

BOOK REVIEWS

Roderick Hindery,

Comparative Ethics in Hindu and Buddhist Traditions,

Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass, 1978, pp. xvi + 308, Bib., Index, Rs. 65.

What stand could a constructive ethical philosopher take with regard to the theory of a residual cross-cultural ethics? Prof. R. Hindery undertakes his descriptive comparative ethics of Hinduism and Buddhism with a view to answering this question. "Except for a brief addition on Buddhist moral texts" (p. xiii), the investigation stops with Hindu traditions.

The basic conception of the book is that there are competing and complementary ethical traditions in the Hindu sources. He deals with moral ideals drawn not only from religious, philosophical and other elites and Scriptures but also from popular classics, poetry and drama. "Consequently, this volume ends in accepting and rearticulating the Hindu and inter-cultural populist principle that moral wisdom is not the prerogative of professional philosophers or other elites, but the domain of every human being" (p. 219). "As populist traditions signify, everyone can learn from nearly everyone, so pluralistic and diversely perceived is the treasury of collective wisdom" (*Ibid.*). With this conviction the author discusses in detail, the Ethics in the *Rigveda*, *Upanishads*, *Laws of Manu*, the *Rāmāyana*, the *Gita* and the writings of some classical and contemporary philosophers and literary men. In the ninth chapter he has given a synopsis of issues discussed in the earlier chapters. He has taken up there a few questions selected from the field of descriptive ethics and offers concluding remarks, taking the Vedic and popular tradition and the Upanishadic and Neo-Brahmanic tradition as polar currents typically cross-cultural. "The this-worldly denial of neo-Brahmanism is a thread which, in its historical interaction, has remained highly distinguishable from the Vedic and popular tradition. It is only the latter which mirrors and develops Vedic life affirmation..." (p. 203).

According to the author, the attitude of absolutizing the cultural relativism and 'non-intervention' is an uncomfortable experience (cf. p. 212). The ethical analysts have jumped, without due authority "from the factual contradictions of secondary and multiple "intui-

tions" to the impossibility of a single insight into goodness in general" (p. 212). That cannot be true. Moral insights do not function in an isolated and dangerous vacuum without verification from collective experiences of consequences. Hence, according to the author, instead of burying oneself in cross-cultural ethical relativism, one has to see, especially in the context of contemporary Hinduism, which of the moral motivations, that is, whether the world-denial of the Upanishadic or the life-affirming view of the Vedic and popular tradition, helps one to better one's life. The book under review accepts the possibility of exchange in moral wisdom and motivation which may improve one's life though, historically speaking, there is a plurality of competing ethical traditions in Hinduism. The book is a real contribution to the study of comparative ethics.

K. T. K.

Roger Aubert et al.,

The Church in a Secularised Society,

New York/Ramsey, N.J., Toronto : Paulist Press, London : Darton, Longman and Todd, 1978, pp. xxxii + 719 + 63, Unnumbered pages containing 90 illustrations, Price : £ 16.00.

This is the 5th volume of *The Christian Centuries* (A New History of the Catholic Church) series in five volumes of which III and IV are yet to appear in English translation. (The original is in French). The series was started 17 years ago under a team of scholars : Louis J. Rogier (died in 1974), Roger Aubert, David Knowles (also died in 1974), A. G. Weiler and John Tracy Ellis. The present volume is edited by R. Aubert who is an expert on the 19th century history of the Church and the author of the famous book in French on the pontificate of Pius IX (*Le Pontificate de Pie IX*). He contributes the bulk of the book with a few chapters by some others.

Divided into six parts, the book gives an 'outline' history of the Catholic Church from the eve of the great European crisis (1848) to the close of the Second Vatican Council, from the pontificate of Pius 12 to that of Paul VI — a little further in the case of the Americas. Detailed descriptions are given only for some of the events selected as significant. Care is taken to remain true to the policy enunciated in the first volume of the series : "This series... will endeavour to present the history of the Church in a form, and on a scale, suited to the needs of the interested reader of to-day."

The first part of the present volume provides a general picture of the Church up to the first World War and part six describes the half century preceding and preparing for Vatican II. Both the sections open with chapters (Chs. 1, 20) delineating the major policies of the Popes, from Pius IX to John XXIII, varying though their personalities are. Their role in guiding the Church is of capital importance for the period which is one of intense centralization in the Church. The other chapters in these sections deal with the story with special emphasis on (1) the evolution of the Church in relation to the liberalising trends of the day and to the movements concerned with improving the lot of the working class (Chs. 2, 3); (2) the development of those organs by which the centralization of the Church made itself felt in the world (Ch. 4); (3) the varying forms taken by lay Catholic Action over the last 100 years (Ch. 7); (4) the emergence of new pastoral methods (Chs. 7, 9); (5) the various forms of Christian vitality within the Church: devotion of the Bl. Virgin, cult of the S. Heart, Eucharistic devotion, liturgical movement, Biblical movement, and so on (Chs. 6, 21); (6) the slow awakening after a lull in 18th century of the ecclesiastical sciences culminating in the modernist crisis and the subsequent development of Catholic thought (Chs. 10, 22, 23).

This general picture of more or less the continental European Church is amply supplemented by Catholicism in the Anglo-Saxon World (Part II), Catholicism in Latin America (Part III), the "Young Churches" of Africa and Asia (Part IV), the Eastern Churches (Part V). Being a survey naturally a lot of details are missing in the volume and the presentation might appear rather incomplete and schematic. These inherent defects can, to a great extent, be compensated by recourse to the extensive bibliographical references indicated for each chapter. The overall picture—"an extended fresco of the principal results obtained to date from works of detailed research"—with its emphasis on essentials is satisfying.

The authors have succeeded by and large in realizing their intention of breaking with the long established practice of Catholic historians: seeing the Church as a primarily European institution, concentrating on the more or less tumultuous relationship between Church and State, interspersed with the many controversies among professional theologians. Instead, it is the life of the People of God in the living organism which is emphasized; so also the vitality of the Church guaranteed by the presence of the vivifying spirit. Attention, however, does not fail to be drawn to the fact that the Church as an association of human beings is subjected to laws and contingencies, and that the life

of the Church needs to be situated in the world of man, *i.e.*, in secular history. The illustrations are a telling story of the vicissitudes in the Church's relation to secular ideologies and institutions. So too the chronological table preceding as it does the illustrations offers a stimulating parallel between the successive political, social and cultural events on the one hand, and the evolution of the history of the Church in its various aspects on the other.

A. M. Mundadan, C.M.I.

Peter Spink,

Spiritual Man in a New Age,

London : Darton, Longman and Todd, 1980, pp. vii+53, £ 1.65 net.

Today's world is deeply sensitive in detecting and classifying the change of consciousness occurring in the society and especially among the youth. They outrightly deny and reject false values and go after experiential wisdom.

Peter Spink in his beautiful book 'Spiritual Man in a New Age' systematically analyses the evolution of this change in consciousness through religious and other secular movements. He sees a dynamics which is gradually extending its power and again which is responsible for all the changes in man's consciousness ; changes not in religious attitudes but in the philosophy of life. The book under review powerfully describes how these changes come about in the life of the Youth today.

Jose Thottathil.

Simon Tugwell, O. P.,

The Way of the Preacher,

London : Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd., 1979, pp 200+XV.

Here is a book written, as the author claims, from the experience of being a member of the Order of Preachers, but is not confined to any tradition or school of spirituality. It is open to any Christian whose duty and privilege it is to preach the Word of God. The basic theological assumption is that one is to be sanctified through the

exercise of ministry to which one is called by the Lord. The book is concerned about the ministry of preaching, an important aspect of the missionary dimension of the Church.

The original inspiration of the 'Order of Preachers' was that of proclaiming the Word of God. St. Dominic did not wish to get a rule of life approved, but rather, the recognition of his brethren as preachers (p. 15). Their mission was ecclesial rather than monastic. It was through its preaching ministry that the members of the Order were to attain perfection; it was a school of spirituality for them which even involved some risk. "The Way of the Preacher" makes interesting reading and it offers real encouragement to all those who are involved in the ministry of preaching.

G. K.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad,

Teachings of Islam,

Delhi: Inter-India Publications, 1910, 1978 pp. x + 198, Rs. 40, £ 8.

This new, excellent reprint of the "Teachings of Islam", was originally written in Urdu by the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, Punjab, the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement in Islam. He was such a prolific exponent of Muslim doctrines that he has nearly seventy works on Islam to his credit. The book under review is a collection of five papers prepared for a conference held at Lahore in December, 1896. The English translation of it appeared in instalments in the "Review of Religions" in 1902 and 1903.

As pointed out in its preface by Muhammad Ali, the book is primarily intended to spread Islamic doctrines in the West. It discusses five subjects, which undoubtedly are of vital importance in any religion. They are: (1) the physical, moral and spiritual conditions of man (2) the state of man in the after life, (3) the real goal of the existence of man and the means of its attainment, (4) the effect of actions in the present life and the life to come, and (5) the sources of Divine knowledge. As a staunch believer in Islam and the founder of a new Islamic movement called Ahmadiyya, which was later considered un-Islamic by Muslim orthodoxy, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad tackles these five subjects from a Muslim point of view. He claims that the contents of this

book are drawn entirely from the Holy Quran or what may be reasonably inferred from its plain words. At the very outset he says, "Before I start with the proper object, I take leave to state that all my assertions and arguments shall be based upon and drawn from the Holy Quran (p 1.)

The general trend of the book is clear from this statement, and he remains faithful to it throughout the book. But as we enter into the body of the book we begin to realize that it is neither a collection nor a commentary of some Quranic verses. Though the learned author bases his arguments on the solid foundation of the Quran, he has something of his own to add to the topic he is dealing with. In other words, it is neither pure theology nor abstract philosophy but the successful attempt of a religious-minded scholar to explain the teachings of sacred scripture within the framework of a limited perspective and freedom. He himself admits that this book does not give a comprehensive treatment of the teachings of Islam. However, this does not undermine the significance and relevance of the way he has treated the topic of this book. It gives us in a convincing and scholarly manner, the Islamic teachings on five topics of vital importance in any religion. Inter-India Publications deserves praise for having made this rare book once more available to the students of Islamic teachings.

George Koovackal

O. A. Wall,

Sex and Sex Worship in the World,

New Delhi : Inter-India Publications, rep. 1979, pp.xv + 608,
Rs. 150, \$ 30.

In the evolution of religion, myths and legends about religion wove a texture for which philosophies and theories about sex, male female, love, passion, lust, desire for procreation, offspring supplied the thread of the warp, and the individual religions, the myths and fables of gods and goddesses and their sex exploits were woven in as the woof. Religions were in a constant process of refinement due to the gradual unfolding of truths in the consciousness and conscience of innumerable thinkers. This advancement of mankind in knowledge helps us to reduce the element of the fantastic, irrational, erotic, and the unbelievable in our faiths.

The history of the progressive refinement, however, of sex and sex-symbolism in religious belief and worship shows that this has had

a very uncertain course. O. A. Wall's work in this field is a valuable contribution to the comparative study of religions in their ancient and modern forms. "Profusely illustrated with more than three hundred and seventy plates, the author has delved deeply into the subject of sex and sex-worship and has brought great scholarship to bear on it. The thirty-nine chapters deal with subjects that vary from Lycanthropy and Gemetria to phallic festivals, virgin worship, the nature of reproduction, and sex and sexual relationships of the gods. The list is endless. The attempt here is to present the truths as recorded in history from time immemorial. A fascinating and scholarly collection of erotica" (inside dust cover).

Far from being a curious collection of accounts and symbols pertaining to erotics in religions, the book under review is a serious attempt to interpret the real meaning of sex-worship in the religious life of mankind. "The facts gathered about phallic religion led me to doubt whether this was ever a religion from all other religions apart; it appeared to me to be merely a phase in the evolution of all religions. Nor was it a real worship of the generative organs, but rather a use of representations of the phallus and yoni as symbols for certain religious ideas which were embodied in nature-worship" (p. viii).

The author does not believe that the theories that are propagated and the myths we are asked to believe are essential to religion. "To act fairly towards our fellow-men is all there is of religion that is worthwhile (p. ix). Though we may doubt the validity of such a simplified definition of religion, it reveals the true intention of the author in collecting and presenting the details of the sex-worship throughout history.

So innumerable are the topics and issues discussed that it is practically impossible to examine the merit of them all within the purview of this review. As a work produced in the early dawn of this century, to be sure, one may find in it statements unacceptable from the religious, biological, historical, and scientific points of view. For example, the chapter on "Light on a Dark Subject" mixes up the physiological study with disputable religious statements (masturbation, p. 162) and biological explanations (menses, p. 152). But that does not in any way detract from the value of the publication in general. The wealth of information contained in the volume makes it an indispensable source book for the study of the history of religion and worship forms.

Bharatan Kurmarappa,

The Hindu Conception of the Deity as Culminating in Rāmānuja,

Delhi : Inter-India Publications, Reprint, 1979, First ed. 1934, pp. 356, Rs. 80 (\$ 16).

“The aim of this book is,” in the words of the author, “is two-fold — firstly, to deal with such conceptions of the Deity as led to Rāmānuja’s views... and secondly to deal with Rāmānuja’s own conception of the Deity” (p. xiv). Though a great deal has been written on the monism of Śaṅkara in English, and it has been accepted as the Philosophy of Hinduism in the West, according to the author, Rāmānuja’s views represent the highest philosophical expression of religious thought in Hinduism down through the ages. Hence “to all those who construct their metaphysics on experience, who are not willing to dismiss the world of values as illusory, Ramanuja’s conception of ultimate Reality must be of profound interest” (*Ibid.*).

The book has two parts with four chapters each. The first part deals with the conception of Deity found in the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Pancaratra* and the Puranic literature which influenced Rāmānuja’s view. The second part gives an account of Rāmānuja’s attempt to develop on the basis of earlier theistic tradition a consistent, systematic, personal conception of the Deity. This work was accepted by the University of London in June, 1930 for the Ph.D. degree in the Faculty of Arts.

The relation of Brahman to souls and to the world is not one of identity or of a perfect opposition. They are one with Brahman keeping their identity. To express this special relation Rāmānuja makes use of the term ‘*Viśiṣṭadvaita*’, qualified non-dualism. This system has well established the theistic tradition in the Indian thought and thereby exposed the fallacy of the assumption that Hinduism teaches only the illusoriness of the self and the material world.

The conclusion of the study of Rāmānuja’s conception of the Deity can be stated as follows : “The Deity... is a personal Being characterised by every perfection, and the world is created by Him out of love for souls, so that He may, by means of experiences undergone by them in it, wean them as responsible individuals from evil, and redeem them to a life of complete devotion to Himself” (p. 328). For those who are interested to study the theistic tradition in Hinduism, the book under review is a very valuable source.

Mathew Chandrankunnel

Howard M. Teeple,

The Noah's Ark Nonsense,

Evanston, Illinois: Religion and Ethics Institute, Inc., 1978,
pp. 156, \$ 10.00.

Howard M. Teeple's work, no doubt, drives one more nail into the coffin of the once almost accepted fundamentalist view that the Genesis account of the Flood is true because the Bible is to be interpreted literally. With the zeal and passionate vigour of an iconoclast the author 'smashes' every theory and findings advanced by the supporters of the Flood.

The book consists of twelve chapters in all. The first two chapters introduce the problem. The author spares no efforts in finding fault with the fundamentalist point of view — it is identified to be the root-cause of all the bias and misconception. Chapters three to seven are set apart for scrutinizing the historicity of the Flood. The locale of origin of the Flood story is traced to be Sumer where the story probably existed by the middle of the third millennium B.C. Later the Flood story spread among many cultures. The Babylonian version of it was appropriated by the Hebrews and finally found its place in the Book of Genesis. Basing his study on geological, archaeological, and other evidences the author concludes that the Flood story is not based on an actual Flood — either local or universal. Thus he tries to prove that the sources of the Genesis Flood story are fictional. Chapters eight to eleven are devoted for a thorough discussion on the Ark. The folly and falsity of the various 'Ark-find' claims and their silliness are expressed brilliantly. The twelfth, and the last chapter blames the media for promoting so vigorously the notion that the remains of Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat, in spite of the lack of any solid, genuine evidence supporting it. The media release such sensational pseudo-documentary material purely for sensationalism and the profit resulting from that.

As the book is written partly as an angry rebuttal of NEC's widely publicized television programme (which claims that Noah's Ark is on Mount Ararat, in what is today Turkey), it has the look of a sectarian approach to the subject. For that reason the present volume seems to lack, the impassionate detachment and credibility that ought to characterize a scientific inquiry of this sort. The study is rather one-sided; evidence to the contrary are often either omitted or belittled. An open-minded reader will find some of the author's explanations and

contentions difficult to accept. There are instances where the book is not very courteous and fair in its treatment of opposing viewpoints. In his zeal to refute a viewpoint he often fails to see its merits and advantages. And that's precisely the weakness of Teeple's work. Nevertheless, the author's sharp, lucid style and the brilliant popular presentation of the subject make *The Noah's Ark Nonsense* a very appealing and highly readable work.

Jose Thadavanal

Finbarr Connolly C Ss R,

In the World : God and I,

Bangalore : Theological Publications in India, 1977, pp. 237.

The aim of the book is "to present the insights of Modern Christian Spirituality in an ordered way." The book contains 35 lectures grouped under four titles, namely, the message, the invitation, the response and the Christian Life.

The first section describes modern Christian spirituality as essentially Trinitarian. The core of this revelation is not the mysterious co-relation of three distinct persons, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, but that there is an inner life in God. Modern Spirituality, being personal and communitarian, must of its nature be very conscious of the Trinity, which is a community of persons. This is the message. The invitation is to become a new man (p. 80). This call is vitally personal. It is a call to enter into the Kingdom of God. Section two studies man's call to the Kingdom of God as the Gospel describes it. A call is completed only when it is responded to. The third section deals with this response. "The heart of the Christian response is charity. The call is from love and to love. The response has to be in the Church and for the Church. The response must be anchored in the liturgy. The response is to be formulated in prayer, it is a living response to a living love. The response must involve self-denial" (p. 147). The result of the response is a fuller Christian life, the topic of the discussion in the fourth section. The beatitudes, self-denial, renunciation, prayer, virtues and such other factors mark out Christian spirituality distinctly. Thus Finbarr's book presents the essentials of Christian spirituality in a strikingly new and attractive format.

Sr. Barbara A.C.

E. De Bekker W.F. and G Tayla W.F.,

Paris Priests and Marriage Cases,

Bangalore : Theological Publications in India, 1978, pp. 239 + vi.

Jesus was one day teaching his disciples when the pharisees came to him in order to test him. "Is it lawful," they asked, "for a man to divorce his wife?" He answered: "From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. A man should, therefore, leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one. So they are no longer two, but one. What, therefore, God has joined together, let not man put asunder." Following this teaching of Christ, the Church has always taught and continues to teach that marital union between two Christians is absolutely indissoluble.

But today the question of this absolute indissolubility of marriage is being questioned by theologians. This has become relevant as marriage breakdowns are on the increase in the present-day society. Certainly this unhappy situation cannot be overcome by granting permission for more and more divorces. People must, on the other hand, be helped in every possible way to adjust their tastes and temperaments, their ideals and interests, instead of breaking with each other when they find that these differ. But in spite of serious attempts in this direction the fact remains that a number of marriages do break down whether the Church is willing to grant permission for divorce or not. In such cases the only solution seems to lie in the diligent application of the law to which some amendments have been made recently. The aim of this book is to help in this task those who are in the parish ministry.

The book is divided into three parts: "Dissolution cases", "Nullity cases" and "Possession cases". Under these titles the authors have attempted to present certain marriage cases where permission may be given for divorce and re-marriage under certain conditions. To help identify the type of case one is handling each type of case is explained with examples. Further, the procedure appropriate to each type is described with formulas in order to assist the pastor in handling each case. Hence it is an essential reference book for all parish priests and for all those engaged in pastoral ministry.

Antony Kariyil

Raymond E. Brown, Karl P. Donfried, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and John Reuman (eds.),

Mary in the New Testament,

Bangalore : Theological Publications in India.

Mary in the New Testament is an excellent book on Mary, the Mother of our Lord, and is the result of the collaboration of scholars from the Lutheran, Catholic and other Churches. The very fact that scholars from various Churches have come together to study a topic which is an important subject in inter-confessional discussions and have been able to present with a good amount of agreement how Mary is presented by the various New Testament authors, itself testifies its uniqueness. It is certainly a valuable contribution for the correct understanding of the development of the different lines of traditions in the Catholic and Protestant Churches.

The authors of the books of the New Testament are made to speak and interpret their writings with the help of redaction criticism and thus what each author writes about Mary is made manifest. All the important texts which may have even an indirect reference to Mary or to her relationship to Jesus are analysed and studied by the editors with Biblical Scholarship and theological reasoning. Each chapter has a completeness and clarity and the conclusions drawn are legitimate with the method employed and with the approach taken. The book is a very valuable contribution both as a mariological study and as an ecumenical research.

I am not too sure whether it is true that pluralism in the New Testament authors on Mary is the source of the development of different traditions in the various Churches. However, pluralism in the N.T. may be an explanation that may help an ecumenical understanding of an important controversial subject like Mariology in inter-confessional discussions.

Eustace Thottan

Nihal Abeyasingha,

A Theological Evaluation of Non-Christian Rites,

Bangalore : Theological Publications in India, 1979, pp. 250 +xix.

“The present work is an attempt to review an old discussion of the Scholastics concerning the economy of salvation...in order to draw from this certain theological principles which could be helpful toward

a better understanding of the salvific import of non-Christian Rites” (Preface). For this the author makes an historical analysis of the growth and development of this idea and reaches a theological conclusion which he presents in his concluding chapter.

In the first five chapters we have a synthesis of the historical development of this doctrine. Chapters six to nine give a picture of the changing perspectives given by later theologians. The final chapter makes an assessment of the non-Christian rites, compares them with the Christian rites and concludes that “In so far as a non-Christian has salvific faith, he is intentionally ordained to the indispensable means of salvation. So, if his use of the non-Christian rites is provoked by an authentic attitude of faith and worship, this includes *in voto implicito* elements of the definitive salvific will of God. In this same perspective, because his faith would justify him and constitute him in grace, one can say that he is united in a real, actual, though invisible way with the Church” (p. 235).

The author has made a good synthesis of the matter and has done it in simple lucid language. The bibliography could be up-dated to include some of the new studies on the theme.

George Kaniarakath

George V. Lobo, S.J.,

Christian Living According to Vatican II,

Bangalore : Theological Publications in India, 1980, pp. xi+484.

George V. Lobo, a reputed writer on moral themes, brings to light in just one volume, his reflections on the contemporary thinking on moral problems in the Catholic tradition of Christianity. Starting with the historical development of moral theology, the author examines in twenty chapters the morality in the Old and New Testament, the problem of Christian Ethics, Christocentric Morality, Natural Law, Moral Absolutes and the New Morality, mature Christian conscience, freedom and responsibility, sin, responsible human act and such other issues of vital importance to Christian living.

Most of the issues revert to the key-concepts like law and freedom, conscience, responsibility and sin. The concept of natural law plays a central role in the Catholic moral tradition. As regards natural law, the author takes the stand that “Just as the human nature is the

substratum of the supernatural reality of man, so the natural law derived from it is a means of attaining his supernatural destiny" (p. 205). According to the traditional view, natural law is absolute and immutable. The new morality, however, makes it a relative concept. The author's sympathy is with the positions of St. Thomas and Karl Rahner. "There is no situation which would justify simply going against the absolute negative precepts of the natural law... Natural law only requires that we should not in principle deny certain basic values like justice and mercy" (p. 232). St. Thomas writes: "The just and the good...are formally and everywhere the same...Taken in the material sense, they are not the same everywhere and for all men..." (p. 241). This flexible but unambiguous position gives direction and purpose to the whole book.

It is also interesting to read the discussion on the nature of the violation of moral laws, *i.e.*, sin, in terms of a fundamental option, understood as an absolutely definitive commitment (p. 387). "Moral sin is an action that changes or is equivalent to changing the fundamental option towards God or expressing an alienation from Him. Venial sin does not touch one's fundamental option" (p. 443). Mortal sin "can only happen at the very deep level in which man is present to himself wholly as a person, fully master of his freedom, fully face to face with the God of the covenant...This cannot happen in an ordinary isolated act, but only in the projected course of a human lifetime, climaxing in the personal position taken in death" (*Ibid.*). For a morally perplexed conscience it is certainly consoling to hear that mortal sin is not a matter of falling into sin haphazardly, but of being... a man who is "unto-sin-death, and who thus enters death" (p. 444). This is certainly a very revolutionary idea in the Catholic moral tradition and the book deserves to be commended for its lucid treatment of the subjects.

K. T. K.

Alice F. and Robert A. Evans,

Introduction to Christianity : A Case Method Approach,

Atlanta : John Knox Press, 1980, pp. xi + 226, \$ 6.95

The purpose of this book, in the authors' own words, "is to help interested persons learn and evaluate what many Christians believe and how they seek to act" (p. viii). For this reason they have adopted

case method approach. It presents the experiences of real people in real situations. It is the declared aim of the authors that their exploration of Christian heritage should have a personal touch in order to promote the study and understanding of Christian religion.

The book has eight chapters arranged in three parts. Part four is a practical resource guide for teachers and students. It includes study questions, suggested projects, audio-visuals, bibliography on each chapter and case teaching suggestions, and an annotated general bibliography.

God's creation and covenant, Christ, Holy Spirit, Church Faith and Love, Rituals comprise the central issues of the book. It is complemented with four case studies. Sue Ann is an unwed mother, now in hospital awaiting an abortion. After discussing the central themes of Christian faith, the authors ask whether a consideration of those themes affect one's decisions and actions. The pertinent question is "what would you say and do if you were Sue Ann or one of her close friends." The most remarkable feature of the book is that it makes the reader aware of the position he takes, consciously or unconsciously on several issues of our contemporary ethical existence. It offers Christian belief in a format that is readable and easy to understand.

K. T. K.

L. P. Vidyarthi, B. N. Sarswati and Makkan Jha,

The Sacred Complex of Kashi : A Microcosm of Indian Civilization,

Delhi : Concept Publishing Company, 1979, pp. 319, Rs. 80.

True to its subtitle, the book presents a microcosmic picture of Indian civilization. The book attempts at studying Kashi, one of the most sacred pilgrim centres of the Hindus, from different angles, describing its sacred antiquity, its sacred geography, and the sacred beliefs and practices connected with it. The work is based on a two-year field study undertaken by the authors. The book also deals with a number of case histories of the various categories of sacred professionals.

In all there are seven chapters with a number of plates, maps, figures, tables and appendices. The institution of pilgrimage and the people who are devoted to the preservation of it, form the two major factors of the complex of Kashi. After a careful study of the sacred

geography of Kashi, the authors take up the issue of sacred actions, festivals, and the persons authorized to perform sacred rituals. Various forms of *arati* and modes of daily worship organized by the management, and the sacred performances organized by the devotees themselves, such as *snan* (sacred bath), *darshan* (sacred visitation), *puja* (worship), are described in the second chapter. It is followed by an account of fairs and festivals and the group of people who cultivate, preserve and promote the classical cultural tradition. The last mentioned group evolves its own sub-culture and life style and thus achieves a kind of natural integration. All these depend on the institution of pilgrimage.

The flocking of pilgrims to a holy place brings with it its own problems and blessings. The (composition of) pilgrims, in most cases, are a heterogeneous group in so far as their caste, class, and education are concerned. According to the authors, "the mechanism of sacred complex and the institution of pilgrimage are dependable and effective means of integration" (p. 156). "The sacred complex is not an abstruse philosophy but a reality that binds us together against the geographical diversities, and social and linguistic heterogeneities. It has got a fairly well established foundation for "the three elements which build up the structure of sacred complex, viz., the sacred geography, the sacred performances, and the sacred specialists are formed on scriptural canons, upheld by Hindus of all categories, of all places and of all times" (p. 142). The fact is that the sacred complex, applicable in the case of Kashi, is also largely applicable to all the Puranic Tirthas of India. Thus the study of the sacredness of Kashi serves as a model-study of holy places and the sacred rituals performed therein.

K. T. K.

D. M. Datta,

Philosophical Perspectives, A Selection of Essays,

Patna : Bharati Bhawan, First ed., 1972, pp. 184, Rs. 25.

The book brings together sixteen papers by Prof. D. M. Datta, previously published in various books and journals, both in India and abroad. The papers cover a large variety of subjects, all discussed in wide philosophical as well as religious perspective. The essays are arranged under four headings, namely, (1) Logic and Metaphysics, (2) Religion and Morality, (3) Society and Culture, (4) India's Debt

to other lands. The essays in the section on Religion and Morality are of special interest. They are (a) Religion as a pursuit of truth, (b) Symbolism in religion, (c) Inward and outward Vedanta, (d) The moral conception of nature in Indian Philosophy, (e) From inter-personal to international Morality.

What D. M. Datta says about religion helps to bring philosophy and religion closer. "Religion...is living in the truth. It is an all-round dynamic sincerity in thinking out a consistent view of Reality and attaining a coherent system of beliefs, and sincerity in letting our beliefs mould our emotions and actions. Religion is thus an all-round integral uplifting of life in the light of truth as envisaged and accepted by the individual" (p. 70). He also recognizes that "religion has necessarily to start with the limited aspects of truth, or truths as grasped by him under peculiar physical, mental, and cultural conditions. These latter define for every individual his own unique religious life" (p. 74). All the selections contained in the volume under review take a realistic view in the field of philosophy and religion.

K. T. K.

Suresh Chandra,

Philosophical Discussions,

Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 1979, pp. xiii, 205, Rs. 50.

Though strictly philosophical in content and a first-rate work on epistemology and metaphysics, it is an excellent work to provoke critical thinking on all types of systems of thought, including religions. It comprises 23 articles published in journals of philosophy during the period 1959 to 1974. They are grouped in seven sections entitled, Philosophical Scepticism, Verification and Basic Statements, Analytic/Synthetic, Analysis of Experiences, Analysis of the Self, Discernibility, Entailment and Sense-data of Prediction, and Philosophy and Metaphysics, respectively. The titles reveal that the book covers most of the problems discussed recently in the West. About the book the author himself writes: "Except the last article on the "Nature of Being", where I have presented my own metaphysical defence of the principle of sensuous pleasures, I have been destructive rather than constructive" (p. xii). Hence, considering its spirit, the present work belongs to the sphere of philosophical criticism.

K. T. K.

Ram Jee Singh (ed.),

World Perspective in Philosophy, Religion and Culture,

Patna : Bharati Bhawan, 1968, pp. xxx + 480, Rs. 50.

The work is a collection of 34 essays presented to Professor Dharendra Mohan Datta in commemoration of his 70th birthday. Datta is a great thinker gifted with the insight to grasp the inner and ultimate nature of things, foresight to distinguish eternal values from transitory ones, and an open mind to form a comprehensive idea of the universe and plan his entire life in the light of this idea. Hence the editors of this volume have tried to make this work a classical comparative philosophy, religion and culture. It tackles the vital problems of God and religion, morality and values, democracy and science.

Analysing the comprehensiveness and practicability of D. M. Datta's thought, W. H. Werkmeisters writes : " In an age in which linguistic analysis and positivistic reductionism have tended to isolate philosophy from the momentous problems and decisions of the day, and in which existentialism emphasizes the irrationalities, if not absurdities, of human existence, it is refreshing to turn to the comprehensive, the balanced, and the integrative view of our human enterprise which is so clearly delineated and defended in the writings of Dharendra Mohan Datta " (p. 446). Datta argues that man should try to form as comprehensive an idea of the universe as is humanly possible; but he is also aware of the differences among the philosophers. They are, according to him, "the necessary consequences of the great complexity and vastness of the subject-matter of philosophy." The " alternative doctrines do not necessarily falsify one another " but " may be regarded as supplementing one another." " This willingness to see at least partial truths in conflicting doctrines makes it possible for Datta to integrate vast areas of philosophic thought—both Eastern and Western" (p. 447).

The essays in the commemoration volume are all written in this spirit and, consequently, they help one to achieve a perspective and a comprehensiveness of point of view well calculated to bring together the great traditions in philosophy everywhere.

K. T. K.

Dalip Singh,

Sikhism : A Modern and Psychological Perspective ; Universal Sikhism : An Aid to Moral Upliftment; Yoga and Sikh Teachings: Some Basic Questions,

New Delhi : Bahri Publications Pvt. Ltd.

The three books by the same author published as the first three numbers of the series in Sikh history and culture give an authentic account of the teachings of Guru Nanak and the successor Gurus, and other practices of Sikhism.

The first book *Sikhism* has fourteen chapters and these deal mainly with the internal discipline. The external discipline prescribed by the Gurus is treated in the book *Universal Sikhism*. Both aspects of the treatment are equally important for the spiritual uplift, as in the case of treatment for a physical ailment. "To cure a sick person, a wise physician prescribes two types of treatment — (1) inner treatment — the cure of the disease by the intake of the drugs. and (2) external treatment or the prohibitory treatment — prescribes dietary and other restrictions" (p. 7). God is the only Reality, who is the Creator of all life and the universe. He is infinite. Guru Arjun categorically states : "Let that tongue be burnt, which says that God takes birth and dies." Man is the crown of His creation. When Self is weakened it gets allured by the fascinating objects of the objective world (p. 21). The moral conscience is the divine teacher (*Sat-Guru*), and the *Sat-Guru* is the supreme Lord himself. "Without listening to the Voice of the Moral Conscience no one can attain the sublime state of bliss" (p. 130). We are called to live in the midst of the impurities of life. The way of Life (the Divine Discipleship or Sikhism or The Path of the Moral Self) is based on the Realisation of the Reality Principle, the objective living against selfishness or egocentricity, independent thinking free from prejudices, which is, in fact, creative activity. *Nam* or the Productive Love of God is the basis of all life. On whom God's Grace dawns, he is driven to utter His name or functional qualities (*nam*). Such are the teachings of Sikhism. They do not form any religion or any theocratic system, prescribing performance of specific rituals, ceremonies and techniques for realization of the one Eternal Reality. There should be no limitation in worshipping Him.

In *Guru Granth Sahib* the man of God is called *Khalsa*, the Pure one. The *Khalsa* discipline prescribes various prohibitions such as

not cutting hair from any part of the body, not using tobacco and, other intoxicants in any form, not indulging in sexual promiscuity and not eating sacrificial meat. It also includes certain practices such as maintenance of a comb in the tress-knot hair of the scalp, wearing of the Iron Bangle (Kara), wearing of the shorts (*Kachhera*) and maintenance of a sword in miniature form (Kirpan). Universal Sikhism deals with these external disciplines. It also explains the basic Sikh teaching on the Baptism of the Double-Edged Sword and the significance of the "Two Swords" —that is, the supermacy of the spirit in both spiritual and temporal spheres — put on his person by Guru Hargobind, the sixth *Guru*. He built the Gurdwara and named it *Akal Takht*, the Throne of the Eternal God.

Hindus and Buddhists consider elimination of self in them as the *sine qua non* of liberation or salvation and are never tired of saying so. The Sikh vision, on the other hand, is to accept oneself as Man and to love the Creator objectively, by retaining one's own individuality. *Yoga and Sikh Teachings* discusses these opposing views and brings the Sikh teachings in clearer perspective. Thus all the three books are indispensable sources for a comprehensive understanding of Sikhism.

K. T. K.

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada,

Srimad Bhagavatam,

First Canto—Part One, Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1972, 1976.

This is the first number of a multi-volume translation and commentary on the eighteen thousand verse *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (*Bhagavata Purana*). The author, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, is Founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and has written several volumes on the Bhakti tradition of Sri Caitanya. The *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Cantos 1-9 (27 Vols.), *Sri Caitanya Caritam* (17 Vols.) and *Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead* (3 Vols.) are only some of his literary achievements.

Since its publication in 1972 the present work has gone into six reprints. It contains, besides a short biography of Sri Caitanya, the original Sanskrit text, its Roman transliteration, synonyms, translation and elaborate explanations. To say the least, the translation is

very faithful to the original text and the explanations are scholarly. Above all, the explanations are expressions of the religious convictions of the author about the message of love preached by the religious philosopher, Sri Caitanya (1486-1534). The mass *sankirtana* (hymn) movement initiated by Sri Caitanya is taken to be the best means to establish the cult of Lord Krishna, which is to bring peace and harmony among men.

“The Lord (Sri Caitanya) inaugurated this system of mass *sankirtana*, and leaders of all countries can take advantage of this spiritual movement in order to keep the mass of people in a pure state of peace and friendship with one another. This is now the demand of the present human society all over the world” (p. 32).

The reason for this preference for the path of *sankirtana* can be found in Caitanya's own words: “I have taken to *sankirtana* movement instead of the study of Vedanta because I am a great fool. And because I am a great fool, my spiritual master forbade Me to play with Vedanta Philosophy. He said that it is better that I chant the holy name of the Lord, for that would deliver Me from material bondage” (p. 35).

This was the beginning of a new type of spiritual movement which gave supreme importance to the chanting of the name of Krishna. The following citation beautifully brings out the central vision of Krishna-Consciousness movement: “In this age of kali there is no other religion but the glorification of the Lord by utterance of His holy name, and that is the injunction of all the revealed scriptures...So on the order of My spiritual Master, I chant the holy name of Hari, and I am now mad after this holy name. Whenever I utter the holy name I forget myself completely, and sometimes I laugh, cry and dance like a mad man. I thought that I had actually gone mad by this process of chanting, and therefore I asked my spiritual master about it. He informed Me that this was the real effect of chanting the holy name, which produces a transcendental emotion that is a rare manifestation. It is the sign of love of God, which is the ultimate end of life. Love of God is transcendental to liberation (*mukti*) and thus it is called the fifth stage of spiritual realization, above the stage of liberation” (p. 35).

Convinced by this teaching A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami took upon himself the great mission of preaching *bhakti*, love of God, which is superior to liberation. His voluminous commentaries on *Bhagavata Purana* and other numerous works have this central aim. As the founder of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (3764

Watsika Avenue, Los Angeles, California, 90034), he is championing the cause of *sankirtana* movement in the Western world. Books forstering this movement are published by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, the publication wing of the society of Krishna Consciousness.

Thomas Kochumuttom

Tsoñ-kha-pa,

Calming the Mind and Discerning the Real: Buddhist Meditation: and the Middle View from the *Lam rim chen mo* of Tsoñ-kha-pa,

Translated by Alex Wayman (New York : Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. + ix 512.

Tsong-ka-pa,

Tantra in Tibet : The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra,

Introduced by His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama ; Translated and Edited by Jeffrey Hopkins, Associate editor for the Dalai Lama's commentary and Tsong-ka-pa's text : Lati Rinpochoy ; Associate editor for Tsong-ka-pa's text : Geshe Gedün Lodrö ; Assistant editor for the Dalai Lama's commentary : Barbara Frye. The Wisdom of Tibet Series 3. (London : George Allen and Unwin, 1977), 252 pp.

Tsoñ-kha-pa (A.D. 1357-1419) is considered to be one of the most important figures in the history of Tibetan Buddhism. However, until the recent publication of the above works by Professors Wayman and Hopkins, his work was largely unknown outside Tibet.

Tsoñ-kha-pa is noted for three great reforms : stricter application of the rules of monkhood in the Buddhist Saṅgha, revitalization of the tradition of scholarship, and synthesis of the various schools contained within the Buddhist tradition as known in Tibet. Throughout his adult life, Tsoñ-kha-pa was a prolific writer; his *Gsuis 'Bum* or collected works run to eighteen volumes. Two of these stand out as principal works : the *Lam rim chen mo* and the *Siags rim chen mo*. Wayman's work includes a translation of part of the former ; Hopkins' work includes a translation of part of the latter.

Throughout his writings, Tsoñ-kha-pa adheres to the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika view, in keeping with Buddhapālita's analysis of

Nāgārjuna's philosophy. In brief, the Prāsaṅgika position states that because all things arise dependent on conditions (*pratītya samūtpada*) there can be no inherent self-nature (*svabhāva*) of self or other, as opposed to the Svātantrika view, which allows for a conception of essence. This philosophy was embraced by Tsoṅ-kha-pa as the best explanation of reality, allowing for the simultaneity of *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*.

Alex Wayman, in his *Calming the Mind and Discerning the Real*, translates the second half of the *Lam rim chen mo*, which "constitutes Tsoṅ-kha-pa's reform of Tibetan non-tantric Buddhist meditation and philosophical position" (p. 4). In this work, Tsoṅ-kha-pa reconciles the way of meditation (*śamatha*) taught by the Yogācāra of Asaṅga with the way of discernment (*vipaśyana*), as advanced by Buddhapālita's interpretation of Mādhyamika. This synthesis, however, is not original, being an elaboration on the work of Atīśa (A.D. 982-1054). Rather, the original contribution of Tsoṅ-kha-pa lies in his thorough analysis of the Buddhist tradition; reference is made to over 90 Mahāyāna Buddhist texts to support his position. In his analysis, the teachings of the Yogācāra school—"Calming the Mind"—are seen as a preparatory stage to the level of insight found in the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika—"Discerning the Real." This insight, the Middle Way, allows for neither nihilism nor eternalism: "When one takes it in the way that here is utterly nothing (*ye med*) accomplished by self-nature (*svarūpa*) and continues that a *dharma* does not exist at all (*ye med*)—in that way, since there is positively nothing (*gtan med pa*) to posit of cause and fruit in the void which is void of self-existence—one falls into the extreme of nihilism. On the other hand, if one claims that a *dharma* exists and subsequently finds it necessary to maintain that it is accompanied by self-nature, in that way it does not happen that one regards as illusory-like the appearance there, which in fact is the cause and fruit without self-existence, and so one falls into the extreme of eternalism" (p. 203). Through his explication of the Prāsaṅgika position, Tsoṅ-kha-pa warns that absolute negation must be avoided, as well as absolute reification: all things exist dependent upon causes and in relation to one another.

The second of Tsoṅ-kha-pa's great works, the *Sṅags rim chen mo*, rather than dealing with problems inherent in the Mahāyāna, attempts to systematize a number of Buddhist paths, including the Vajrayāna and the so-called Hinayāna as well as schools of Mahāyāna. In his *Tantra in Tibet: The Exposition of Secret Mantra*, Jeffrey Hopkins translates the first part of this work, and includes an introduction by

His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and current head of the Dge Lugs Pa sect which Tsoñ-kha-pa originated. In the *Sñags rim*, the various paths are hierarchically arranged, with the Hīnayāna designated as the lesser vehicle, the Mahāyāna the greater, and the Vajrayāna the best. The Mahāyāna is further divided into the Perfection Vehicle (*Pāramitāyāna*), the beginning stage; the Yogācāra, the intermediate stage; and the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika as the culmination of the Mahāyāna. Similarly, the Vajrayāna is divided into four progressive tantras: *kriyā*, *caryā*, *yoga*, and *anuttarayoga*. The “lesser” tantras (*kriyā*, *caryā*, *yoga*) require dependence on some external support for meditation, while at the level of *anuttarayoga* the practitioner unites with his chosen deity, thus effecting enlightenment. Tsoñ-kha-pa, quoting from the *Vajradāka Tantra*, emphasizes that the practice of deity yoga yields the final achievement: “Oneself is all Buddhas and all the Heroes. Through union with one’s own deity, its nature is thoroughly achieved” (p. 137).

Although Tsoñ-kha-pa advances a system of eight stages leading to enlightenment, beginning with the Hīnayāna and culminating in *anuttarayoga*, he nonetheless states that all the paths share a common goal. However, he does acknowledge differences in intensity between the paths: “. . . just as many rivers flow to a great ocean from different approaches, so all the water of the three vehicles flows into the great ocean of Tathagatahood. Still, it is correct that these methods differ in completeness and incompleteness and in the speed of their paths and so forth due to the superiority or inferiority of the trainees” (p. 104). Thus, Tsoñ-kha-pa attempts to synthesize and, perhaps, homogenize diverse Buddhist schools, with Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika and the Vajrayāna regarded as the “superior” vehicles.

These two translations make an important contribution to the field of Buddhist studies, being the first major English translations of Tsoñ-kha-pa’s work. However, neither is without its problems. Wayman’s translation is uneven; in some places it is very clear, while in others the syntax is awkward and the meaning obscure (e.g., “If it were not that way, it would not be possible for the nonfluxional path to arise from the fluxional path, so an ordinary person could never attain the noble state, because the cause and fruit are not alike” (p. 406). Hopkins, on the other hand, although his quality of translation is uniform and generally clear, is prone to over-translating, using English terms for Sanskrit words which are easily recognized by even the beginning student of Buddhism, such as Truth Body for *dharmakāya*. Similarly, he gives priority to his own English translation of various

Sūtra titles, which are more readily familiar in the original Sanskrit. However, both Hopkins and Wayman provide English-Sanskrit-Tibetan glossaries and detailed bibliographies which are very helpful.

The contributions of native Tibetan scholars such as Tson-kha-pa, which have long gone unheralded, provide important insights into the history and philosophy of Buddhism. Hopefully, these two translations will lead to further study in this relatively new field.

Christopher Chapple