

Gradually, learning was presented as an integral part of the life of poverty and perfection, with the Franciscan Order as the best milieu for the pursuit of higher learning (120). Haymo of Faversham, an English theologian and master at Paris when he entered the Order, became master general in 1240. During his four-year term, the Order's attitude toward learning changed considerably. He encouraged the need for learning at many levels, but he also remained a loyal son of the poor Francis by living simply, wearing a patched habit, and traveling on foot to visit the provinces. Later, friars such as Peter John Olivi, Bonaventure, and Matthew of Aquasparta endorsed learning as faithful to, not a betrayal of, Francis's spirit. A portrait of Francis as a learned man (inspired by the Spirit) legitimated study for Franciscans. Learning and holiness were now linked.

Francis's attitude toward learning remains a subject of debate (97). Ş. notes that the Rule of 1221 (*Regula non bullata*) contains "not a single line about the pursuit of scholarly learning as such" (35). Francis counseled reverence for clergy and scholars, but his evangelical charisma pointed to a vision of a community of love that leveled social divisions based on wealth, pedigree, or education. Tensions over learning within the Order after 1244 stem from the inevitable conflict between Francis's countercultural vision of a radically equal, nonhierarchical, downwardly mobile society, and the values and mores of medieval society and church in which the power and prestige of knowledge were central.

Building on previous scholarship, Ş. provides a careful chronological analysis of textual sources related to the substance, evolution, role, and conflicts surrounding learning in early Franciscan life. She offers a compelling story of when, how, and why the Franciscans marshaled such a widespread and highly developed educational system that contributed so much to the life of the church, but that also took a toll on the Order's cohesion. It is a story that continues to reverberate in the church. Conflicts between theologians and ecclesiastical officers perdure. The 13th-century hierarchy of values also lingers in assessments that judge pastoral care as inferior to university learning. Most recently, we note the ecclesial contrast between power/knowledge/office, and poverty/pastoral care/holiness, incarnate in an erudite, Jesuit, Argentine cardinal who identifies with the poor, cooks his own meals, takes the bus to work, and then becomes a pope named Francis.

Fairfield University, CT

ELIZABETH A. DREYER (EMERITA)

ORTHODOX READINGS OF AQUINAS. By Marcus Plested. New York: Oxford University, 2012. Pp. xi + 276. \$99.

Since the resurgence of Orthodox thought among Russian émigrés to Paris in the early 20th century, people sometimes have sensed that Orthodoxy

and the Latin West are somehow opposed. As a result, Orthodoxy understands itself as a foil of the West, leading to an attenuated Orthodox theology, always restricted to being the opposite of the “enemy.” Recent works such as those by John Demetracopoulos on Aquinas’s influence in the last century of Byzantium and the 2007 Fordham conference on the Orthodox reception of Augustine have challenged this conventional narrative. Plested’s book is the clearest and most cogent challenge to emerge, carrying forward and synthesizing the work of Demetracopoulos and other European scholars on the reception of Aquinas by Orthodox theologians.

In the earlier dominant narrative, the Angelic Doctor is thought to be everything that Eastern Christianity is not, particularly on the question of the use of pagan sources and the role of human reason in the work of theology. Some 20th-century scholars have assumed that any Orthodox theologians who encountered Thomas’s thought reject him, and to the extent that they did not, their Orthodoxy was called into question. P.’s historical theological approach (reminiscent of de Lubac’s in *Surnaturel*), however, demonstrates that this hermeneutical principle simply does not work when we use it to read the texts of the Orthodox theological tradition since the 14th century.

Aquinas burst onto the scene in Constantinople in 1354 when his *Summa contra Gentiles* was translated into Greek by the learned diplomat Demetrios Kydones. A translation of the *Summa theologiae* by Demetrios and his brother Prochoros, a monk of Mount Athos, soon followed. In the following decade Aquinas became something of a phenomenon in Byzantium while, at the same time, Palamite theology in general and the question of essence and energies in particular were enshrined as official Orthodox doctrine. A condemnation of Prochoros for his rejection in 1368 of the essence/energy distinction tainted the group of theologians who had begun to identify with Thomistic theology. That many of them were eager for union with Rome and even personally submitted to Rome made matters worse.

P.’s most original contribution in this book is his reinterpretation of Prochoros Kydones. P. argues that Prochoros was not following Thomas on the question of the light of Mount Tabor (for which the Athonite was condemned) and that Aquinas is fully Orthodox in his treatment of this question. P. further argues that the monk-emperor John Kantakuzene’s analysis of Prochoros agrees with his own: “In effect, Prochoros is reproached not so much for his Thomism but for being insufficiently Thomist” (89).

In the following generations we find Aquinas in surprising places—among unionists and antiunionists, Palamites and antipalamites. Unionists tend to cite Aquinas with approval, while antiunionists draw on but do not cite him. The great exception to this trend is Gennadios Scholarios whom

P. lauds as “the herald of a creative approach to theology based on strict fidelity to ecclesial tradition but nourished, enlivened and strengthened by close and informed contacts with developments outside the Orthodox world” (134).

P. continues the story of the Orthodox reception of Thomas through the Turkish rule over the former Byzantine empire (ca. 1400–1821) and in Russia, drawing on Gerhard Podskalsky’s *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1453–1821)* (1988) for the former, and Florovsky’s *Ways of Russian Theology* (two vols., 1979, 1987) for the latter. This third and last part of P.’s study brings the story up to the present. In it we discover that Thomas was regularly consulted by Orthodox theologians, especially on the questions of sacramental theology, predestination, and justification.

P.’s work is an important theological contribution, a clarion call for the Orthodox Church to be herself rather than to be defined as merely the opposite of all things Western. P. points to forgotten resources in the Orthodox theological tradition that have been recovered, and that are helpful in themselves and serve as examples of how to engage theological resources from outside the Orthodox tradition. “An Orthodoxy that refuses to have any truck with Aquinas is not only impoverished by that refusal but also untrue to itself” (227).

Fordham University, NY

MATTHEW BRIEL

ISLAM E CRISTIANESIMO: MONDI DI DIFFERENZE NEL MEDIOEVO; IL DIALOGO CON L’ISLAM NELL’OPERA DI NICOLA DA CUSA. By Marica Costigliolo. Genova: Genova University, 2012. Pp. 155. €16.

Costigliolo treats the development of Nicholas of Cusa’s thought by comparing it to his evaluation of the religions of others, especially Islam. Through an attentive analysis of three of the most representative of Cusa’s works on this topic, *De docta ignorantia*, *De pace fidei*, and *De cribatione alcorani*, C. documents two main trajectories that characterize her thinking in reference to the question of religious plurality. They are, first, the philosophical path from the concept of *concordantia* into a resolute and evident apologetic commitment; and second, from polemics and controversy to the prodromes of a more systematic study of Islamic doctrine.

Although an apologetic intention is always present in Cusa’s philosophical endeavors, it becomes particularly evident in the *Cribatio alcorani*. While *De docta ignorantia* and *De pace fidei* are more concerned with his attempt to find common ground between the contrasting worldviews and the harmonic reconciliation of the differences, his *Cribatio* presents a dialectical reading of the Qur’an and a systematic rebuttal of the errors of Islamic doctrine.