

ing an argument for the existence of God, drawn largely from Augustine's *De Libero Arbitrio*, but deserving attention in its own right. Appendix II contains a list of the contents of a Florilegium on the *Periphyseon*. The author has treated this material more fully in an article, and it

would have been helpful to have the fuller version here. Appendix III consists of an indispensable handbook to the glosses on the *Categoriae Decem*. There is a useful bibliography and an excellent index, broken down by topic within each entry.

G. R. EVANS

CONSCIENCE IN MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY by Timothy Potts. *Cambridge University Press*, 1980. pp xiv + 152. £10.50.

Those who wish to begin a study of conscience (*synderesis* and *conscientia*) in medieval thinking would normally be referred to Volume 2 of Dom Odo Lottin's *Psychologie et morale aux XII^e XIII^e siècles*, published in 1948. They can now, however, be safely referred to Timothy Potts's new book, though it is nothing like as comprehensive as Lottin's work (on which it heavily depends), and though, as Dr Potts would doubtless agree, it cannot, for textual and historical reasons, pass as a serious contribution to modern medieval scholarship.

But it can be warmly recommended as an introduction to its subject. And it ought to prove very useful indeed to undergraduate (and similar) students of moral philosophy and theology, and to professional philosophers (of which there are many) who know little or nothing of medieval philosophy. It brings together extracts in

translation from Jerome, Augustine, Peter Lombard, Philip the Chancellor, Bonaventure, and Aquinas. The extracts are prefaced by five expository and helpfully critical chapters from Dr Potts, which serve as an introduction to the extracts. At the end of the book is a list of medieval texts on conscience (largely compiled from Lottin) and a programme for a medieval course on conscience.

In his preface to the book Dr Potts says, 'I hope that this volume may help to create interest in medieval philosophy, not just as an object of purely historical study, but as an aid to thought about contemporary philosophical problems'. I hope that Dr Potts's wish is granted. And if it is not, then he is not to blame. He has produced an extremely good attempt to set the ball rolling.

BRIAN DAVIES O P

LET'S PARLER FRANÇAIS! by Miles Kington. *Penguin Books*, 1981. pp 96. 95p.

Comment? Un très classé et intellectuel comic comme *New Blackfriars* avec un review d'un livre de Miles Kington, formerly de *Punch*? Oui, vous avez got it in one. Et c'est because *New Blackfriars* est classé, même with-it, que vous voyez devant vos très yeux un review de *Let's Parler Français!* Car nous avons ici un travail terrifique et très important pour les fans de theology, philosophy, et autres choses que vous aimez lire. Vraiment. Je ne pull pas votre jambe. Straight up.

Qu'est que c'est *Let's Parler Français!*? Comme dit Monsieur Kington lui-même, c'est 'une occasion d'utiliser votre schoolboy French' (ou, pour éviter le sex-

isme d'utiliser votre schoolgirl French). Le Français est un wonder-new-product qui vous assiste à sembler gifted avec le Français dans un flash, de parler sans effort comme un véritable Sartre ou untranslated Simone Weil. Et dans ce bargain d'un livre (at 95p un give-away) vous pouvez trouver des lessons pour perfecter votre Français. Quarante lessons, in fact. Toutes les choses de 'A la Gare' à 'Déjeuner sur BR'. Et bon fun aussi, avec beaucoup de laughs. Peux pas complain.

Mais, sadly, Monsieur Kington (un free-lance qui habite London) lacks un lesson crucial pour les would-be theologians et philosophers de notre jour. Je therefore remedy le deficiency avec un petit 'Lesson

Quarante-et-Un', qui s'appelle DANS LE THEOLOGY-PHILOSOPHY SEMINAR.

Professor: Ah! Nous avons ici un problème très tricky et très baffling. Un teaser pour les brain boxes. Does Dieu existe?

Etudiant: Quelle question daft! Comme disent les crack-intellects A. J. Ayer et Anthony Kenny, c'est un waste of time.

Professor: Pourquoi?

Etudiant: 'Dieu existe' est meaningless. Un load of gibberish.

Professor: Comment? Et Jésus Christ, et St Paul, et St Augustine, et St Anselm, et Malcolm Muggeridge et Prince Charles? Do they parlent le nonsense?

Etudiant: Oui. Of course.

Professor: Vous êtes trop quick, je pense. Remember les *Philosophical Investigations*: 'Don't ask for the meaning, ask for the use'. Moi, je suis aussi au fait avec le slick Anglo-Saxon method de penser philosophically. Je ne suis pas un rural-idiot Hegelian. Et j'ai une use pour 'Dieu existe'.

Etudiant: Et j'ai une use pour 'Pixies

existent'. So what? Vous êtes un Wittgensteinian fideist, mais je dis 'Balls a Wittgenstein'.

Professor: Comme vous êtes sharp mais misguided! Je vois que vous n'êtes pas un mystic. What about *Les Lives of the Desert Peres*? What about le nouveau Classic of Western Spirituality *Native Mesoamerican Spirituality* (SPCK, 1980)? Mais, pour le coup de grâce, regardez le best-seller par Hans Küng, *Does God Exist?* (London, 1980), et le petit-seller par Herbert McCabe, 'God: Creation' (*New Blackfriars*, 1980). Ils disent (more or less) 'There might have been nothing at all'. Et maintenant, then, cocky. Mettez tout cela dans votre pipe de *St Bruno Flake*, et fumez. C'est une knock-down raison.

Etudiant: Hmm. Impossible d'arguer avec les died-in-the-wool Thomistes qui sont doubtless in the pay de *New Blackfriars* (c'est à dire, de *Nouveaux Frères-Noirs*). Ils ont toujours le last-word. Même en Franglais.

BRIAN DAVIES O P

LESSONS IN LIBERATION. THE CHURCH IN LATIN AMERICA by Peadar Kirby. *Dominican Publications, Dublin, 1981. pp 128 £3.00 + VAT.*

Peadar Kirby is a journalist and this book is an extremely good example of religious journalism. The author went to Puebla in 1979 to cover the third general conference of Latin American Bishops, and then spent some months journeying around Latin America. He is aware that he is giving a series of first impressions: but as the book is a well-written account of its author's introduction to the church militant in Latin America, it serves as a good introduction for those who want to find out about the awakening of conscience which is taking place among many Catholics in that continent. It is clearly and simply presented, and might make a good text for parish discussion groups even in this country.

Chapter I is a rather brief account of the social, economic and political background to the struggles in which the radicalised church is engaged. There follow

chapters on Basic Christian Communities, on the notion of 'Conscientization' as outlined by Paulo Freire and used by some church pastors as a way of defining their task; on organisations set up by the bishops to defend human rights or respond to present needs; on the theology – and the theologians – of liberation; two chapters on missionaries and bishops consist of descriptions of various development projects set up by missionaries, and short biographies of four bishops whose experience has radicalised their outlook and practice. The two final chapters are on the Puebla conference, and how Christians in the West might apply to themselves some of the lessons Peadar Kirby learned on his journey.

The book does not purport to be an objective study of the whole church in Latin America. It is about those sectors of it which are critically aware of the awfulness of the social and economic situation,