

Recensiones

Francis ROTH, O.S.A., *The English Austin Friars 1249-1538*. Vol. I : *History* (Cassiciacum. Studies in St. Augustine and the Augustinian Order, Vol. VI). Ed. Augustinian Historical Institute, 3103 Arlington Avenue, New York N.Y. 10463, 1966, VIII+675 p. and 15 plates. Price : unbound \$ 9.50 bound \$ 10.75.

Fr. Roth has already published Vol. II (*Sources*) of this set of two volumes on English Augustinian history. Now we have the companion volume comprising material published in *Augustiniana* over nine years. The whole enterprise is a monument to a scholar who has devoted an incredible amount of energy, industry and care to three hundred years of his Order's history in England. *The English Austin Friars* is best described, and approached, as a commentary on the sources which he has already published. It remains close to those sources ; so close that it must be considered rather the raw material than the finished fabric of history. Indeed the author himself would probably prefer to think of his work in this light, since he expresses the hope in his Preface that it will serve as a guide to historians in their researches.

Before Roth began to publish the result of his work on English Augustinian history there was only one significant study available, namely, *The English Austin Friars in the Time of Wyclif*, by Aubrey Gwynn, S.J. Working from sources sparser by far than those used by Roth, Gwynn produced an eminently readable study of English Augustinian life against the background of the lively debate over poverty and power which was so characteristic a feature of the fourteenth century. The shadow of *Armachanus*, Archbishop Fitzralph, lies four-square across its pages, controlling its focus and scope. In many respects this limitation was an advantage, since the relative paucity of sources available to Professor Gwynn was compensated for by the skilful, indeed artistic, use he made of them. His book has unity and direction.

Fr. Roth has had to dispense with both elegance of aim and the literary discipline imposed by a theme. He is a pioneer, an explorer opening up and charting the outlines of a *terra incognita*. The materials he has assembled fall broadly under two heads. First, he makes extensive use of the Roman archives of the Priors General of the Order. Here the material is largely unpublished, though the author expresses his debt to Frs. F. X. Martin, O.S.A. and A. de Meijer, O.S.A. for their

paleographical and editorial work in this field. He rightly warns his readers of the need for care in the use of these registers: they make somewhat depressing reading with their record of trivial litigation, preoccupation with rights and privileges, and the whole sorry story of what can justly be called government by dispensation. The warning is not without point when one remembers, for example, the use made by Baskerville of forensic sources, especially records of visitations. Nevertheless, the General Registers are a constant reminder of the sheer inefficiency of an over-centralized system of government at the Roman level coupled with lack of flexibility at provincial level. Slow and haphazard communications made things worse. In the jealously-guarded field of studies there was a case for centralized control at least of the *studia generalia*. When, however, we recall that friars were assigned to individual houses (by virtue of entry) rather than to the province, or even its 'limits', we can only marvel that there was any unity of purpose within the province at all. This situation was aggravated by the stream of petitions flowing out and of dispensations flowing in. Once the indulgence-traffic was added to the pipe-line, the end was in sight.

That religious orders differ from one another in the indefinable thing we call 'spirit' is a generally accepted phenomenon. What may well be questioned is the extent to which the difference-factors are discernible by historical examination. Certainly most of the materials used by Fr. Roth belong to the stock-in-trade of medieval institutional history. With few variations (such as the psychological warfare with the Austin Canons) Augustinian history rises and falls with the mendicant and monastic graph. The glory of the thirteenth century fades in the fourteenth and all but vanishes in the fifteenth. It takes the ingenuity of a Gasquet to find anything more than scattered rays of former glory in the sixteenth century. Roth makes the interesting suggestion that Langland and Chaucer contributed to the decline in vocations by the acerbity of their observations on the friars. Possibly; but the Dd registers scarcely give the lie to their words.

The second batch of sources used by Fr. Roth come from the local and national records of England itself. Patent and Close Rolls are an index to property transactions and as such can be especially helpful in dating the foundation of houses together with additions made to their real estate. Mendicant exemption makes episcopal registers of little use except for records of ordinations.

The book has five parts. It opens with a survey of origins and general development leading into a section on intellectual and religious life. As Roth remarks, in no other country are pre-Union events so well documented, and he is inclined to give considerable weight to Capgrave's very early dating (more than four foundations as early as 1230). The Great Union of 1256 gave the Order its mendicant status and aims in England as elsewhere. It is perhaps in the section on intellectual life that the implications of this are most clearly seen. The Dominican pattern of studies is soon apparent: in topographical

terms, the *studia grammaticalia, particularia*, and *generalia*, and, in personal terms, the long and complicated ascent through six grades from student to master. Fr. Ypma has already written about the organization of studies throughout the Order, and Fr. Roth makes good use of his findings. The presence of two *studia generalia*, Oxford and Cambridge, in England gave English Austins a greater opportunity for advanced education than their *confrères* in other provinces. During the Great Schism the Paris *Studium* was forbidden to all members of the Order by decree of the General Chapter of 1391. This caused an influx of continental friars into England somewhat to the resentment of the natives. Thirty years later both universities had lost most of their European appeal. Numbers at the Oxford house fell so dramatically that 'in 1426 it had not sufficient members to carry on its work' (p. 83). Cambridge became the intellectual focal-point of the English Austins, a phenomenon Fr. Roth finds significant for the Reformation period.

The pastoral scene, from the historian's viewpoint, is marked by tiresome and unseemly wrangles over jurisdiction, preaching, sacramental ministry and burials, (A. G. Little stigmatized the bull, *Cum a nobis petitur*, as a 'disastrous privilege', since, by giving to the mendicants the right to bury in their churches, it cut clean across parochial incomes and jurisdiction). It is unfortunate that these are the sorts of event which reach the history books, but it is they that are best documented. The unspectacular doings of everyday life with its prayer and pastoral activity necessarily lie outside the purview of the historian. Part III of this book does, however, give us some idea of the typical make-up of a friary together with an account of normal life therein; yet such is human interest in malfeasance that we may well find the most interesting pages here to be concerned with the monastic prison where a friar might find himself, minus his habit, possibly in chains, doing a three month stretch for dicing.

Part IV treats of literary work, libraries and attitudes to books. It leads into a chapter on individual authors among whom there occur names of the most celebrated English Austin friars, Herdeby, Waldeby, Flete, Erghome (on whom Roth corrects Gwynn), Capgrave and Bokenham.

The last part of the book is concerned with the suppression under Henry VIII. Three interwoven but distinct strands should be noted carefully: the King's (and Cromwell's) actions, the state of religious life, and the existence of positive Protestant thinking. Fr. Roth comments adequately on the first two; on the positive content of Protestant thought he is rather less satisfactory. Henry and his Secretary acted from political and economic motives, but their malice must not be used to palliate the seriously defective condition of much pre-Reformation religious life. Roth is careful to avoid doing so by showing how both the Oxford and Cambridge priories resorted to indulgences as a means of raising funds. The resulting transactions portray a venality which was all too common in the Church. Roth suggests tentatively

but most plausibly that an 'inner separation' from Rome paved the way for the forensic events of the 1530s. These few pages convey some idea of (to use modern political jargon) the 'credibility gap' that had developed between the Roman curia and northern European Christendom. The third strand of English Reformation history is its positive Protestant content. During Henry's reign it was by no means certain of ultimate success, but, with the more stentorian tones of Geneva and Strassburg muted, it was to emerge anglicized and Anglicanized in the writings of the great Elisabethan and Caroline divines. Today one may reasonably regard Myles Coverdale's translation of the Psalter (so highly regarded by many Anglicans) as an Augustinian link with our separated brethren. The Cambridge Austins were deeply involved in the new theology, and, however much one may regret their breach with Rome, it simply will not do to categorize them indifferently as time-servers. John Stone of Canterbury is the undoubted hero of these closing pages. We perhaps need to take more care about those we cast for the role of villains. In common with the other orders the Austins had their trimmers and time-servers and, one may also presume, their quota of the genuinely perplexed. It seems quite clear that they also made a constructive contribution to the positive elements of the English Reformation. Roth points significantly to Augustinian interest in the Bible: Luther in Germany, Macho and Farget in France, and, of course, Coverdale in England.

The book has useful appendices containing lists of persons and works. The bibliography is impressive and the index a full one. There are eighteen pages of important addenda and corrections. There are many misprints, most of them corrigible at sight. At the head of p. 174, however, in an important passage which compares English and Italian friars in respect of masterships there is serious typographical confusion. John of Gaunt appears on pp. 82ff as John Gaunt. On p. 396 n. 986 Dr. Heiko Oberman appears as Overman.

One occasionally feels in Fr. Roth's writing a certain tension between his Augustinian *pietas* and his historical judgement. His integrity as an historian always takes precedence, though from time to time a homiletic sigh escapes from him as he records some of the less creditable activities of his spiritual ancestors. Historians of religious life, while they need not go all the way with Faulkner in regarding man as the sum total of his own misfortunes, have nevertheless to develop a sense of mature disillusionment which will serve as a cultural basis for a realistic and satisfying theology of community life under rule. Honesty demands that the picture be painted, as a famous Englishman put it, 'warts and all'; and it may well be considered the Church historian's special vocation to show the Spirit at work with defective materials.

It would be hard to exaggerate the debt owed to Fr. Roth by all students of English Augustinian history. It was a gracious touch to include a page on the re-establishment of the Order in England and to dedicate the book « to the members of the newly established English

Vice-Province in the firm conviction that they will more effectively reclaim their ancient position in English life if they are aware of what they formerly suffered and achieved ».

Gabriel DALY, O.S.A.

E. APPOLIS *Entre Jansénistes et Zelanti. Le « Tiers Parti » catholique au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, Editions A. et J. Picard & Cie, 1960, 601 pp.

Dit boek geeft waardevolle feiten voor de tegenwoordige tijd. Niet alleen in verband met de geschiedenis van het jansenisme, maar ook om de parallel die aan te wijzen is met bewegingen die steeds in het christendom aanwezig zijn en waarvan er één in de vorm van een nieuwe doorbraak zich steeds duidelijker aftekent.

De benaming « Tiers Parti » voor de middengroep tussen jansenisten en antijansenisten is gelukkig gekozen. De schr. is goed belezen; wat blijkt uit de waardevolle gegevens over vele personen en de karakterisering van hun plaats in tijd en ontwikkeling. Het jansenisme staat de laatste jaren sterk in de belangstelling en het is de schr. niet kwalijk te nemen, dat zijn bibliografie « slechts » loopt tot 1957. Zijn bijdrage is groot door het citeren en letterlijk weergeven van vele originele teksten en het terecht vele malen corrigeren van het werk van Dammig en van de studies van de door hem hooggewaardeerde auteurs Codignola en Jemolo. Jammer is het, dat de schr. onvoldoende de studies van p. L. Ceyssens O.F.M. heeft benut, die nu ook aangevuld moeten worden met de gegevens uit de publicaties van de laatste tien jaren. Correcties kan ik alleen aanbrengen t.a.v. de augustijnen, de leden van de O.E.S.A., die in dit boek een grote plaats innemen. Appolis gebruikt, dunkt mij, het woord *Augustiniens* (pp. 65-68) breder dan de betekenis: leden van O.E.S.A.; hij gebruikt die benaming ook voor al degenen, die het 18^e eeuwse Augustinisme aanhangen en onder dezen namen de augustijnen een aparte plaats in. Dit komt door het naar voren brengen van een traditioneel geworden ordesopdracht: het uitdragen en verdedigen van de strenge leer van Augustinus, die in zich pessimistisch is en heel dicht bij de jansenistische opvattingen komt. Deze leerinhoud duid ik liever aan met de naam: Augustinianisme en de volgelingen van deze benadering: Augustinianisten, die goeddeels de « Tiers Parti » vormden.

Het is opvallend en juist dat de « Tiers Parti » vanuit een dilemma werken: zij zijn de nieuwe rigoristische opvattingen werkelijk toegegaan en willen tevens tegelijkertijd overtuigd ultramontaan blijven, d.w.z. zich ramen binnen de richtlijnen van Rome. Augustijnen, die achter een hernieuwingsbeweging staan, die veel gelijkenis heeft met de hedendaagse, zijn p. Francisco da Annuniação en p. Antonio de Sousa (pp. 27; 255) rondom het centrum van Coïmbra; daarnaast p. G. Bertieri (p. 429) e.a. die een rol speelden in de theologie- en studiehervorming die door de oostenrijkse regering onder Maria