

be exhaustive, and every reader may regret the absence of some topic or person close to their heart, but as an introductory guide to what is a vast and bewildering subject, this is an excellent place to get one's bearings.

NEIL FERGUSON OP

**BEING IN THE WORLD. A QUOTABLE MARITAIN READER**, edited by **Mario O. D'Souza, C.S.B. with Jonathan R. Seiling**, *University of Notre Dame Press*, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2014, pp. xiv + 314, £31.95, pbk

At the time of his death in 1973, the French philosopher Jacques Maritain was praised by Pope Paul VI as 'a master of the art of thinking, of living, and of praying'. Born in French, protestant, revolutionary circles in 1882, Maritain and his wife-to-be Raïssa Oumançoff (1883–1960) converted during their student days to Roman Catholicism. As a couple, they opened up their house and their lives, effectively becoming a centre for an intellectual and spiritual revival that influenced Catholic life inside and outside of France. Maritain's books and lectures inspired the Christian Democratic Parties in continental Europe after the Second World War and in South-America during the early 1960s. He has been praised as an inspiration for the founding fathers of the European cooperation: Schumann, Monet, and Adenauer. He was also involved in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Perhaps Maritain really was the greatest Catholic philosopher of the twentieth century. And yet, after his death, he seems to have faded quickly from the collective mind-set of both philosophers and Catholics. One of the reasons for this quick change in appreciation is the change, after the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), in the appreciation of philosophy done in a Thomistic style. On the one hand Thomism in general went out of fashion, on the other hand, what was left of the Thomist tradition fragmented into different schools of thought. In more recent times, Thomism seems to be making a sort of revival in the United States. And, in the slipstream of that bigger revival, new interest seems to have grown for philosophers like Maritain, but also Yves Simon (1903–1961) and Charles De Koninck (1906–1965), especially among students of jurisprudence and international law.

It is in within this wider context of developments that we welcome Mario D'Souza's collection of citations from fifty-five translated works of Maritain. Fr. Souza, a member of the Congregation of St. Basil, collected these citations when rereading all of Maritain's works during a sabbatical year in 1996–7. The title of the collection, *Being in the World*, tries to capture the broad range of Maritain's thought and writings. These writings seem to evolve around some core concerns that serve as the philosophical pillars for his whole approach: the primacy of being; the search for, and acquisition of, truth; the dignity of the human person; internal and spiritual freedom; the revelation of God in the natural and supernatural orders, the primacy of the common good, to name just a few (p. 6).

The book itself is made up of a short introduction, followed by forty headings, in alphabetical order, under which the citations have been ordered. These headings include specific philosophers like Aristotle, Descartes, and Marx; specific philosophical topics like Being, Evil, and Truth; political topics such as relating to Politics, Society and the State; and some other gems like the one on prayer and contemplation. Within each topic, the citations are not ordered in a way that they would provide the reader with the idea of one, continuous, reflection. The quotations stand independently of each other (p. 8).

And yet, some sort of ordering has taken place. It may be, that the unseen criterion for the ordering can be found in D'Souza's appreciation of Maritain's philosophy as a *philosophia perennis*. D'Souza writes that: 'Maritain's synthesis, – made possible by his broad knowledge of the various elements of philosophy and the philosophic habitus, and because his age and time were intellectually receptive to comprehensive synthesis – provided a bulwark against the atrocities of his age, particularly atrocities against human dignity, whether historical, cultural, political, social, or ideological' (p. 4). All the quotations are presented in such a way that they do not refer to the historical, political and/or cultural context in which they were written. This could be a very helpful way for those who encounter Maritain for the first time, in order to see the value of reading him today.

And yet, Maritain's Thomism was slightly more complicated than that. Already during his lifetime, Maritain was accused, by fellow philosopher Etienne Gilson (1884–1978), that he, in fact, did not have a *philosophia perennis* based on Thomism and Aristotle, but only an epistemology. This can be illustrated by his political writings. The political philosophy of the young Maritain was sympathetic to the Catholic Social movement, *Action Française*. This movement stood at the far-right of the political spectrum. The Church forbade support for the movement in 1926. By the end of his life, however, Maritain's writings were the foundations for the Christian Democratic parties: broad, centre, peoples' parties, sometimes even ecumenical, that included both traditional and progressive support. The ideological differences between the two political movements are too large to argue that they could have found the same intellectual support in an unaltered political line of thought in Maritain. We can trace how Maritain changed his opinions while his method remained the same. His books on *Human Rights and Natural Law* (1942), *Christianity and Democracy* (1943) and *Man and the State* (1951) are very different in feel and content than the book *Antimoderne* (1921) that had made him temporarily the intellectual figurehead of an anti-liberal and reactionary current, full of nostalgia for the *Ancien Régime*. That does not mean that Gilson's critique was completely right. In other areas of Maritain's thought, the changes seem less dramatic and continuing undercurrents of thought can be traced.

In his lifetime, Jacques Maritain was a great inspiration for young Catholic students and future political leaders worldwide. Hopefully, Fr. D'Souza's collection of citations will inspire a new generation of Catholic, Christian, students to pursue truth through both faith and reason, to protect human dignity under all circumstances, and contribute to the common good. What better way to start than at the feet of a master in thinking, living, and praying?

RICHARD STEENVOORDE OP

**THE PAPACY IN THE AGE OF TOTALITARIANISM 1914–1958 by John Pollard, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014, pp. xvi +544, £85.00, hbk**

This masterly survey and analysis of the pontificates of the three popes who had to grapple with the challenges of 20<sup>th</sup>-century totalitarianism is a further volume in that distinguished series – the *Oxford History of the Christian Church*. The eighteen pages of the bibliography demonstrate the impressive foundations on which author has constructed this penetrating and authoritative account.

His approach is remarkably judicious, so much so that, when he feels compelled to make a severe judgment, it is all the more striking. For example - after Pius