was no such thing. But the Gilson theory is quite plainly untenable and readers of the present volume will see why this is so. For in it they will find Aquinas reflecting on a wide range of issues few of which are exclusively the concern of theologians and none of which (in the extracts provided by McDermott) are treated by Aquinas as one might expect to find him treating them if he were writing nothing but theology (though one might wonder where philosophy ends and theology begins).

Readers of the present volume will also have before them the best currently available English selection of Aquinas's philosophical writings. Its chief rival is the highly commendable *The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* edited by Christopher Martin (London, 1988), which must still be strongly recommended because of its good editorial essays. But McDermott's book must now be preferred to that of Martin if we have an eye on writings by Aquinas. Its selections deal with more issues than those dealt with by the extracts in Martin's volume. And it offers more of Aquinas's writings. An especially attractive feature of the book is that it provides complete translations of some of Aquinas's key philosophical works. McDermott gives readers the whole of the *De Ente et Essentia*, the *De Principiis Naturae* and the *De Mixtione Elementorum*. Another welcome feature of the book is that its extracts come from a wide range of Aquinas's writings. Apart from translating the texts just mentioned, and apart from (predictably and inevitably) providing extracts from the *Summa Theologiae*, McDermott's book contains translations of sections from the Commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate* (pp.1–50), the *De Veritate*, the *De Potentia*, the *De Malo*, the *De Anima*, the Commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, the Commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, and the Commentary on Aristotle's *Peri Hermeneias*. The extracts provided from these works are substantial, not skimpy. Readers of them will not be looking at snippets. They will be working through solid quantities of continuous text—a task which is most necessary if one is to

get any serious sense of what Aquinas is saying about anything.

So this book is much to be recommended. At £7.99 and \$12.95 it is a very good bargain indeed and it should prove invaluable to students and teachers looking for a solid introduction to Aquinas as a philosopher in the words of the man himself. I should add that the translations found in it are reliable and that it comes with a helpful and attractively written Introduction which is appropriately geared to the general reader rather than to the specialist.

BRIAN DAVIES OP

THE THEOLOGY OF THE LATER PAULINE LETTERS by Andrew T. Lincoln and A.J.M Wedderburn. *Cambridge University Press*. 1993. Pp. xi + 185. £27.95 H/b. £9.95 P/b.

A growing dissatisfaction with the theological treatment of individual New Testament writings in New Testament introductions and commentaries has prompted the Cambridge New Testament Theology series, under the editorship Of Professor James Dunn. This latest, and welcome addition to the series, despite its potentially misleading title, confines itself to a discussion of Colossians (Wedderburn) and Ephesians (Lincoln).

Both halves of the book follow a similar pattern. A discussion of the background to each letter prepares the way for a consideration of its theology. There follows a discussion of its canonical context within the New Testament, while the final section attempts the often-neglected task of critical theological engagement.

Wedderburn adopts a fairly traditional historical-critical approach to Colossians, placing great importance on the background to the letter, and specifically the Colossian 'heresy', for understanding its theology. He avoids the pitfall of many in refusing too precise a definition of the "false teachers", though his preferred background of Hellenistic Judaism is perhaps rather vague. The author too, he sets against this background, which provides the provenance both of the christological hymn of 1:15–20 and of the *Haustafel* of 3:18–4:1.

The bulk of his chapter on the theology of Colossians concerns this christological hymn, but there are useful, if brief, discussions of its eschatology, and the relationship between its theology and its ethical teaching. His discussion of the hymn's christology reminds us of the need to take seriously the author's adaptation of the existing hymn for his or her own purposes; its originally cosmic nature has been considerably narrowed in its final form, both by reference to the cross of Jesus, and to humanity, rather than the cosmos, as the focus of reconciliation.

Finally, Wedderburn offers a useful concluding chapter on the contemporary theological implications of Colossians, noting, for example, the relevance of its cosmic christology in an age concerned with the 'integrity of creation', though fully aware of the problems involved in ascribing the role played in creation by God's Wisdom to a human being who lived millions of years after even this planet came into being. The limited scope of his task, however, means he can often do no more than provide pointers for future critical engagement. What he does do is invite