

in the eleventh and twelfth centuries' in *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies* 1 (1943) 194–231, p. 208.)

Boschung is unwilling to accept that Anselm is a lone genius. He is rather 'an outstanding testimony to a broader strand of 11th century' logic. Anselm 'operates in a purely Boethian framework' (p. 315) without knowledge of Aristotle's *Sophistici Elenchi* and yet manages to develop a theory of fallacious reasoning. Boschung offers a helpful discussion of the relationship of signification *per se*, signification *per aliud*, and appellation. He argues convincingly that signification *per aliud* and appellation are not to be identified (pp. 249–253).

The book contains rather too many typographical errors, particularly in Boschung's own translations, some of which verge on the incomprehensible. (See, for example, the quotation from the *Glose in Aristotilis Sophisticos Elencos* on p. 74.) For some reason, the extracts from Priscian on pp. 206–213 go untranslated. It is also surprising given the title and the suggestion of the importance of Boethius' *In Ciceronis Topica*, that the index does not contain entries for 'middle terms' or 'maximal propositions'. The work is not a history of reception, and certainly did not require an entire chapter (originally intended as an appendix?) given over to Henry's use of Lesniewski.

That said, there is much of importance in this book (for example the discussion of *usus loquendi*) and it should be essential reading for anyone who wants to get to grips with Anselmian dialectic in the *De Grammatico*, which is, I suspect, a necessary condition for the understanding of his other writings.

IAN LOGAN

ST THOMAS AQUINAS by Vivian Boland OP (*Continuum Library of Educational Thought, Continuum: London and New York 2007*) Pp. 256 £75 hbk

This book is one of a new series designed to introduce major thinkers on education to students and teachers. The subjects of the other volumes so far published range from Plato to Rudolf Steiner, from Rousseau to Newman to Maria Montessori; it is good to see Aquinas on the short-list, so to speak, of philosophers of so important a topic. Vivian Boland takes a broad approach to his theme, arguing that Aquinas' ideas on education can be understood only in the contexts of his life, which was largely that of a teacher, and of his thought as a whole. Teaching and learning are not sharply delineated exercises, separable from the rest of life, as one might think of a ball-game, but an activity of the whole person, an expression of one's total understanding and commitments, in which one engages far beyond the narrow confines of the classroom.

The book has four parts: an intellectual biography of St Thomas, an exposition of the main passages in which he directly discusses teaching, an account of the reception and influence of his writings in general, and finally a discussion of the contemporary relevance of his ideas. The biography is a standard summary, useful to those readers of the series who are new to Aquinas, which includes an explanation of teaching methods in medieval universities and argues that Thomas' choice of the Dominicans was in large part motivated by his desire to teach. The second part ranges widely over Aquinas' oeuvre, showing how he returns repeatedly to the theme of teaching, sometimes in unexpected places.

In the early commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, St Thomas makes the point, under the influence of Augustine, that while a human teacher can provide the words that point the pupil to the truth, he or she cannot provide the power of understanding in us: that comes from God. Later on, he clarifies this point, steering a middle way between a Platonic idea of innate knowledge on the one hand, and, on the other hand, two beliefs that he found in the Arabic

commentators: Avicenna's, that some other power thinks through and for us, and Averroes', that we think not as individuals but by participating in a universal intelligence. The Platonist view allows no real contribution from outside to the process of learning; the Arabic views share a refusal to grant real independence to the mind of the thinking individual. St Thomas argues that God bestows on rational creatures the power to understand, but that this needs to be actively exercised and developed, through the appropriation of sensory experience by the mind, normally with the help of other people. The teacher acts like a doctor or gardener, helping to provide the conditions that will enable the active intelligence of the pupil to do its work. Underlying all this is Aquinas' realism: truth has what Boland calls 'public, objective character'. At the same time, there are limits to the powers of our reason: philosophy can support faith and revelation, but not replace them.

The account so far draws primarily on *De Veritate*, on the *Summa Theologiae* and on the commentaries on Aristotle. The final section of Part 2, on pedagogy, uses the commentary on Boethius' *De Trinitate* to explore the different methods appropriate to different branches of learning, such as natural science, mathematics and theology. All knowledge begins with the senses and the imagination; different branches of knowledge can attain different degrees of certainty; knowledge of things divine uses the imagination, but goes beyond it, and is what brings happiness to human beings. The prologues of Aquinas' works reveal his concern to put theory into practice and develop teaching methods appropriate to his actual students; indeed, he justifies the writing of his massively influential *Summa Theologiae* primarily in terms of its pedagogical approach. The ultimate inspiration for all this is, of course, Christ, and an interesting chapter, based on the *Commentary on St John*, examines Jesus as a teacher. 'The disciples learn by spending time with him; listening to what he says and experiencing how he lives.' The pupil must begin by trusting the teacher, and must have his or her own desire to know. Jesus is as a teacher both the servant of and an example to his students, above all in his passion and death. He also teaches interiorly, through love conveyed by the presence of the Holy Spirit, something made possible by a certain quietness in the soul.

Boland's account of the themes and later history of Aquinas' work tends to be cautiously suggestive rather than to develop fully the ways in which his thought might contribute to current debates. It will sometimes be difficult too for the non-specialist to grasp the significance of key terms given in 'scholastic English' ('possible intellect' is one example of rather opaque transliteration). However, there is a wealth of material here of interest and contemporary relevance. The *quaestio*, with its respectful attention to the opponent's argument, remains a model for how to integrate understanding in a way that is neither dismissive nor relativistic. Thomas' insistence that education is more like gardening than like filling up empty jars offers a radical challenge to the fundamental assumptions of many of today's policy-makers and students alike. At a time when there are plans to make sex education compulsory in the classroom for five-year-olds, as if it were mathematics, it is vital to rediscover Aquinas' understanding that different methods of teaching are appropriate for different topics. His awareness of the need for teachers to be free to develop appropriate pedagogical methods; of the importance of personal contact and friendship between teacher and pupil; of the need for time and stillness to be receptive to learning; of the fundamental role of love for the subject – each of these strike at the heart of our own society's commercialised, technologised and utilitarian approach to education. The unity of creation poses major questions in an academic culture obsessed with specialisation. The fundamental connection between learning and moral formation, grounded in the idea that human life has a shared and definable purpose, is something that needs at the present time to be proclaimed from the house-tops.

All of this leaves us with a question that Boland raises sharply, but does not resolve: can Aquinas' reflections on education be properly appropriated by resolutely secular thinkers? The more that one insists, for very good reasons, on rooting his philosophy in his theology, the harder it becomes to convince our agnostic contemporaries of his relevance. It seems urgent, however, both to be able to explain how one might do just that, and to engage in the task of doing it.

MARGARET ATKINS

PREACHING JUSTICE: DOMINICAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL ETHICS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY by Francesco Compagnoni OP and Helen Alford OP, editors, preface by Gustavo Gutierrez OP (*Dominican Publications, Dublin, 2007*) Pp. 512 €30

This is a book about Dominicans, written by Dominicans, edited by Dominicans, and distributed by Dominicans. But it is not merely a book for Dominicans. The nineteen vignettes of perhaps thirty or so friars of the Order of Preachers (the women of the Order will have to await a further volume) are about Christian engagement in the world during the course of the twentieth century. One, Dominique Pire, is a Nobel Prize-recipient; a handful, like Georges Rutten and Laurentius Siemer, are national politicians; many have started and run their own charitable and social institutes; many more are leading academics not just in theology but in sociology, anthropology and psychology among other fields. These men are Christian social leaders and are worth the effort to get to know. On the other hand, it is not incidental to their leadership that they are members of an ancient religious order. Their diversity of style, political colour and social mission have a common root in Catholic culture, particularly in the philosophy and theology of their most famous confrere, Thomas Aquinas. For those who suspect Thomism of some sort of intellectual or ideological straightjacket that dampens creativity or misses the mark about modern issues *Preaching Justice* is essential instruction.

Christian justice is not a legal right to impartial civil judgement or the economic assurance of a fair trade in an open market or the formal equality of democracy. While it may include all these, Christian justice is most importantly a relationship, in the first instance a relationship of 'rightness' with God, which is the source of rightness in the relationship among human beings. This relationship cannot be defined satisfactorily in terms of systems or procedures or political philosophy. In fact because Christian justice is mediated by the divine, it can have no fixed meaning at all. Just as the Christian life is a search for the reality of God, so it is a search for the reality of God's justice, the *mishpat*, of the Old Testament. The meaning of justice becomes clear only in the search, and it evolves with that search in the concrete circumstances of time and place. *Preaching Justice* is a chronicle of this search in both conceptual and practical terms.

Justice for the early twentieth century Dominicans whom the editors chose to include in the book, is mainly about class, poverty and trade unionism – issues central to *fin de siècle* Europe. The Belgian, Georges Rutten (the first to hold a University chair in the Social Teaching of the Church, he was also a member of the Belgian Senate for a quarter of a century), is arguably the dominant intellectual force for a whole generation of Dominicans including the Canadian Georges-Henri Levesque, the Spaniards Pedro Gerard and Jose Gafo, and his fellow Vlaam Jules van Gestel. Rutten's idea of justice is one of social reconciliation, reforming 'the system' from within through a sort of Christian corporatism. So social science, in his view, becomes a tool for moral education. The facts of our situation will lead us to awareness of our true interests and their