Even very good books are likely to contain a few mistakes, and Irène Rosier's book is no exception to this rule. Dealing with the Christian sacraments the author claims that the sacraments of the New Convenant are distinguished from those of the Old Convenant by their operative function (p. 200). Most medieval theologians would, however, disagree; according to their understanding, it was quite evident that a sacrament such as circumcision did, in fact, bring grace to its recipient. It was not a grace as full as the one donated through baptism but, nonetheless, circumcision was no empty sign or a mere adumbration of what was to come.

Less worthy of mention is the circumstance that in translating a text from pseudo-Kilwardby Irène Rosier has corrected the Latin of the published edition by substituting a "conciliantur" for "consiliantur" (p. 72). Of course, it is true that in medieval manuscripts these words are likely to have been confused orthographically. This is, however, not tantamount to saying that the distinction between "concilio" and "consilio" was altogether obliterated in the middle ages. For this reason one might venture to suggest that a fitting French translation of this particular word would be "conseiller" instead of the "concerter," which appears to be less suited for the context.

An obvious slip of the pen is to be found in another translation from pseudo-Kilwardby; in the last line of the translation on p. 27 one should read "finale" instead of "formelle."

Such insignificant blemishes, however, should serve only to set off the value of a book as erudite and inspiring as Irène Rosier's. Moreover, it is a book of great courage. In its choice of subject as well as manner of approach it attempts to unify perceptions gained in widely different disciplines. In this it provides a highly laudable service to breaking down the barriers between historians of grammar, logic, philosophy, and theology.

Copenhagen

LAUGE OLAF NIELSEN


The translation of selections of Thomas Aquinas's philosophical works by Timothy McDermott (formerly professor in philosophy, theology and computer science) is very useful and interesting. It provides the reader with a fluid translation of texts, not only from the Summa Theologica, but also from many other works. The selection covers a broad range of topics, that are presented systematically. The texts as a whole, and individually, are introduced by notes that are very clearly ordered: each text is preceded by information about sources, date of composition, type of passage and how to read it, and on the translation.

The title promises the reader a selection of philosophical writings, but, of course, this does not exclude texts that in various ways discuss God—the God of the philosopher Thomas, that is. The first section discusses structures of thought, i.e. the nature and difference of Natural Science, Mathematics and Metaphysics; section II is about structures of things in general (being, matter, form etc.); section III is about what is labelled the "ladder of being," dealing with elements up to the mind; sections IV, V and VI are about God, in Himself (inter alia about eternity and time, about our words and concepts of God, about God's Power), as the beginning of things (inter alia about creation and evil) and as the end of things (inter alia about moral and theological virtues) respectively. McDermott elucidates his choice of texts on pp. xxi-xxiv. There is a useful index of terms.

The introduction to the general contents of Thomas's philosophy is short, but adequate. The literary structure of the texts (esp. the form of the question) is well presented with numbers and titles in a bold typeface.

To be more precise, McDermott wants, on the one hand, the translation to be absolutely faithful to Thomas's philosophical meaning, but, on the other, prefers contemporary turns
of phrase to more traditional translations (p. xvi). Here McDermott's translation is sometimes at some distance from Thomas's own words.

I shall examine some translations in more detail.

- p. 51: "Being true then is just the same as existing" ("ergo verum idem significat omnino quod ens"). A more literal translation would be e.g. "therefore, the true signifies absolutely the same as being." McDermott has chosen to render "significat" by "is," and "esse" by "existence." By the first translation, the level of being is expressed instead of the level of signification. Further, "esse" is a broader notion than what is conveyed by "existence," which would favour the translation "being."

- p. 67: "Existing (period!) for "esse simpliciter"; the latter is a fixed expression, so I would prefer "to be without qualification." Two lines below: "in both senses things can exist potentially" ("ad utnimque autem esse est aliquid in potentia"). "Now, something is in potency in both ways of being" conveys the ontological aspect better.

- p. 77: Two sentences of Thomas's text have been contracted to one: "Note, too ... primary."

- p. 107: "exists" (formaliter est), an omission. "Formally" should be added.

- p. 146: "(...) every potentiality can be said to undergo the actualization that in fact brings it to fulfillment" ("omne quod exit de potentia in actum, potest dici pati, etiam cum perficitur"). My suggestion: "everything that goes from potency to act, can be said to undergo, even when it is made perfect." Firstly, this brings better forward the fact that Thomas speaks about a thing which is perfected; secondly "etiam" ("even") indicates a climax.

- p. 209: "[[1]]" should be placed after the first sentence (that is after "endless life"). Here the opponents' arguments start.

- p. 211, line 2: "have a beginning": "or end" is omitted. Line 5: the reference to Aristotle's *Physica* is omitted.

- p. 215: "Aristotle says words express thoughts and thoughts represent things; so clearly words refer mediately to things by way of our mental conceptions. We talk about things in the way we know them. (Respondeo dicendum quod, secundum Philosophum, voces sunt signa intellectuum, et intellectus sunt rerum similitudines. Et sic patet quod voces referuntur ad res significandas, mediante conceptione intellectus. Secundum igitur quod aliquid a nobis intellectu cognosci potest, sic a nobis potest nominari.) I would prefer the following translation: My reply is that, according to the Philosopher, words are signs of thoughts, and thoughts are likenesses of things [the relation is here brought out more clearly by McDermott's "to represent"]. So clearly words refer to things to be signified [omitted by McDermott; Thomas does not speak about things without qualification] by way of the conception of our intellect. In the way something can be known by us with our intellect, so it can be named by us [McDermott does not render the technical term "nominare"].

McDermott's book is very useful, especially for university courses. The translation is clear, which makes reading quite easy and attractive. It is a little free, however, though the general meaning of Thomas's thought is no doubt preserved.

Leiden

E.P. Bos


Das Buch, dem eine Habilitationsschrift von 1992 zugrundeliegt, konfrontiert Ockhams Semantik und Ontologie mit Ansätzen gegenwärtiger angelsächsischer Philosophie in fünf Kapiteln: "Zeichen und Dinge"; "Was es gibt und was es nicht gibt"; "Suppositionslehre..."