

Chappell also includes ecology in his list. This raises a more general difficulty: if not all goods for humans are human goods—if we platonise the goods—then we might as well re-examine every good. Why not make numbers part of the good for man? Why hold his goods are tied up with his nature at all? Chappell would like (p. 61) to be an Aristotelian about the good but his views draw him too to Platonism, and not even St Thomas brought off a Platonic-Aristotelian account of the human good. The irony then is that though he complains of dualism in the new natural lawyers (p. 63), it is Chappell himself who risks a Platonic theory of the good in which 'our' goods may be ontologically separate from us.

He also argues that the list of basic goods is incompletable—art, for example, had to be discovered—so new possibilities of human good and the good human life may lie ahead. Some clarification would help here. Does it mean we may be experiencing some human goods we don't recognise as such, or that there are human goods we could create by choice but which we presently either reject or are ignorant of? This raises deep questions concerning our self-evident knowledge of basic goods and the possibility of genuine happiness for us if not all the goods are 'in'. In any case, isn't the truth that in discovering art we simply discovered a new mode of participating in an old good — beauty?

It is good that Chappell does not simply repeat natural law orthodoxy on such topics as pursuing the good by immoral acts, commitments, consequentialism, moral absolutes etc.: it is right to discuss these in ways philosophers from other schools will heed. On the other hand, the contribution of Finnis, George and others in these areas is so enormous that I missed more discussion of their work. To take one example, Chappell argues we may kill would-be murderers if our intention is to stop a murder (p. 89). Others argue one may never directly kill, though sometimes one can justly do something which will cause a death. Some discussion of the admittedly bamboozling literature on this topic might be appropriate here.

This book is engagingly written (horrid labels apart!), builds bridges between different moral traditions and provides valuable series of arguments for scholars and students alike. I'm aware of not doing justice to the huge range of topics covered. Let me say it is rare in moral philosophy to resist the temptation of talking your subject into the ground and instead moving *andante*, as Chappell does and does so successfully, from one vital topic to another.

HAYDEN RAMSAY

LE THOMISME ET LES THOMISTES by **Romanus Cessario**, translated by **Simone Wyn Griffith-Mester** *Les Editions du Cerf Paris*, 1999. Pp. 125; 120 F.

With such books as *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* (Notre Dame University Press, 1991) and *Christian Faith and the Theological Life* (Catholic University of America Press, 1996), not to mention substantial

articles in various journals, the American Dominican scholar Romanus Cessario is at the forefront of the rebirth of interest in the theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas, in North America. As he notes, there is, rather surprisingly, no modern history of Thomism. The last account, he tells us, was by a certain Karl Werner, published in 1859, thus long before the emergence of the Thomism that flourished from Vatican I until the aftermath of Vatican II. In effect, this sketch is offered to provoke some one to attempt something on a much larger scale.

As Fr Cessario notes, in his brief outline of the saint's career (heavily dependent, rightly, on Jean-Pierre Torrell's splendid book), Thomas had to work out his theology in the context of several different disputes, in some of which his own views were very much at issue. Far from being the placid figure indifferent to his surroundings that he is often portrayed, he was immersed in conflicts of interpretation. Allowing that there have been 'points of discontinuity' among Thomists, Cessario never the less wants to bring out the 'substantial unity' in the Thomist 'school'. He dislikes Géry Prouvost's recent book, *Thomas d'Aquin et les thomistes* (Cerf, 1996), in which it is claimed, somewhat dramatically, that 'historically, almost all Thomas's essential theses have been contested by one 'Thomist' or another'. For Prouvost, that is to say, 'Thomism' has always been riven by almost incommensurable interpretations. Cessario, on the other hand, distancing himself from this 'deconstructionist interpretation', insists, rather, on the 'continuity' from 1274 until now.

Agreeing with Alasdair MacIntyre, he has little time for 'eclectic Thomism' (page 29): the 'unhappy hybrid' which is 'transcendental Thomism'. It is a mistake to read Aquinas in the light of the Kantian problematic. While very popular among theologians after Vatican II, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992) shows that this version of Thomism 'has changed nothing in the way the Church expresses the Catholic faith' (page 110).

Even 'non-eclectic' members of the Thomist school have diverged on significant issues (page 119); but from the thirteenth century until now, with Yoshimori Inagaki the most recent to be named (page 53), the interpretation of Aquinas has remained a living and dynamic tradition.

Rightly mentioning Le Saulchoir and in particular Marie-Dominique Chenu (pp. 111-2), Fr Cessario might have said more about the Dominicans at Toulouse, and particularly about Marie-Michel Labourdette. The 'venerable English Thomist', who certainly liked a pink gin, was Thomas Gilby (*not* Gilbey, pp. 42-3). It is surely arguable that the transcendental Thomism of Karl Rahner and others, if it is absent in the *Catechism*, left a mark on some of the Vatican II documents (but Fr Cessario might agree about that). All in all, however, this is a very lucid and well documented introduction to seven centuries of reading Thomas Aquinas.

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