
Professor Quinn presents a synthesis of the philosophical thought of St. Bonaventure through detailed analyzes of specific texts and their doctrinal sources, particularly in the works of Aristotle and Augustine. The presentation begins with a fully-documented examination of long-standing and intricate controversies among modern historians of medieval philosophy.

Taking natural knowledge as a central theme, the author then exposes the philosophical positions of St. Bonaventure on the problems of being and existing, creation and eternity of the world, the nature and person of man (with a detailed examination of the problem of plural forms), the potencies, acts and modes of human knowledge, the certitude and illumination of natural knowledge, and the nature of Bonaventure’s theological knowledge with special attention to the question of Christian Philosophy. Bonaventure’s position on each of these problems is compared point by point with the position of St. Thomas Aquinas, so that Bonaventure’s philosophical thought emerges both historically and doctrinally, as a truly original synthesis which is entirely distinct from the philosophical synthesis of St. Thomas. The one is properly “Bonaventurean,” and the other is properly “Thomist.”

The book closes with an analysis, based solely on the texts studied, of the views of historians in order to offer an acceptable solution to their celebrated controversies, particularly those involving Maurice De Wulf, Etienne Gilson, and Fernand Van Steenberghen.

The volume includes a complete bibliography on Bonaventure’s philosophical doctrines, and a comprehensive index divided in to several specialized sections.