

totalitarian state, he fails to convince. For how could one justify such a preference other than by giving *moral* reasons? And does not experience tell us that ideologists justify giving up (some) moral values for political goals on the basis of 'higher' moral values?

A good bibliography of books and articles is included.

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***The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor, A Medieval Guide to the Arts.* Translated from the Latin with an Introduction and notes by Jerome Taylor. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1961. Pp. xii + 254, with index. \$6.00.**

Continual progress is being made in our knowledge of the intellectual history of that twelfth century, which, like the seventeenth, is, for western civilization, such a watershed for all the developments that follow. We are able to see this more and more clearly thanks to works of synthesis like Père Chenu's *La théologie au douzième siècle* (Paris 1957) and to the numerous monographs, as well as editions and translations of key texts upon which such general studies depend.

Amongst the authors whose works are important is the famous Hugh of St. Victor. One of his principal works, *Didascalicon, De studio legendi* was presented a generation ago in a critical edition by Brother Charles Henry Buttimer, F. S. C. It is on this edition that the present translation is based.

Hugh is interesting, first because he had an original and penetrating mind and second because he is the origin as well as a good representative of a tradition of thought that arose in clear relation—often of conflict—to his contemporaries, and which was perhaps replaced, but not really absorbed by the great developments of the thirteenth century. His work and that of the other Victorines is like an island which remains after a great flood, and it represents one possibility in the attempt at a Christian solution to the problem of secular versus religious culture. It is one for which there has been a lingering sympathy in monastic circles throughout the centuries, and even (in my humble opinion) in the mind of such a man as Josef Pieper.

As has just been said, Hugh is original. His views on the proper

course of study for a dedicated Christian, a clerk regular, or a monk, are not a variant of someone else's; they are resolutely his own. Historically, a great number of solutions have been offered to the question of what someone for whom the acquiring of a direct sight of God, even in this life, when possible, is the avowed good, can want with a study of subjects like grammar, rhetoric, astronomy, and philosophy. Mostly the Christian answers can be described as policies of englobement. St. Augustine, for instance, assumes that the supreme study of the Christian cleric is the Scripture. The secular arts are needed, or, at the very least, quite useful for understanding the word of God as it comes down to us in written form. So, and to that extent, they are to be encouraged. The arts then are included as elementary preparation for a greater and more important task, which is the real intellectual goal of the clerk. Something very like this, though in a much more scientific (in the Aristotelian sense) way is the solution suggested by St. Thomas' work.

Hugh knew St. Augustine's solution, and was not unsympathetic to what was positive in it—the use of secular arts to help in understanding the sacred page. It is not, however, his own solution. He was impressed by the thought that original sin had left us not only morally weak, but also impoverished. A prime example of our poverty is ignorance. Learning, then, makes us closer to the unfallen man, more like the uncreated Wisdom who is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. This is why it should be encouraged. Here there is no real question of auxiliary roles, of subalternation, or of separation between philosophy and theology, or even of a profound distinction between the arts themselves. Learning itself helped us restore our fallen nature. Hugh makes a fourfold division of the arts: "the theoretical, which strives for the contemplation of truth; the practical which considers the regulation of morals; the mechanical, which supervises the occupations of this life; and the logical, which provides the knowledge necessary for correct speaking and clear argumentation." (*Didascalicon*, Bk. I, Chapter 11, p. 60). The first of these arts restores human nature through knowledge; the second through virtue. The third makes up for the weakness of bodily life (again, consequence of the Fall). The fourth, is a means of judging our procedure in the other three.

This division, and its justification, is not only original with Hugh, but it is one which he held to closely as one can see by reading the notes that Taylor furnishes to show how consciously he departed from and modified his sources and how he distinguished his views from those of his contemporaries.

Having said this much, one ought also to note that this outline of the arts is, for Hugh and the line of Victorines that followed him, only the first step in a whole program of the intellectual and moral life. The next step is that of meditation, and the third and final step is that of contemplation. Something of the nature of the next steps can be learned from other of Hugh's writings (not as yet translated) and from works of later writers of his school like Richard of St. Victor. Some of the relevant works of this latter writer have been translated into English by Clare Kirchenberger and published recently.

The *Didascalicon* is concerned only with the first step. Its nature is revealed by the subtitle *On the Study of Reading*. Hugh is simply outlining a course and method of reading works so that the wound of our ignorance can be healed. Two themes will immediately strike the modern reader who reads, or even leaps through the chapter headings of the book. One is the comprehensive, all-inclusiveness of the list. As Taylor points out, it is much wider, much more generous in scope than the list of arts to be studied given by St. Augustine in *De Doctrina Christiana*. The second thing that one cannot help noticing is the relative shortness of the list, its incredible lacunae when compared with what was known in any century that followed the twelfth. It is, of course, this relative poverty that helps explain what would otherwise be a sanguine ambition, i. e., survey all, or almost all, knowledge of the time. A brief description of each of these arts is the principal subject of Book II of Hugh's work.

The method of study proper to various arts is given in Book III. Other interesting considerations in this same book concern meditation, memory and the moral dispositions (humility and eagerness to inquire, for example) needed to become a good student.

Book Four distinguishes the authentic books of the Scripture from the apocrypha and lists works that fall under each heading.

Books Five and Six concern the manner of reading and interpreting Scripture. In Book VI can be found an outline of Hugh's famous attempt to found allegorical interpretations on the text of Sacred Scripture, first seen and established as a *history* of the events that lead to our salvation. This penchant for allegorizing can be looked on as a continuation of ancient patristic tradition, if one emphasizes the closeness with which it is linked to the *sacred page*, which is more often than not the historical account; or, it can be looked on as a step toward building structures that would have interior order and consistency that go beyond that suggested by the flow of the text. Hugh resolutely stood

against such a substitution, but the development of the allegory in his other works is so great as to encourage such a departure. Stronger forces like the work of Abelard and the reintroduction of the *Posterior Analytics* were the causes which finally moved theology in that direction, however, and Hugh's work has to be thought of as a continuation of older methods.

The Introduction provided by Taylor gives a summary of his views on Hugh's relation to earlier writers and to his contemporaries. The notes continue this study in fascinating detail. We are provided with excellent parallel passages from Augustine, Boethius, Cassiodorus, Rhabanus Maurus and other earlier writers and so are able to see Hugh's thought in its proper contours and often its originality. We are also enabled to see him as engaged in a dialogue, and sometimes in a polemic with more or less contemporary writers like the Porretains, the Chartrains and with other currents of twelfth century thought like those inherited from interpreters of Dionysius. For all this carefully gathered information one ought to be grateful to Taylor.

The translation is clear and reflects the tone of the original in its lapidary style and a plainness that suggests honesty and austerity rather than lack of imagination.

In a number of places Taylor has preferred other readings than those adopted by Buttimer in his final recension. In most cases these changes are justified in terms of context or clarity and they usually derive from a group of manuscripts which Buttimer praised as faithful.

The typography of both notes and text is admirable.

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***Fundamentals in the Philosophy of God.* By Arnold J. Benedetto, S. J. New York: Macmillan Company, 1963. Pp. vii + 330, with index. \$5.50.**

It is symptomatic of the present age with its emphases on Scriptural and liturgiological interests that philosophers should rethink and re-evaluate the subjects which lie at the basis of man's natural, rational relationship to God. Indicative of this fact are the many treatises upon metaphysics and natural theology recently published. Among the latter