

prepared as he was by years of successful and fruitful labour in this field. His work has been widely acclaimed and appreciated by students of all denominations as a valuable contribution in what is perhaps the most fundamental problem facing Christians today. His work deserved translation and is now available to the English-speaking world.

The translation is assured of inevitable success. It is perhaps regrettable that what we are given is not strictly a translation of the original, but an abridged edited version; hence one cannot expect the English edition to be the same mine of information as the original. On the other hand, Fr McHugh has previously demonstrated his excellence as translator (and editor) and is in his own right a highly competent biblical theologian on whom we can place reliance. Moreover, some reviews of the original criticized it for being too rich, in that it raised so many issues which it could not fully develop within the scope of the volume and so left one with an unsatisfied appetite. The abridgement will naturally obviate some of this criticism—although many issues receive much scantier attention and so will be even less satisfying than the original.

One does not want to be faint in one's praise, and the over-all impression is far from dissatisfaction; what we are given is far too readable, complete and informative and will more than satisfy most readers. Both the translator and the publishers deserve our gratitude.

It would be impossible to summarize the mass of material or even to mention all the aspects of the problem covered in this volume. In such a short review it must remain sufficient to indicate the general lines of the investigation.

In the Introduction the author indicates the literary and historical problems and the

insufficiency of the classical, traditional arguments in favour of the authenticity and historicity of the gospels. He determines the necessity to submit them, their formation and pre-history to critical investigation, working back from the second century to the oral tradition preceding the gospels and thence to Christ himself. He does this in three stages and in each stage *everything* which throws light on the gospels, their authors, their nature, their formation, sources, literary forms and characteristics, the theological purposes and orientations of the evangelists, the synoptic problem, the Johannine problem, the relationship between faith and history, the role of the Holy Spirit and many other questions, is examined; nothing escapes investigation.

Throughout the book the author's treatment is admirable, his information reliable and always up-to-date. His method is the only way to demonstrate the true historical and theological character of the gospel narratives, i.e. by situating them ultimately in the 'Jesus of history'. In the end we are given an extremely balanced panoramic view of a vast problem where neither scepticism nor fideism has any place.

No hesitation is felt in recommending this volume as the best introduction to the study of the gospels. Professors, teachers, students, the average reader will all find it enjoyable and informative. Those who seek further information will be greatly aided by the references in the footnotes and by the appended bibliography, but those who can be recommended to read the original. Priced at 30s. we are given a bargain and Catholic publishers should take note.

THOMAS HANLON

AUGUSTINIANISM AND MODERN THEOLOGY, by Henri de Lubac, S.J., translated by Lancelot Sheppard. *Geoffrey Chapman*, London, 1969. 320 pp. £3 3s.

In 1564, shortly after leaving the final session of the Council of Trent, Michael de Bay, regius professor of sacred scripture in the university of Louvain, published a succinct and lucid work, *De prima hominis iustitia et virtutibus impiorum*, in which he attempted to present the authentic teaching of St Augustine, uncluttered by the complexities of contemporary scholasticism.

Bay's thesis in this work is that before the Fall man was able—in a daring phrase—*pari facilitate Deum agrosque coluisse* (i 9). The restitution of this primal integrity is *supernatural*.

But man's original condition, including his possession of the Holy Spirit, was *natural*.

To Bay's Catholic contemporaries, this simple, perhaps too simple, thesis seemed to place God in the power of his creatures. If the possession of the Holy Spirit was required for the completeness of man's natural state, then the freedom of God's gift of himself to man seemed to be compromised.

Less than a decade later, in lectures delivered at Louvain, and later, in 1587, in the course of a work *De gratia primi hominis et statu innocentiae*, Robert Bellarmine—not yet a cardinal—

opposed Bay, partly by making use of the notion of a state of 'pure nature'. Man was made for the vision of God. But in a state of 'pure nature' man could be restricted to a lesser vision of reality: 'as a bat's eyes can be made to look upon the sun, but meanwhile are content with a feebler light' (e.g. *De gratia primi hominis* cap. 7 s.f.—the image is adapted from the second book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*).

Père de Lubac's *Augustinisme et théologie moderne* (Paris, Aubier, 1965) uncovers with much learning, and in places with considerable insight, the origins of the notion of 'pure nature'. The conception came properly into its own in the controversy against Baius (or Bay). But the idea was then read back into St Thomas, and even into St Augustine.

Under cover of the supposed authority of Thomas and Augustine, the notion of a state of 'pure nature' was increasingly elaborated. By an ironical paradox, in its full flowering, 'pure nature' included the vision and possession of God, and so became in effect indistinguishable from Baius' theory of pre-fallen man—the theory which initially it had been designed to replace. Fire had extinguished fire. Once again the supernatural was lost in the natural.

In a companion volume, *Le mystère du surnaturel* (Paris, Aubier, 1965), Père de Lubac attempts to do what Baius failed to do: to restore the authentic teaching of Augustine and the pre-Tridentine tradition of Catholic orthodoxy on the place of the supernatural as the end of man.

Père de Lubac's thesis, in its very simplest form, appears to be that man, so to speak, opens directly on to the supernatural. There are thus not two orders in man, the natural, and the supernatural added from without or from above, as it were: which is the notion that since Bellarmine has come to control much western theology. Nor is man in his original constitution a single *natural* creature: the theory of Baius. Man is a single creature, but called directly to the *supernatural*.

I have stated Père de Lubac's thesis thus simply. I do so with considerable unease. For the later chapters especially of *Le mystère du surnaturel* are open to the complaint that Apollodorus is said to have made of Chrysippus: that if you took away the quotations, the pages would be blank. I am not at all confident that I have been able with accuracy to disentangle Père de Lubac's own conception of the supernatural from the kaleidoscopic profusion of

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quotations with which he establishes his traditionalism, and perhaps his orthodoxy.

For the path of orthodoxy has not been made easier for Père de Lubac's thesis by the form of Pius XII's condemnation in *Humani generis: Alii veram 'gratuitatem' ordinis supernaturalis corrumpant, cum autem Deum entia intellectua praedita condere non posse, quin eadem ad beatificam visionem ordinet et vocet (Acta apostolicae sedis 42 [1950] 570)*. To an innocent eye, the conception of a state of 'pure nature' would seem to be firmly, if unspokenly, embedded in the contrary of this proposition. But Père de Lubac is apparently anxious to pick his way between the Charybdis of Baius and the Scylla of Bellarmine's 'pure nature', without yet scuttling the barque of *Humani generis*. I am not sure that this feat is possible, or desirable.

Père de Lubac had in fact first put forward his thesis before the publication of *Humani generis*: in *Surnaturel, études historiques* (Paris, Aubier, 1946), and 'Le mystère du surnaturel', *Recherches de science religieuse* 36 (1949), 80-121. His two more recent volumes are a reworking, and in places a straight transcription, of part of these two earlier studies. For a critical examination of Père de Lubac's earlier statement of his position readers may like to refer *inter alia* to *Theological Studies* 8 (1947) 483-91 and 9 (1948) 213-49.

Both Père de Lubac's latest volumes have now been translated into English. The more recent translation of the two, Mr Sheppard's version of *Augustinisme et théologie moderne*, struck me as a good deal less lively than the French. Verbal comparison of original and translation showed why.

On the first page of text (p. 9 in the French edition, p. xi in the English translation) 'ainsi gémit Gerberon' is reduced to 'these are the words of Gerberon'.

On the same page the play of tenses in 'les

historiens de la théologie . . . qui pensent que le baianisme est un fruit authentique de l'augustinisme, comme l'avait été pour une bonne part la doctrine de Luther et comme devait l'être plus encore celle de Jansenius' is flattened out to become 'historians of theology . . . who hold that Baianism was the genuine consequence of Augustinianism, as to a great extent was the teaching of Luther, and still more that of Jansenius'.

More seriously, a couple of pages later (p. 13 and p. xv), 'Pour le baianisme en particulier, plutôt qu'un augustinisme excessif, un augustinisme systématisé, raidi, poussé à ses dernières conséquences, ne serait-il pas un augustinisme faussé, travesti?' is rendered both clumsily and meaninglessly as, 'For Baianism in particular, rather than an exaggerated Augustinianism, would not be a systematized, rigid Augustinianism, taken to its ultimate conclusions, but a falsified version, a parody of it'. This is clumsy, because the lightness of 'ne serait-il pas' is transmuted into the single monosyllable 'but'. It is meaningless, because the French offers a simple alternative, marked by 'plutôt que' and 'ne serait-il pas', whereas the English offers three disjunctions, marked by 'rather than', 'would not be', and 'but'.

On the next page, 'des perspectives qui engendrèrent la théologie "post-tridentine"' is mistranslated as 'the viewpoints engendered by post-Tridentine theology' (my italics).

These examples all come from the Introduction. I have not checked the translation for verbal accuracy throughout. But clearly a reader seriously intent on following Père de Lubac's historically fascinating account of the eclipse of the supernatural in post-Tridentine theology, and his own attempted resuscitation of the idea, would do well, for the Augustine volume, to provide himself with a copy of the French original.

DENIS O'BRIEN

ST THOMAS AQUINAS: SUMMA THEOLOGIAE. Latin Text and English Translation. Introduction, Text, Appendices and Glossaries. Vol. LI: Our Lady (III, xxvii-xxx), T. R. Heath, O.P. *Blackfriars*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode. New York: McGraw-Hill. xvi + 130 pp. 42s.

Fr Heath rightly remarks that not all of St Thomas's teaching about our Lady is to be found in the four questions that compose this volume, but they certainly contain much that is informative and inspiring, and they are, as he says, based on the principle that 'she cannot be understood except in relation to Christ, or perhaps more broadly, she cannot be understood in isolation'. These questions 'have come from a profound consideration of the meaning

of the Incarnation, the union of God and man (which itself came from somewhere else) and they are going on towards an existential consideration of Christ her Son, who was born, lived, suffered, died, rose from the dead, and thus saved us from our sins'. They deal successively with her sanctification, her virginity, her betrothal and her annunciation. The delicate question of the Immaculate Conception is courageously handled, both in a footnote