

## BOOK NOTICES

Kelly James Clark, *Return to Reason: A Critique of Enlightenment Evidentialism and a Defense of Reason and Belief in God*, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990, pp. ix + 158, \$ 10.95.

In *Return to Reason* Kelly James Clark presents a penetrating critique of the assumptions of Enlightenment evidentialism even as he defends reason and belief in God in the manner of Alvin Plantinga and Thomas Reid. After a novel discussion of various arguments for the existence of God, Clark deals with the difficult problem of evil, offering a lucid and accessible presentation of Plantinga's free-will defense. Clark maintains, moreover, that the Enlightenment demand for evidence is both irrelevant and irrational. He asserts that one does not need arguments or evidence in order for one's belief in God to be rational. Throughout this discussion a radically new conception of rationality emerges. "Let us depart from the bane of the Enlightenment," says Clark, "and return to reason."

Wolffhart Pannenberg, *Metaphysics and the Idea of God*, (translated by Philip Clayton), Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990, pp. xiv + 170, \$ 21.95.

This book continues Pannenberg's ongoing effort to overcome the ghettoization of theology and to demonstrate the convergence of philosophy and religion. Reflecting the pervasively historical orientation of much of Pannenberg's earlier work, this book offers a superb and succinct introduction to the crisscrossings of theology and metaphysics over the last two thousand years. In that historical context Pannenberg defends a close and necessary connection between theology and metaphysics without equating them. Indeed, his theory of the symbiotic relationship between metaphysics and theology is a most impressive achievement. *Metaphysics and the Idea of God* will engage theologians, philosophers, and any Christian readers who are concerned with the intellectual currents of our time.

Jan Milic Lochman, *The Lord's Prayer*, (translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley), Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990, pp. x + 180, \$ 12.95.

In the introduction to his study Lochman probes the nature of prayer, explains its importance for the life of faith and in the life of Jesus,

discusses three modes of prayer – petition, intercession, thanksgiving – and looks at the two canonical forms of the Lord's Prayer. The rest of the book expounds the Lord's Prayer phrase by phrase, clarifying its original meaning and historical background (including Old Testament as well as New Testament references), drawing on its treatment throughout history, and applying it to contemporary life. Lochman's sources include the ancient world as well as the Third World; throughout his work he interacts with a wide range of scholarship – including literary and philosophical references, from Homer to Jaspers – without being enslaved to any of it. Students, teachers, pastors, and general readers will all benefit greatly from Lochman's insights on the Lord's Prayer.

E. John Hamlin, *JUDGES: At Risk in the Promised Land*, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990, pp. xii + 182, \$ 12.95

This work is a specimen of "International Theological Commentary" series which aims to develop the theological significance of the Old Testament and to emphasize the relevance of each book for the life of Church. This theological treatment of the Book of Judges is fresh, original, imaginative, scholarly, and relevant. In his commentary E. John Hamlin pays careful attention to the structure and meaning of the text of Judges, and he elucidates the "risk" that Israel faced in the Promised Land – the risk of living among the "Canaanites," of adopting their ungodly practices and their way of organizing society (the way of death). Hamlin's characterizations of the various liberator judges are particularly thought-provoking.

Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (eds.), *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament: Volume I*, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990, pp. xxiv + 463, \$ 39.95

Seeking to meet a broad range of needs, the *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* is first of all a complete English dictionary of New Testament Greek. Going far beyond that, however, *EDNT* also serves as a helpful guide to the usage of every New Testament word in its various contexts. All English speaking readers of New Testament Greek will find in *EDNT* a gold mine of exegetical and theological information. *EDNT's* thorough, lengthy discussions of the more important words and its grouping of words related by root and meaning (with alphabetical cross-references) set it apart from simpler Greek-English lexicons. Scholars, pastors, and students will welcome the publication of *EDNT*. This

volume is "a notable achievement and a veritable thesaurus of current biblical scholarship that will be the more highly appreciated the more it is used in the classroom and in preparation for the pulpit."

Douglas John Hall, *The Steward: A Biblical Symbol Come of Age*, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. and New York: Friendship Press, 1990, pp. xiii + 258, \$ 14.95

This work is a revised and greatly expanded edition of *The Steward* (1982). *The Steward* works from numerous angles—biblical, historical, sociological and ecclesiastical—to argue that in the symbol of the steward the church has a bridge to communicate to the world God's standards of peace, social justice, and care for creation. Hall aims to recapture the most basic meaning of the biblical metaphor of the steward and to apply that meaning to our social context, one in which human beings are confused and ambivalent about their place and vocation in a threatened world. Hall also puts forth apocalyptic warnings about the fate of the earth unless we heed the call to be stewards of creation, work for world peace and justice, and nurture life in its many forms.

John Gray, *The New Century Bible Commentary: Joshua, Judges, Ruth*, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. and Basingstoke: Marshall Morgan & Scott Pub. Ltd., 1986, pp. 427, \$ 12.95

This completely revised edition of Dr. Gray's fine and scholarly commentary now includes a special section on Israel's gradual growth from the militant core of worshipers of Yahweh to the incorporation of local groups and the underprivileged proletariat who were attracted by the social ethic of the new faith. In an appraisal of the historical significance of Joshua and Judges, Dr. Gray emphasizes the nature and date of the sources as distinct from later compilations in the early monarchy and the later Deuteronomistic History, which assume the engagement of "all Israel." The book of Ruth is compared to a novel, but the author skillfully relates it to the problem of resettlement which the returning exiles faced.

Luis M. Bermejo S.J., *Church, Conciliarity and Communion*, Gujarat: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1990, pp. xii + 361, Rs. 70.00, \$ 12.00.

In this volume the author examines certain ecclesiological themes such as: Are the Church of Christ and the Catholic Church identical

and coterminous? What is the meaning of the principle that 'The entire People of God cannot err'? Why are we witnessing today an ecumenical deadlock on the papacy? Vatican I is reexamined in the light of new documentary evidence made available only recently. Can this Council be reconsidered? How far is it accepted and received by the Catholic faithful today? Several concrete historical cases studied in the book seem to show conclusively that particular doctrines, once authoritatively proclaimed as immutable and as such universally received by the Church, were later substantially altered, at times even radically revised. And if this has happened repeatedly in the past, cannot something similar happen again in the future?

Anthony de Mello, S.J., *Contact With God*, Gujarat: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1990, pp. 214, Rs. 40.00, \$ 9.00

This work is a transcript of Anthony de Mello's retreat conferences which he himself carefully edited but never released. The author is a famous Jesuit writer, who had written several books such as *Sadhana: A Way To God*, *The Song of The Bird*, *The Prayer of the Frog etc.* In this present volume, he teaches how to pray, what are the laws of prayer? what is the Jesus prayer and shared prayer? As an appendix, he gives some aids to prayer "that have proved very helpful to many people." "The text is reproduced just as Tony left it... The style is somewhat old-fashioned, the content not altogether post-conciliar, the language quite sexist... The subject of the talks can be summed up in the classical Three Fundamental Principles: prayer, penance and the love of Christ.

Ravi Ravindra, *The Yoga of the Christ*, Dorset: Element Books Limited, 1990, pp. 256

*The Yoga of the Christ* presents a fresh exploration of St. John's Gospel from an Indian perspective. It focuses on a search for the spiritual heart of the Gospel and demonstrates the need for the seeker to draw inspiration from whatever source is appropriate. This is a work of appeal to all concerned with the emergence of a universal spirituality, who recognize that the Truth is to be found in all places. In the introduction of the book, the author says, "The only reason that I, an outsider to the Christian tradition and not particularly learned in it, write about one of its most sacred texts is my love for it... In trying

to understand the Gospel, here and there I have found some Indian texts specifically helpful in offering a new way of looking." This work "catches the tone and spirit of St. John and this gospel's profound coherence with other traditions, particularly the Hindu tradition in India and of course the Bhagavad Gita."

Antony Fernando, *Christianity Made Intelligible*, Sri Lanka: Inter-Cultural Book Promoters, 1990. pp. vi + 222, Rs. 98.00.

*Christianity Made Intelligible* is a book that Christians as well as non-Christians, beginners as well as scholars, will welcome. It answers a great need of our times. The book's exceptional forcefulness is due to the new approach to the study of religions, called religiology, that it follows. Because of that approach, this exposition of Christianity is very different from those commonly available today. No blind assumptions, propaganda devices or defence mechanisms are found in it. Still, it is deeply religious, positively ecumenical, and brings out the spirituality of Christianity very effectively. *Christianity made Intelligible* is a sequel to the author's *Buddhism made Plain*.

J.A.G. Gerwin van Leeuwen o.f.m., *Fully Indian - Authentically Christian*, Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J.H.Kok, 1990. pp. xv + 357,

This publication is no. 4 in the series KTC (Kerk En Theologie in Context - Church and Theology in Context) of the faculty of Theology of the Catholic University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands. It is a study of the first fifteen years of the NBCLC (1967-1982), Bangalore, India in the light of the theology of its founder, D.S. Amalorpavadass. The title of this thesis, *Fully Indian - Authentically Christian*, pregnantly expresses the twofold aim of the NBCLC. This twofold aim also runs like a red thread through the theology of S. Amalorpavadass, the founder and first director of the centre. Many Christians in India have to discover and manifest that only by being fully Indian they can become authentically Christian. This study shows how much has been done, not to glory the past, but to see clearer how much more is still to be done.

Boris Aldanov, *The Human Predicament - The Secular Ideologies*, New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House, pp. xii + 618, Rs. 400.00.

This Volume I of *The Human Predicament - The Secular Ideologies* is the companion volume to Volume II of *The Human Predicament -*

*Theory of Religion.* Both volumes go together, inasmuch as the same basic principles hold as the solution of both realms, the so-called secular and the so-called religious. This work addresses the problem, risen to relevance in the present age, that men find themselves divided into groups, each group united by sharing a particular ideology or religion which at the same time divides them from another correlative group. The author, Boris Aldanov, is of Russian extraction but spent most of his life in Canada, arriving as a child in 1923. He came face to face with the problem of the human predicament in its modern form during twenty-two years in the Canadian diplomatic service.

Boris Aldanov, *The Human Predicament – Theory of Religion*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1988, pp. vi + 550.

This work extends the principles of solution developed for the secular ideologies to the religious realm with the aim of solving the problem posed by the classical religions. This is a radical work in that it starts from the position that the diverse traditional religious foundations of the various civilizations of the world have crumbled, so that an entirely new foundation for one world-wide civilization must now be discovered. In the preface, the author himself says: "Our elaboration of a religious solution is inevitably imperfect. But we venture to hope that its underlying foundation is perfect... The past spoke perfectly on an imperfect foundation; we for our part seek to place ourselves on a perfect foundation, but the consequence is that we must perforce speak imperfectly about it, because of its extreme complexity."

Alistair Shearer (tr.). *The Yoga Sūtras of Patanjali*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989, pp. 128, Rs. 195.00

The *Yoga Sūtras* are one of the oldest and most vibrant spiritual texts in the world. In a simple and lucid way, the *sūtras* analyse the nature of the mind, describe the progressive stages of meditation and discuss the joys and trials encountered on the path of self-understanding. One whole chapter, unparalleled in the literature of the spirit, is devoted to those transpersonal experiences – such as extrasensory perception and supernormal powers – which are the natural gifts of a mind operating free from the boundaries of suffering. Alistair Shearer's new translation of this great classic is infused with a serene clarity and enhanced by evocative photographs taken specially for the book by the well-known photographer Richard Lannoy.

Konstanty Régamey, *The Bhadramāyākāvyākaraṇa*, Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass, 1990, pp. 138, Rs. 125.00

*The Bhadramāyākāvyākaraṇa* is part of the great collection entitled *Ratnakuta*, "Multitude of Jewels," a collection much revered in the Buddhist Mahayana traditions of Tibet and China. The work possesses rather a literary value than a doctrinal one. It contains the story of juggler Bhadra who wanted to deceive the Buddha with magical tricks in order to prove that the claim of the Tathagata to omniscience was false. But the Buddha foiled his attempt by performing such a magic that Bhadra could not revoke his charms, and was finally converted. This work is a reprint of the 1938 Warsaw edition of the work containing an Introduction, Tibetan text, Translation and Notes published by Konstanty Regamey, which was almost wholly destroyed during the Second World War.

Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990, pp. xviii + 604, Rs. 225.00

This book explores the intellectual encounter of India and the west from pre-Alexandrian antiquity until the present. It examines India's role in European philosophical thought, as well as the reception of European philosophy in Indian thought. Halbfass also considers the tension in India between a traditional and modern understanding of itself. He covers a wide variety of epochs and "cultures" in this study without oversimplification and without distraction shifts of tone. The volume's methodological unity is reflected in Halbfass' reliance on the German hermeneutical tradition and in his root characterization of the encounter between India and the West as *dynamic*. It is a contribution rooted in the interpretive tradition typified by the work of Heidegger, Gadamer, and Habermas. Halbfass has not only translated, but has also revised, updated, and added much new material.

John C. Plott, *Global History of Philosophy*, (Volume V) The Period of Scholasticism, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989, pp. xv + 393, Rs. 200.00.

The fourth and fifth volumes of the *Global History of Philosophy* are designated *The Period of Scholasticism* (part one: 800-1150; part two: 1150-1350) in order to stress that the scholastic method with its emphasis on thesis, antithesis and attempts at synthesis, became

universal throughout Eurasia. The major developments of this period are "Monism in Many Moods" during the ninth century, through "Exfoliation and Elaboration" of those seminal systems in the tenth and eleventh centuries until the time of the "Great Summas" in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This volume is a new way of *exploring* the accumulative wisdom of mankind, and in the process explode many of the ethnocentric stereotypes which still hinder intercultural communications and world peace through intercultural understanding.

Anil Sooklal, *Children of Immortality*. South Africa: The Ramakrishna Centre of South Africa, 1990, pp. xiii + 387.

*Children of Immortality* is a study on 'the Ramakrishna Movement with Special Emphasis on the South African Context.' This monograph is based on a D.Phil thesis submitted in the Department of Hindu Studies, University of Durban-Westville, in 1988. In this book the author discusses the Ramakrishna Movement in the context of Neo-Hinduism. He makes use of the phenomenological approach i.e., he tries to grasp what is the essence by means of empathy and intuition which implies the "feeling in" disposition. This means that he tries to grasp with sensitivity the theological, philosophical and pragmatic disposition of the Ramakrishna Movement. Much attention is given in the book to the philanthropic, educational, charitable and missionary activities of the Ramakrishna Movement. Special attention is given to the service departments of both the Ramakrishna Math and Mission namely Religio-Cultural, Educational, Medical and Humanitarian. This is done with special reference to South Africa. The author has succeeded in giving a clear picture of the Neo-Vedanta basis which the brilliant Swami Vivekananda gave to the Ramakrishna Mission as a Neo-Hindu Movement.