

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Metaphysics of Creation: Aquinas's Natural Theology in Summa contra gentiles II.* Norman Kretzmann. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1999. pp. xii–483. £45.00 (hbk.) ISBN 0-19-823787-1

*Aquinas' Moral, Political, and Social Theory* (Founders of Modern Political and Social Thought). John Finnis. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998. pp. xxi–385. £00.00 (pbk.) ISBN 0-19-878084-5-0

Both these books about Aquinas are, in their very different ways, quite significant. The first is the author's latest and perhaps last to be published work; the dust-cover announces this further diminution of that band of writers on the history of logic who were responsible for the post-war revival of their subject. The second is, in effect, the finally comprehensive product of thirty years' work based on Aquinas's assumptions in the moral, social, and political fields (p. vii). Both authors are convinced that Aquinas is a top author in their field: 'the fullest and most promising natural theology ever produced' (Kretzmann p. vii); 'the fundamental superiority of Aquinas' work' (in the fields mentioned), (Finnis p. vii).

Kretzmann here continues his extended campaign to confirm that Natural Theology is a legitimate part of the philosophical spectrum. His earlier support of the same contention was exemplified in his work on the Metaphysics of Theism, based on the first book of Aquinas's *Summa Contra Gentiles*. This is now extended into an analysis of the second book of the same work, wherein studies of creation (and its opposite, the eternity of the world) precede general consideration of exactly what it is that is created, and in particular the nature of the intellects (both human and superior) which form a part thereof. This in turn leads on to 'The Souls' Anatomy' (ch. 9), and to 'Souls before Birth and at Death' (ch. 10). Given the soon-to-be-fatal nature of the long illness from which he was suffering when he wrote all this, Kretzmann's readiness to discuss such topics is startlingly analogous to Socrates's persistence in the same direction (despite his friends' expostulations) before consuming the hemlock. The projected volume on the third book of that work of Aquinas's which is now in question (p. 5) may hence never materialize.

It is, of course, impossible to deal in much detail with the vast areas covered by Kretzmann in what are, after all, these steely-hard analytic surveys produced by a practised historian of medieval logic. Most welcome is his excellent reminder on p. 38 that the Latin *perfectio* here alludes to completeness rather than to some mysterious evaluative element. The relevance of this to talk about the 'perfection' of the universe in discussions

of the 'best of all possible worlds' thesis is accordingly well brought out on pp. 236–7. Appendix III finally adds material on this subject drawn from the Commentary on the Sentences. One has superb accompaniments to the question of the eternity of the world around p. 148, and the same goes for the elucidation of Aquinas's contentions on the existence of created intellects (p. 239). Chapter 8 covers the consequent contrast between the human 'metaphysical hybrids' and the Cartesian mind–body dualism.

Throughout, critical remarks and illuminating footnotes abound. A fitting memorial to Kretzmann could be the gathering together into one work of this and his previous elucidation of *Summa contra Gentiles*, along with parallel-column English–Latin texts of its relevant sections at each stage. Only thus can his accomplishments in this field be really appreciated without the necessity for much arduous further research.

Whereas Kretzmann has concentrated analytically on a definite segment of Aquinas's metaphysical texts, the hugely expansive and comprehensive work by John Finnis now explores the enormous territory of 'reasons for action, personal conscience, free choice and self-determination, human dignity, community, family, justice, and state law' (p. vii) which, astonishingly, are to be found in the work of the same medieval author. Where appropriate, Finnis is also fully critical and analytic without reserve, especially where questions of coherence and consistency are concerned. At times this leads to admittedly unusual conclusions. The book is amply documented at all points by comprehensive allusions to Aquinas's texts, with information about the original Latin most usefully interspersed for the information of researchers, and very comprehensive end-of-section notes and discussions.

What we have here is, of course, an account of Aquinas's development of Aristotelian moral and rational teleology, as opposed to modern emotive theories of evaluation. A full defence of this approach is provided in chapter III. The originality of tone is further visible when, for example, in the face of the usual story about Aquinas deriving his norms from Law (Natural) as opposed to Rights, the central chapter V of the present work is boldly entitled 'Towards Human Rights'. Likewise, although the post-medieval Bodin is usually credited with having introduced the accent on 'the State' (in the sense of a sovereign body with an accompanying absolute power of command), chapters VII and VIII here fearlessly present details of 'The State' in their descriptive titles. Also surprising is the ascription of the doctrine of the 'two swords' on p. 292 to St. Bernard, whereas it is surely a historical commonplace that it derives from the much earlier Pope Gelasius. Perhaps it is Finnis's novel ascription of *both* swords (the spiritual and the temporal) to the church at his point which is responsible for the deviant cross-reference.

The discussion of Aquinas's doctrine of 'right of resistance' here still pursues its complex course, and is particularly relevant to the actions of Guy Fawkes and company, as discussed by James I and Suarez in their polemics

(p. 288, cf. pp. 273–4). In this connection it is particularly gratifying to observe that the final discussion-note on p. 274 broaches the subject which I have long thought worthy of a doctoral study, namely the sense in which Aquinas uses the Latin *nisi forte* (*except perhaps*), as when, for example, in relation to tyrannical laws he says that such laws do not oblige in conscience, *except perhaps* for the sake of avoiding scandal or disturbance. Finnis here claims that this expression should not, in general, be taken to imply that Aquinas is indicating uncertainty. I would tend to agree, especially when it occurs in connection with the discussion of the headship of the Church, but a full Busa-backed survey would still be most interesting.

This work's prose is admirably clear. In the midst of the discussions of personal morality (marriage, killing, and so forth) I had an uncanny feeling that I was reading all this section in the Latin of the old moral theologians, such as Alphonsus, or Gury, or Genicot. But this, I suppose, is how it should be.

Desmond Paul Henry  
LIEGE Belgium

*Insight and Inference: Descartes' Founding Principle and Modern Philosophy.* Murray Miles. University of Toronto Press, 1999. pp. 564. £80.00. ISBN 0-8020-4315-1

The opening sentence stakes out the volume's claim as the 'first book-length study devoted specifically to Descartes's founding principle, *cogito ergo sum*'. Full-length it certainly is – a massive 564 pages – and on a topic about which one might have thought enough ink had already been spilt to last us well into the new millennium. The scholarship is of the 'heavy-duty' variety, including much dissection of the secondary literature. But for all its heftiness, the book is on the whole a remarkably digestible read, owing partly to the relegation of many cross-references and quotations to footnotes (130 pages of them), and partly to the concise and helpful summaries which conclude each of its 22 chapters.

The book purports to be, and is, a detailed study of the elements of Descartes's most celebrated dictum, with the first clutch of chapters devoted to the precise sense of *cogitare*, the middle set to the certainty or necessary truth of *sum* or *existo*, and the final batch to the *ergo* – the nature of the inference involved. But inevitably (and mercifully) the scope of the argument broadens out beyond this super-specialized focus, to embrace many of the key structural issues of Descartes's metaphysics. The book's main contribution, to my mind, is the analysis it provides of the tangled problem of the Cartesian Circle.

To develop his system of knowledge, Descartes has to start with a firm

'Archimedean point' of which he is irresistibly persuaded. Yet *persuasio* is not *scientia*. Psychological conviction, however strong, does not guarantee truth (and Miles stoutly resists any attempt to erode this crucial point by following those who offer some kind of Kantian or representationalist/idealist reading of Descartes: Miles's Descartes is a firm realist). But even if conviction of P were somehow enough to guarantee the truth of P, the guarantee would only be temporary. This is strikingly underlined by Descartes even in the case of his first principle: the Cogito carries assurance only 'so long as it is put forward or conceived in the mind' (Second Meditation). The thought leading to the cast-iron defeat of the malicious demon depends on its continuing to be entertained: 'he can never make me nothing so long as I think I am something' (ibid.).

How can we get beyond this isolated self-guaranteeing act of consciousness? Only by proving the existence of the ultimate guarantor – the 'true God on whom depends the certainty and truth of all knowledge' (Fifth Meditation). Yet the axioms and arguments that *convince* us of God's existence, irresistible though they may be while entertained, seem vulnerable to the gap between *persuasio* and *scientia*: the upgrade to *scientia*, it seems, cannot be paid for in the coin the meditator has at his disposal prior to the upgrade. The solution which Miles offers to this familiar puzzle hinges on a special property of the divine nature, namely its 'absolute immutability'. In our awareness of all other natures, even those (like triangles) which we call 'eternal' and 'immutable', there is always a residual doubt about what might happen to the truth-value of the relevant propositions when they are no longer being attended to. But 'theological knowledge alone among the "eternal truths" and demonstrations converts unconditionally from perfect certainty now to perfect certainty at all times owing to God's *absolute* immutability' (p. 218). Or, as Miles puts it more fully:

In the proofs of God's existence and veracity, *persuasio* remembered, or capable of being remembered, is ipso facto *scientia*, since what is known now, as I attend to the axioms and proofs that render God's existence and veracity certain and necessarily true, cannot be believed false at any subsequent time, provided I am capable of recalling that I once perceived its truth clearly and distinctly. For God's perfections, which include his manner of existence, are immutable in a sense in which most other 'eternal truths' are not. The latter were created and remain alterable by him; God's own nature, by contrast, is immutable in an absolute sense.

(p. 217)

This approach is ingenious in that it integrates into the strategy of Descartes's metaphysical inquiries his doctrine of the divine creation of the eternal truths – a doctrine never explicitly invoked in the *Meditations*, but one which Descartes consistently espoused, and which has baffled and exasperated generations of commentators. The dependency even of logic and

mathematics, and of the simple natures, on the sovereign will of God means that a certain sort of contingency threatens to infect even the paradigms of secure reasoning: there is a sense (albeit not always fully graspable by humans) in which the simple natures disclosed by the irresistible deliverances of the natural light might be (or might have been) otherwise. But Miles stresses that the divine nature is a special case: being an *uncreated* nature, it lacks this residual contingency or dependency, and hence, once we have arrived at awareness of it, it has the effect, as it were, of locking our awareness into perfect and permanent knowledge. A kind of parallel suggests itself here (though it is not made by Miles) with the ontological argument: just as God's essence once properly understood, hooks onto actual existence, so His immutable nature, once understood, takes our *persuasio* and locks it into permanent *scientia*.

It requires God's goodness and veracity to guarantee that what I have once perceived clearly and distinctly is still necessarily true even when I no longer attend to it. It is a peculiarity of *uncreated* eternal truths about God himself that there can never be any subsequent doubt once they are perceived clearly and distinctly. To know God, therefore, nothing more is required than *persuasio*. And once he is so known, this and all other *persuasio* becomes *scientia*.

(p. 53)

Problems, not surprisingly remain. In particular, there appears to be a certain ambiguity in Miles's talk of the special nature of 'theological knowledge'. This might refer to propositions about the divine nature, but it might equally refer to the various demonstrations of God's existence, which can hardly be said to depend solely on premises about the divine nature, since they require the truth of assorted other axioms (such as the causal reality principle in Meditation Three). It is not easy, however, to take this line of debate further, since Miles unaccountably omits from the book any detailed discussion of the proofs of God's existence – the very bits of the jigsaw that one might have supposed most crucial for his purposes. One would certainly not want the volume to be any longer, but a decision to tackle the proofs, in place of, for example, the sections on innateness, or on induction in the *Regulae* (interesting though these are) might have produced a more integrated study.

Reservations aside, even those who are not convinced by Miles's central claims on the circularity issue will find it hard not to acknowledge something illuminating about the way he brings out the role of God in Descartes's system as a kind of *stabilizer* of knowledge. Because we are powerless to develop science without this stabilizing function, Descartes's God retains His traditional status as the fount of all knowledge; but alongside this acknowledgement of the 'heteronymy of reason in *scientia*', Descartes is enough of a modernist to insist on reason's autonomy in its principal, intuitive role: human reason is 'self-validating in *persuasio*, its own law and authority' (p. 226). Overall this is a stimulating book, combining considerable textual

erudition with a pleasing boldness in tackling the perennially fascinating core of Descartes's metaphysical quest.

John Cottingham  
The University of Reading

*Scritti hobbesiani (1978–1990)*. Arrigo Pacchi. A cura di Agostino Lupoli. Introduzione di François Tricaud. Franco Angeli, Milano, 1998. pp. 205. L34000 pb. ISBN 88-464-0722-9

At the time of his premature death, Arrigo Pacchi (1933–1989) left behind not only a number of translations of Hobbes's works into Italian, but also two books on this author and about twenty articles on him. We must be grateful to Agostino Lupoli for collecting the ten most important ones, all of them from Pacchi's later years, in a volume which contains what will probably turn out to be Pacchi's most lasting contribution to Hobbes research. The qualities distinguishing these articles are a reliable knowledge of the entire corpus of Hobbes's texts, a careful consideration of the texts focused on, and a broad erudition displayed in the notes. Though these articles centre around problems of Hobbes's natural as well as biblical theology, they are in part also on his intellectual context. Thus Pacchi shows that Epicurus left but few traces in Hobbes's thought; a certain hedonism seems to be the most distinctive trait the two philosophers share. Regarding the passions, Aristotle is a major factor behind both the *Elements of Law* and *De Homine*; *Leviathan* however shows traces of Cartesian influence.

Reason, according to Hobbes, shows that there is a God, and as substances are bodies, God must be a body too, be it a 'subtle' one, i.e. a spirit. Although he denies reason's capacity to inform us about any attribute of God, Hobbes always takes infinity and irresistible power to be two properties which can truly be ascribed to him (the first one is to explain why we cannot have an idea of him, the second one why he governs the world). Though this is certainly an uneasy act of balance on the dividing line between philosophy and Christian theology, it is ultimately brought about by the fact that Hobbes's philosophy, despite its materialism, is in no way hostile to religion. What he fights against, is rather (scholastic) theology, i.e. the attempt to understand the mysteries of Christian faith by means of a philosophy which posits the existence of immaterial entities such as the soul or angels. Hobbes claims that neither in the Old nor in the New Testament do such chimeras proper to Greek heathen philosophy play any role. So it is rather his own philosophy which is most in line with the unadulterated teachings of the Bible. Pacchi points out that Hobbes's particular move consists in a 'terrenization' of Christian faith, not only because he makes the authority of the Bible depend on the laws of the (Christian) sovereign, but

also because according to him Christian doctrine is about a Kingdom of Christ which is to be established on Earth after resurrection.

Most of these themes are also discussed in Tricaud's fine Introduction which is prefixed to the book. In this French text Tricaud points out a few of the more debatable theses of Pacchi. As research progresses, it will probably become necessary to qualify some other ones; Pacchi himself would certainly have been the first one to accept this. But his articles will – and for quite some time – define the framework of future research. In view of the fact that two of the articles published in this book are to be found there in their original English version and two others have already been published in English translation, it would be most desirable if this whole collection were quickly translated into English and thus made accessible to a broader scholarly public.

Karl Schuhmann  
Utrecht University

*Philosophy and Memory Traces: Descartes to Connectionism.* John Sutton. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998. pp. xvii + 372. £40.00. ISBN 0 521 59194 5

John Sutton's rich and absorbing book interweaves two related themes. The first comprises an account of the history of the idea of memory traces, from Descartes's version of the 'animal spirits' theory, through the subsequent responses, particularly in English thought up to Coleridge, and including comparisons with current connectionist theories; memories, on this view, are 'dynamic patterns rather than static archives, fragmentary traces to be reconstructed rather than coherent things to be reproduced' (xiii). His second theme is a defence of a theory of memory which makes use of distributed models, models which are sensitive to context and culture, in opposition to models of memories as unchanging items stored permanently in discrete physical locations in the brain. Sutton's aim, set out in a broad general introduction, is to place theories of autobiographical memory in a broad historical context, and to show how 'mechanists can be holists, how determinists can be contextualists . . . how bodies can have narrative flows' (3). Memory, being both a natural and a human kind, is a 'test case for those who wish to connect cognition to culture' (3), raising complex issues ranging from neurophysiology to ethics.

After some well-taken warnings about problems of the continuity of reference of theoretical terms, Part I opens with a brief sketch of some aspects of the history of the notion of animal spirits, from confused ontological beginnings, to a more settled status as corporeal entities playing a central role in seventeenth-century physiological explanation. For Descartes, animal spirits

were neither animal, nor spirits, but were conceived of in mechanical terms, as fluid bodies flowing through fibres in the brain. In the central chapter of Part I, Sutton argues persuasively that Descartes's theory of memory outlines 'the rudiments of a distributed theory of memory, where memories are "stored" only superpositionally' (52). Drawing particularly on *L'Homme*, letters to Mersenne and others, and also on the later *Passions of the Soul*, Sutton sets out to illustrate the main aspects of Descartes's distributed model: on the Cartesian account, the animal spirits, that is, micro-particles in motion, cause memories – in the dispositional sense – to be imprinted as patterns in fibres in the brain. Such memory traces can be extended over a wide spatial area in the brain, and, crucially, distributed, so that many different experiences make use of the same underlying physical basis, just as one piece of paper can simultaneously reveal a number of patterns left by different folds. The claim is not that Descartes fully understood the nature of super-positional storage, but that the materials were there for him to draw at least some conclusions – for example about memory overlap, mutual interference, and confabulation – which anticipate modern ideas about the workings of connectionist systems.

Sutton argues effectively against a number of objections to this interpretation of Descartes. He rightly points out that Descartes's scientific project may be seen as an attempt to explain as much as possible of the physical world, including the workings of the human body, in purely mechanical terms, without resorting to any mysterious relations such as those appealed to in scholastic notions of the transmission of species between bodies. Thus it is consistent for Descartes to advance a theory of corporeal memory in order to account for much memory phenomena. A problem remains for Descartes however (as Sutton concedes), since he was also committed to the existence of an intellectual memory which depends upon the soul alone, in order to have a coherent account of conscious recognition. Descartes's view thus differs from current connectionist models, by allocating an important executive role to the single conscious centre which both receives and, supposedly, controls the recall of occurrent memory images. This tension between the ideas of the controlling self and of active animal spirits is reflected in much of the subsequent theorizing about memory that Sutton explores in the rest of the book: there was 'a gradual realization that Descartes's account left authority much too fragile, vulnerable to fluid material processes which are unconstrained by the soul' (130).

Part II considers some specific responses to Descartes's account, locating problems about memory in the context of wider debates, especially concerning personal identity, rationality and moral responsibility. Chapters focusing more immediately on the scientific problems raised by the animal spirits theory, exploring the reasons for its long survival, and what might have lead to its eventual demise in the absence of a clear competitor theory, are interspersed with chapters dealing with some of the wider cultural and philosophical issues raised. Throughout, Sutton counters both explicitly and



implicitly the idea that there is a sharp divide between philosophical and scientific issues, illustrating at various places the interconnections linking conceptual and empirical enquiry. Amongst the writers discussed are Kenelm Digby, Henry More, Joseph Glanville and Robert Hooke, and also Hume and Malebranche. Although Locke was inclined to accept Descartes's basic model of memories as traces in the brain disposed to evoke ideas, he was, Sutton suggests, nevertheless concerned about the possible threat to personal identity, and hence to morality, from the undisciplined workings of animal spirits.

Somewhat confusingly, Sutton re-crosses some of the same historical terrain in Part III, examining the distributed model of memory in the broader context of debates about the associationist theory of learning, where he looks at the varying views of Thomas Reid, David Hartley and Samuel Coleridge, and modern critics such as Stuart Hampshire and Jerry Fodor. The final part concentrates on modern philosophical theories of memory. One important argument considered is the objection that the indirect model of memory which appeals to memory traces leads to incoherence, by interposing representations between experience and subsequent memory. Sutton's response is surely on the right lines, when he argues that 'Direct Realist' models of memory are unable to explain what kind of a relation direct awareness of the past could be. What is less successful, in my view, is the discussion of the relation of distributed models to alternative views such as Fodor's. Sutton does not deal fully enough with issues such as retrieval and interpretation of memory, and whether distributed models are compatible with a higher level language of thought model.

While the interpretations are well-supported by both textual evidence and argument, the overall structure Sutton adopts obscures some of the narrative development; the discontinuous style of exposition means that there is much back-tracking, and some repetition of topics. Despite this, the particular historical debates are insightfully covered, and full of fascinating detail: Hooke is reported as having worked out that in a 50-year life, one person might store 1,826,200 distinct memories! All those interested in the history and philosophy of memory should benefit from this work.

Paul Coates  
University of Hertfordshire

*Verantwoordingh van Renatus Descartes aen d'achtbare overigheid van Uitrecht.* Descartes. Ed. Erik-Jan Bos. Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 1996. pp. vii + 138. Dfl.35,00. ISBN 90-5356-195-1

Utrecht, one of the many places where Descartes lived for a short while during his long stay in the Dutch Republic, was a city where he had important

friends and enemies, and it has the ambiguous honour of being both the place where his philosophy was for the first time taught at a university and where it was for the first time prohibited. Theologian and rector of the Utrecht university, the Calvinist preacher Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676), aptly described by Descartes's biographer Baillet as 'ce Gladiateur' (II, p. 32), vehemently attacked the allegedly atheistic implications of the new philosophy. Voetius was the main party in a polemic which consumed a considerable part of Descartes's energy in the 1640s, and which gave birth to the *Epistola ad patrem Dinet* (AT VII), the *Epistola ad G. Voetium* and the *Lettre apologétique aux magistrats de la ville d'Utrecht* (both in AT VIII-B).

After Voetius had managed to prompt a suppression of Descartes's philosophy at the university, the Frenchman tried to obtain rehabilitation by writing two letters to the City Council, which however did not bother to react to either of them. Descartes failed to notice that his philosophy was making progress anyway, despite a loosely observed interdiction that was based mainly on pragmatic grounds concerning the public order, by a Council that even partly sympathized with his ideas. His first letter was written in June 1645, in Latin, and is lost. The second letter was the *Lettre apologétique*, sent to the Utrecht Councillors in 1648. In this letter Descartes tries to show that the upheaval caused by his *Epistola ad patrem Dinet* and the *Epistola ad G. Voetium* is totally unjustified, and that he never had intended to cause offence to either Voetius or the City Council. Yet in the *Lettre apologétique* itself, Descartes launches an acrimonious counter-attack on Voetius, at one point comparing the Calvinist theologian with one of the two old men who in the apocryphal scriptural passage Daniel 13 peeked at the chaste Susan taking a bath. This time Descartes had written his letter in French to which, in addition, he had ordered a Dutch translation. The French original is lost. However, after Descartes's death, two manuscripts containing the text of the letter were found. One was in French, presumably in Descartes's hand; it was published in 1667 by Clerselier and has been lost ever since then. The other manuscript, now also lost, contained a Latin translation by a friend of Descartes and was published in 1656.

The manuscript of the Dutch translation survived, and is kept in the Municipal Archives of Utrecht. It amounts to 47 folios plus a title-page, and has now for the first time been edited by Erik-Jan Bos. The text is preceded by an introduction with chapters on the historic background to the controversy, on the date the manuscript was written, the editorial history of the *Lettre*, and on Descartes's knowledge of the Dutch language. The manuscript contains Dutch corrections in Descartes's own hand, giving us a rare view of the philosopher at work as a corrector. Since the only complete sentence by his hand in this manuscript, written in French, states that he accepts responsibility for the French original only and not for the Dutch translation, Adam and Tannery declined to consider it as a genuine text by Descartes. Bos, however, points to the fact that Descartes understood Dutch quite well and this, together with the presence of notes in Dutch that Adam and

Tannery failed to mention, gives him reason to call the Dutch translation of the *Lettre Apologétique* a genuine work of Descartes.

Bos observes that the Dutch manuscript and the Latin translation of 1656 share many characteristics that are absent from the French version of 1667. According to the plausible hypothesis of the editor, these translations are both based on the lost French original, whereas the Clerselier version is not; it might be based on a draught manuscript that preceded the definitive version Descartes was to send in 1648 to the Utrecht magistrates.

Adam and Tannery considered the *Lettre Apologétique* as a translation of the Latin letter that Descartes wrote in June 1645 to the Utrecht magistrates and which is now lost. However, Bos shows that the *Lettre Apologétique* contains numerous passages referring to books that appeared after June 1645; these passages form so much of an essential part of the *Lettre Apologétique* that this must be considered as a different letter from the one Descartes wrote in 1645. Perhaps the editor somewhat undermines his point by drawing attention to a letter from Descartes to Huygens (AT IV 260–2), in which the Frenchman states that his first letter to the Utrecht magistrates is a defence of his good name and honour – which, as Bos himself admits (p. 36), is ‘as a matter of fact’ also the content of the *Lettre Apologétique*.

The *Lettre Apologétique* contains little that is of philosophical interest, but in the case of a philosopher with Descartes’s standing, texts with a predominantly historical meaning can be of interest as well – especially if they are annotated as accurately and given an introduction that is as readable and informative as is the case with Bos’s book.

Paul Schuurman  
Erasmus University Rotterdam

*Milton and Republicanism*. Eds, David Armitage, Armand Himy and Quentin Skinner. Cambridge University Press, 1998. pp. xii + 281. £13.95 pbk. ISBN 0 521 64648 0

*Stoicism, Politics & Literature in the Age of Milton: War and Peace reconciled*. Andrew Shiffleet. Cambridge University Press, 1998. pp. xi + 174. £35. ISBN 0 521 59203 8

The welcome paperback reissue of *Milton and Republicanism* allows us a reconsideration of what has become an increasingly important field of debate in the history of ideas as well as literary studies of the period (David Norbrook’s *Writing the English Republic*, Cambridge, 1999, for example, has a long section on Milton, arguing for the republican principles behind *Paradise Lost*). One obvious reason is the constitutional debate in Britain, associated with Charter 88, but increasingly part of mainstream political

considerations; recovering the meaning of the seventeenth-century English republic has a contemporary urgency for those who would like to see the back of the British monarchy along with its cultural and (just about) intellectual baggage. Another is the peculiarly contentious nature of history in the National Curriculum for schools. Even as I write, the Secretary of State for Education is insisting that dates and kings and queens (not Prime Ministers) remain a key part of the teaching of English history. Politicians are understandably keen to control what gets taught as history. The literary league tables are also value-laden. Shakespeare is mandatory reading for all British schoolchildren; the republican Milton, still number two in the literary canon for American university students, is read less and less in his home country, so much so that many first-year English undergraduates have not read a line of his. One cannot imagine Prince Charles chairing the Milton Trust, if it existed. The establishment of a republican literary culture has a long way to go. As the contributors to this volume know, seventeenth-century republicanism is almost as distant from the contemporary version as its monarchy; but that does not stop this volume signalling more than a specialist interest. In particular, Milton's stress on republican virtue might provide contemporary arguments for and against monarchy with an important extra dimension.

The origins of this collection are Anglo-French (most of the papers were given at a colloquium in Nanterre); as well as two interesting contributions from French scholars on how a republican reading of *Paradise Lost* might be constructed, there is a fascinating investigation of the supposed 'unEnglishness' of republicanism in Tony Davies's chapter on Milton, Jefferson and Mirabeau. However, the methodology is mostly that of the history of ideas in the Anglo-Saxon style, following on from Zera Fink's pioneering work on the classical republicans in the 1940s, updated here by Martin Dzelzainis and Blair Worden (the latter the author of key essays elsewhere on republicanism); and the contextualizing drive of J. G. A. Pocock and of Quentin Skinner himself. The other frequent starting-point is Hobbes, whose hostile remarks about the classically-educated republicans in *Behemoth* provide the soundest seventeenth-century link between classical republican ideology and what happened after the regicide of 1649. There are particularly interesting dialogues opened up between the political views of Hobbes and Milton in Martin Dzelzainis's opening chapter on classical republicanism, and in Victoria Kahn's chapter on contract and *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*. Here is Kahn: 'Milton stresses what Hobbes labours to conceal: that political contract involves only a metaphorical transfer, since power remains fundamentally with the people.'

Other seventeenth-century links are explored in Blair Worden's chapter on Milton and Marchamont Nedham, where Milton's emphasis on the inwardness of liberty is contrasted persuasively with Nedham's more openly Machiavellian commitment to a republican public sphere. Elizabeth Tuttle provides one of the better commentaries on Milton and the Levellers by con-

trasting their evocations of biblical history in the service of radical politics. Nigel Smith, in his chapter on John Streater and the popular republicanism of the 1650s, shows how some Leveller ideas survived the break-up of the movement, and draws parallels between Milton's increasing reliance on classical sources for his political arguments and the movement in republican ideas represented by Streater and, in a rather different vein, Harrington.

Elsewhere there are characteristically subtle and judicious analyses of Milton's political prose by Thomas Corns and Cedric Brown, Corns on the 'theoretical reticence' of Milton's republicanism, Brown on the role of godly education in the republican state. Nicholas von Maltzahn, on the 'Whig Milton' traces the way Milton was gradually accommodated into a Whig position in the late seventeenth century, not so much through the uncompromising prose works, but through the sublimity of poetry – the reprinting and revaluing of the prose being left largely to more radical Whigs such as Toland. Finally, David Armitage combines analysis of the tensions in Renaissance republicanism between the value of liberty within and the search for glory abroad with an acute analysis of the anti-imperial strains in *Paradise Lost*.

The collection thus manages to combine heavy-duty historical and critical scholarship with a fair sense of Milton's strengths and limitations as a political thinker. It is an important contribution in a number of areas – Milton studies, obviously, but there are essays here that historians of seventeenth-century political ideas will find of considerable stimulus.

Andrew Shiffleet's book on Stoicism in the age of Milton forms an interesting companion, and incidentally takes as its starting-point Skinner's earlier work on the classical foundations of Renaissance political thought. The philosophical tradition of Stoicism was not just republican, of course, but in a number of well-grounded analyses, Shiffleet shows how pervasive the influence of Stoicism was. He quotes at length from seventeenth-century translations of Seneca, Lucan and Cicero as well as Lipsius, the great Renaissance stoic thinker, and his inwardness with the material gives him a number of points of purchase on well-known texts. For example, his perception that retirement was a much more morally-ambivalent as well as politically-symbolic topos leads him to a fine analysis of Marvell's 'The Garden'. Similarly, his treatment of Katherine Philips's translation of Corneille's *Mort de Pompée* demonstrates that the virtue of magnanimity, much evoked in the Restoration settlement to Charles's credit, places an awkward moral burden on the recipient of it. As a result, he is able to show Phillips as a much more subtle political writer, in particular much less of an uncritical Royalist, than is generally thought.

This is a short book, though; and while his analyses of Marvell will lead many to reassess some central poems – 'Appleton House' and the preface to *Paradise Lost*, as well as 'The Garden' – the analysis of other writers is necessarily more limited. The exception is Milton, where a final chapter on *Paradise Regained* explores a strong link with May's translation of Lucan's

*Pharsalia*, particularly in its depiction of Stoic virtue in (enforced) political retirement. Milton's Jesus, it would appear, has something in common with Lucan's Cato the Younger. One might say that Shiffleet has accomplished more in his 154 text pages than some have in twice that length, but there is clearly more to be done with Renaissance stoicism, particularly in its insistent refusal to demarcate private and public in conventional ways. The legacy of Renaissance republicanism is indeed potent and fruitfully unsettling.

Roger Pooley  
Keele University

*Trinità e Incarnazione. Il rapporto tra filosofia e teologia rivelata nel pensiero di Leibniz.* Maria Rosa Antognazza. Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 1999. pp. xi + 419. Lit60.000. ISBN 88-343-0139-0

The book presents a chronological survey, from the study years up to the *Essais de Théodicée*, of Leibniz's writings on the Trinity and the Incarnation. Of course the relationship between the two themes is not an arbitrary one but depends on both an ancient tradition and a judgement by Leibniz himself, who connects them under two aspects: on the one hand they are considered as the most difficult mysteries of revealed theology, necessary to man's salvation and therefore requiring an apologetic treatment which goes beyond the limits of simple natural religion. On the other hand they are related to one another in consideration of the logical difficulty they imply: whereas the Trinity claims the existence of three persons in one single mind, the Incarnation demands us to believe in the coexistence of two minds (human and divine) and of Christ's earthy body in one single person (p. 93).

The central claim of this work is that the principal features of Leibniz's theological thought remained unchanged during the five decades between the first acquaintance with Bisterfeld's works and the *Discours préliminaire* of the *Essais de Théodicée*, so that this latter work may be seen as a sort of recapitulation of all the viewpoints Leibniz held during his life. The author has the great virtue of demonstrating this continuity by means of a meticulous analysis of the manifold controversies engaged by the German philosopher; even more interesting is the lucid presentation of the positions, often very subtle, held by his opponents (mainly the Socinians, who are the co-protagonists of this book); thanks to this wide and keen analysis, the study is of the highest interest for scholars of the trinitarian disputes between the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth. Yet, being impossible to present the whole range of the anti-trinitarian authors in this review, I shall just underline some of the conclusions on Leibniz reached by the author.

Leibniz's rejection of the doctrine of double truth, whose fideistic outcome

appears to him as fundamentally insincere, compels him to elaborate arguments sustaining the faith in the dogmas without repudiating the principles of logic. The first step of his apologetic strategy consists therefore in the admission that the two dogmas, as truths of fact, are possible, i.e. that they do not lead to insuperable contradictions; otherwise, they ought to be refused without hesitation, since they are not contained *in terminis* in the Scriptures. It is, however, impossible to demonstrate their truth, or they would belong to natural religion; they have therefore to be sustained by exegetical arguments, showing that they are really stated in the Bible, according to the judgement of the *universalis ecclesia*. Once the reliability of this source is verified, which implies a reasonable concordance with the most moderate positions of the Roman and Reformed churches, it is possible to assume the truth of the dogmas of the Trinity and the Incarnation, considered as propositions which do not contradict reason but rather transcend it. This leads to the second step of Leibniz's strategy, consisting in posing himself as *defendens*, in accordance with a juridic and dialectic praxis he masters so well, thus throwing the burden of the proof on those who try to argue the falsity of the dogmas. As a matter of fact, if for the comprehension of the dogma it is sufficient to have a clear knowledge of it, in order to believe one must have a distinct knowledge, which implies the lack of a contradiction; but an adequate knowledge, which would be tantamount to a demonstration of the necessary truth of the dogmas, is excluded by the nature itself of mysteries; and it is rather the opponent's duty to exhibit an adequate knowledge of their impossibility. In his disputes against the anti-trinitarians Leibniz makes use not only of all his theological erudition, which allows him to dip into the huge Patristic and Scholastic repertoire, but also of his own philosophical subtleties and of his logical achievements; thus he distinguishes between *Deus absolute sumtus* and *Deus relative sumtus* and carries on a relational notion of the persons of the Trinity which only seldom risks falling into the trap of modalism. The defensive nature of his argumentation does not prevent him from taking a further step, consisting in the elaboration of various analogies of the Trinity and the Incarnation; albeit imperfect because of the infinite distance between God and his creatures, these analogies offer a good support to the orthodox theses. Examples corroborating the plausibility of the Trinity and the Incarnation are scattered in Nature but they cannot wholly dissipate the nature of these mysteries; the most evident of these traces is found by Leibniz, according to an ancient tradition going back to Augustine, in the nature of the mind. This in Leibniz's discourse is perhaps the least original in his theology and lacks a real interest, unless one sees it in connection with his metaphysical thought.

As to the relationship between Leibniz's trinitarian thought and his metaphysics, the author stresses the centrality of the concept of harmony, which is clearly expressed in (or maybe it is even derived from) the *diversitas in unitate* of the three divine persons. It must be said, however, that the author is very cautious in proposing the thesis of the centrality or of the priority of

Leibniz's theological thought and that her innovative analysis of Leibniz's earliest writings, which show indeed a much greater maturity than his contemporary physical or philosophical works, largely justifies her judgement; it is to be regretted, however, that the following emergence of such issues in Leibniz's thought is confined to the background of the book. In particular, the last inexplicability of the mysteries of revealed theology is somehow unproblematically extended to notions (e.g. the dynamical nature of substance and the body–soul unity) which are strictly philosophical and which would merit a deeper inquiry; the book seems therefore to follow in the footsteps of a secondary literature which considers Leibniz to be a substantially elusive philosopher, whose philosophical system is structurally incapable of a definitive solution. Yet, it has the merit of revealing in a proper light Leibniz's theological strategies (seldom apodictic, more often dialectical) and to exhibit their derivation from the juridical domain.

As to the style of the research, the author herself defines it as 'continental' (p. 16); whatever is meant by this term, one cannot but praise this approach: her documentation is accurate, the whole range of Leibniz's writings is presented in a chronologically-detailed order, all sources (even the least-known ones) are well-researched and quoted with the greatest attention, extensive footnotes offer wide selections of hardly available works in their original language and the use of secondary literature is selective but well-focused and up-to-date.

Gianfranco Mormino  
Milano

*Recovering Benjamin Franklin: An Exploration of a Life of Science and Service.* James Campbell. Chicago and La Salle, Illinois, Open Court, 1999. pp. x + 302. £55.95/\$69.95. ISBN 0-8126-9386-8

There is, of course, a sense in which everyone has a philosophy or guide to conduct. It is another question as to whether those day-to-day philosophies can be regarded as philosophical in a professional sense. American academics have less difficulty than their British counterparts in responding to it since intellectual history has long occupied a respectable position in their scholarly arsenal, and has a broader range than the study of professional philosophical development. No doubt there are good reasons for this. Until the middle of the eighteenth century such speculative thought as functioned in the American colonies was confined to theology rather than secular thought, though the greatest mind of his period, Jonathan Edwards, attempted with considerable success to modernize Calvinist predestinarianism in light in Newtonian science and Lockean psychology. Only much later – during the following century – did a class of professional academic



philosophers emerge. In between, the Revolutionary generation was especially concerned with matters of public policy, and their writings reflected these imperatives. Even James Madison, whose contributions to the *Federalist* papers are the most systematic discussion of political science of his era, was writing for a particular political purpose rather than speculating on political philosophy for its own sake. Among the other founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson comes closer to articulating a philosophy by virtue of the principles expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Virginia Statute for Religious Liberty. Perhaps, though, it would be better to use the looser French term 'philosophes' to describe them. This term would certainly fit Benjamin Franklin, all the more so in view of his associations with French intellectuals during his stay in Paris. But should he be taken seriously as a philosopher? This is the question addressed by James Campbell. A philosopher himself, he discusses the multitude of interpretations of Franklin before developing his own thesis. His claim to authority in this respect is that he has written on pragmatic social thought.

There can be no doubt that Benjamin Franklin had a philosophy in the common use of that term and that he was also pragmatic in the same vocabulary. He undoubtedly possessed a set of principles which guided his own life and which he recommended for the use of others. But like Thomas Jefferson, whose life overlapped with his, he is very difficult to pin down. Each had a major political career in which he was obliged to confront major political issues. Each was heavily engaged in the world of the intellect, the one as a natural scientist, the other as an architect. It is open to doubt as to whether either man was a philosopher in the more technical sense of that term; in each case it has been necessary for later historians to reconstruct a coherent system out of disparate materials. Much of this work has been performed by general historians such as Esmond Wright, political scientists such as Clinton Rossiter and intellectual historians such as I. Bernard Cohen, Adrienne Koch and Paul Conkin, to cite only a few. Yet in Franklin's case there is a regularity of approach and development that is evident even in the absence of sustained expositions of philosophical enquiry apart from his early *Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain* of 1725. And the very atypicality of this work demonstrates a striking feature of his thought since it argued a necessitarian position which he later abandoned in favour of deism as a system sustaining ethical conduct. Franklin had a supple mind and was prepared to adjust his ideas in the light of experience and fresh ideas. In recovering him, Campbell traces his scientific work and places it in a broader philosophical context by arguing that Franklin saw natural science as a practical means of promoting the common good through a common enterprise. He goes on to explore Franklin's moral thought and vision of the social good without denying that Franklin was inconsistent in his actual conduct in matters of racial attitudes, slavery and gender relations. He makes a powerful case for considering him as a philosopher in spite of these limitations, and locating

him professionally within the pragmatic tradition that reached its apogee with Charles S. Peirce, William James and John Dewey at the end of the nineteenth century.

It is important to appreciate the terms in which the claims are made and can thus be judged. Franklin was not a speculative abstract thinker, and, as Campbell concedes, most scholars have rejected the suggestion that he was a philosopher. He cannot compare with Jonathan Edwards, for his work lacks extended systematic investigation. Indeed, his major work, on electricity, was experimental and practical, though in eighteenth-century terms it was regarded as philosophical. But in a broader and looser sense Franklin contributed substantially to the development of the American pragmatic tradition which emphasized as philosophical principles the advance of the common good of society and the overall well-being of the average person, and especially the place of individuals as shapers of social institutions. He stressed the importance of duty and service, and the measurement of the social consequences of actions as the key to deciding proper conduct. Overall, Campbell denies that Franklin's moral system was no more than a justification of proto-capitalist individualism. Instead, he insists, Franklin's pragmatism replaced metaphysics with enquiries aimed at enlightening common experience and promoting the common good. In particular he argues that Franklin shared a concern with four central themes, with Ralph Waldo Emerson in the mid-nineteenth century, James and Dewey: the attempt to understand man's natural situation, the importance of experience as a corrective to dogma, the recognition of the possibility of shaping one's life, and the value of community. In the judgement of a general historian broadly familiar with the field, he makes a powerful, even persuasive, case that Franklin contributed significantly to the development of American philosophy – and also, by implication, that the history of philosophy as a mode of human thought should not be confined to the study of academic philosophers.

Colin Bonwick  
Keele University