

BOOK REVIEWS

Thomas Aykara (ed.),

Meeting of Religions : New Orientations and Perspectives,

Bangalore : Dharmaram Publications for the Centre for Indian and Inter-Religious Studies, Rome, Inter-Faith Series No. 1, ix + 186 pp. \$ 4.00 or Rs. 15.00.

A new spirit is alive in Asia; scholarship, spirituality, and youthful vigour are its characteristics. Although strongest in India, this spirit is not without advocates in Sri Lanka, Thailand, South-East, and even East Asia. Its hall-mark is genuine openness to and positive probing for spiritual truth and beauty wherever these are to be found. In other words, this new spirit bespeaks a profoundly catholic attitude.

Perhaps, the Dharmaram Pontifical Institute of Bangalore, India epitomizes this spirit best. Dharmaram is an Indian theologate with a Faculty fully equipped not only in the richness of the Judaeo-Christian heritage but also equally well-trained in a wide variety of Asian spiritual disciplines. In 1971, Dharmaram initiated a Centre for the Study of World Religions. Already, this Centre has produced more than eighteen books, all dedicated to uncovering and articulating this emerging spirit of openness. In 1975, this Centre launched *Journal of Dharma*, an international quarterly linking scholars of Europe, America, and Asia in a mutual quest for this same spirit. To date, *Journal of Dharma* has produced sixteen numbers on themes ranging from Meditation and Mysticism to Human Development. In 1977, another major step was taken. To extend the impact of its work to Europe, the Centre for Indian and Inter-Religious Studies was founded in Rome. *The Meeting of Religions : New Orientations and Perspectives* presents papers delivered at the Inaugural Seminar of this Rome Centre in September of 1977.

This slim volume is impressive because of the direction to which it points, genuine openness to the spirit of truth wherever that appears. The papers fall within three categories : (1) broad overviews, (2) philosophical-theological reflections and (3) specialized studies.

Perhaps, what will be most appreciated at this moment are the superb overviews. Archbishop D. Simon Lourdasamy's "Indian

"Orientations" traces the story of Christianity's encounters with Hinduism from its earliest stance of isolation and defensiveness to its current thrust towards openness. Whereas Lourdasamy focusses on official ecclesiastical meetings and documents resulting therefrom, Muthias Mundadan's "Contemporary Indian Christian Literature" surveys the mountain of literature which supports this impetus. His division of recent trends into : (1) spiritual-contemplative, (2) intellectual-theological, and (3) 'social', is particularly helpful for understanding *why* the 'social' imperative is so critical for today's India. It is especially interesting to juxtapose Julien Ries' excellent study of the sacred within this same context. Drawing heavily on the methodology of History of Religions and concentrating on the classic works of Eliade, Otto, and Soderblom, Ries challenges a further breaking out of any singular theological mould.

The more speculative philosophical-theological articles also bespeak this new spirit. John Macquarrie, Horst Burkle, and Pietro Rossano all search for how a Christian can approach the Oneness of religious experience while simultaneously witnessing and attesting to the truth and beauty experienced within one's own tradition. Albert Nambiaparambil's discussion of his personal grass-roots pastoral work in religious dialogue with both Islam and Hinduism is an especially charming and helpful paper. Significantly, he points to Baptism (p. 79) as the most real, practical and theological problem that is beginning to express itself anew. John B. Chethimattam's contribution to the forum is especially appreciated for the critical questions he raises about what can realistically be expected from dialogue. The questions that Chethimattam draws attention to are important and must not be glossed-over.

Three specialized studies conclude this work : B. K. Matilal on an Indian definition of Religion, Gerhard Oberhammer on Yoga, and Ninian Smart on Theravda Buddhism. Each broadens the vistas of the *Meeting of Religions* and helps it to break out of a purely theological mould. Simultaneously, these studies point to an obvious limitation and a clear next step. If the *Meeting of Religions*, if, indeed, the Roman Centre for Indian and Inter-Religious Studies, is ever to pass beyond the stage of polite introduction, far more input is needed and is to be actively sought from the Hindu-Buddhist-Jain-Islamic world.

The Seminar concluded with a resolution to "search for a new model a 'spirit-model' respectful to the identity and diversity of every individual religious experience" (p. 178). To this noble

objective, the Centres originating in Bangalore and now reaching to Rome are dedicated. To this work, the Staff brings a depth of Scholarship, spirituality, talent, and vigour. The *Meeting of Religions* is clear evidence that their work is already well-begun.

Frank R. Podgorski

Hajime Nakamura,

Buddhism in Comparative Light,

New Delhi: Islam and the Modern Age Society, 1975, xiv + 185 pp., Rs. 40.

This small but timely book is a comparative study of Buddhism and Christianity, and the author's aim in it "has been to view Buddhist history in a wider perspective and consider, in the light of comparative studies, some of the questions presented by this history" (p. xiii). However, as he has the Western readers specially in view, he takes their knowledge of Christianity for granted and, therefore, does not go into the details of the Christian doctrines and practices. Instead, he presents the Buddhist positions in greater detail and then just suggests the corresponding Christian positions. Therefore, his presentation of Christianity is naturally incomplete, if not superficial. Apart from this, the book provides useful reading in comparative religion. In eight chapters it discusses the comparable histories of Buddhism and Christianity, their claims for universality, the roles of faith and reason in these two religions, the Buddhist and Christian diagnosis of the human condition, their therapies of the illness of man, their views about the goal of life and the moral disciplines, their monastic systems, the Zen and Christian mysticism, Pure Land Buddhism and devotional Christianity and, finally, the influence of the Western thinking on the East.

As the author himself hopes "this work, although small in size, will stimulate discussion and further investigation, of the issues presented" (p. xiii). Buddhism and Christianity may be said to represent the Eastern and Western cultures, respectively. Therefore, works of this kind, paving the way for a fruitful dialogue between Buddhism and Christianity, can hasten the meeting of the East and the West in a creative manner.

Thomas Kochumuttam

Joseph Gelineau,

The Liturgy Today and Tomorrow,

London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1978, trans. by Dinah Livingston.

In his recent book, *The Liturgy Today and Tomorrow*, Pere Gelineau speaks to us not so much as a dry theologian or liturgiologist but more as an experienced pastor who knows all the practical difficulties when one tries to make liturgy relevant and meaningful in one's parish. He exposes the deplorable condition of the post-Vatican parish liturgy, which has neither the solemnity of the good old days when 'the smoke curled up, the vestments glowed, the chants rolled,' nor the intimacy of the contemporary Group Liturgies with its own music and Gospel-sharing. He observes that only 'rubble has been cleared, walls have been breached, but there is as yet no sign of the new building to house the Christian assembly' even many years now after Vat. II.

What makes the liturgy alive and meaningful is neither its structure nor its various parts, but its style—the human behaviour involved. Only in particular assemblies can this assume incarnational forms. Besides, gestures, postures, and other symbolic rites, the type of singing, the place of the assembly, etc., are the flesh and face of the liturgical structure, all of which are bound up with particular socio-cultural contexts. The author finds that all this aspect of the liturgical reform remains to be worked out. There are practical difficulties in implementing the reforms of Vat. II, for example, the faceless character of the assemblies and the palatial size and shape of the churches—a heritage of the past. Whereas Vat. II has envisaged for its reformed liturgy simple churches with single space centred on the one altar, what we have today is big churches 'usually compartmentalized into several naves separated by pillars, choirs, sanctuaries with grills and holy tables, lateral chapels, transepts, ambulatories, tribunes etc.' The influence of this situation on the liturgies is manifold and considerable, wherever it obtains.

The post-conciliar liturgical reform, according to him, is based on a very fine theology of Sunday, the liturgical seasons and festivals, but paradoxically, it seems to have produced a levelling down of festivals. This is because, as every Sunday is made important, special days can no longer stand out. It may be noted that these feasts and festivals grew up in symbiosis with the socio-religious life of the society in which

the Gospel was preached. But the contemporary society has no more 'sacred seasons', which could offer a basis for our Christian celebrations. Hence the crisis of liturgical feasts in the West.

In his chapter on 'Clergy Managers and Lay Consumers', the author criticizes the clericalism still rampant in the Church as well as the lay passivity that fans up such clericalism. He then offers some valuable suggestions to make the liturgy a true celebration of the people of God. Among the many important observations, the one regarding the role of music in its varied forms like cries, acclamations, proclamations, chants, pluri-melodies, instrumental sounds and noises, and above all the human voice and human body as the most important means of expression and communication, deserves special mention.

The author's remarks on spontaneity in the liturgical celebrations are also very relevant. He expresses very forcefully that liturgical celebration, being a symbolic action, must strike a balance between pure religious experience and gross ritual display, which alone can bear the hall-mark of genuine creativity. He warns us that the extempore prayers or gestures, being only what is immediately available, may often be poor and superficial, nay even a mere facade of truth, just as in the case of the prescribed modes of expression; true spontaneity comes from a long inner growth in its expression.

By and large, the author has succeeded in outlining the existing shape of the parish liturgy, especially in the West, putting it against its ideal shape vaguely discernible in the documents of Vat. II. Some of his concrete suggestions will not only help the pastors in the field to improve the situation, but also make the Post-Vatican liturgical thinking take a new direction, keeping in mind the actual parish situations into account. However, it must be pointed out that the author's vision, in the exposition of the parish situation has been limited by his own pastoral experience among the French-speaking people, or at best by the context of Western Christianity, even though he seems to have made some efforts to situate his thoughts with respect to a wider horizon including Eastern Christianity and cultural diversity.

Louis Malieckal

Danesh A. Chekki,

The Social System and Culture of India: A Research Bibliography,
New York, London : Garland Publishing Inc., 1975, 843 pp.,
\$ 79.

In the words of the author himself, "This book can be considered as an important indicator of the nature of sociological research output on India during the last quarter of a century or so, since the founding of the modern state of India" (p. xii). The studies documented in this bibliography fall under the various branches of sociology. It contains 5487 entries, including studies made in 1973 and 1974, under the following headings : Methodology and Research Technology; Sociology : History and Theory; Social Psychology; Group Interactions; Culture and Social Structure; Complex Organization (Management); Social Change and Economic Development; Mass Phenomena; Political Interactions; Social Differentiation; Rural Sociology and Agricultural Economics; Urban Structures and Ecology; Sociology of the Arts; Sociology of Education; Sociology of Religion; Social Control; Sociology of Science; Demography and Human Biology; The Family and Socialization; Sociology of Health and Medicine; Social Problems and Social Welfare; Sociology of Knowledge; Community Development; Planning; Forecasting and Speculation; Radical Sociology; Environmental Interactions; Studies in Poverty; Studies in Violence. Ninety-eight per cent of the citations in this volume are in English and the remaining are in European languages. Though studies emerging from the fields of agriculture, demography, education, political science, psychology, religion etc., are included because of their sociological relevance, the over-riding concern of this volume, however, has been the adherence to an inter-disciplinary social science approach. The book under review is certainly an essential reference book for students who undertake serious research in the social system and culture of modern India.

K. T. K.

Sebastian Karotemprel (ed.),

Indian Missiological Review,

Vol. I, No. 1, January 1979. Bombay : Asian Trading Corporation, Annual Sub. Rs. 20.

One may wonder whether a publication specially devoted to the review of the activities of a missionary church will have any relevance

at all at a time when the religious world is experiencing the evolution of a spirit of dialogue and co-existence. An aggressive proselytizing technique of a religious sect is certainly unpalatable to the modern spirit of tolerance. Missionary techniques are sometimes associated with propagandist, clandestine activities. In this context, the publishers of *Indian Missiological Review* deserve praise for venturing to discuss in a public forum all that Christian missionaries are doing in various parts of India.

The articles in the first volume of the *Review* are, strictly speaking, an account of the personal missionary experience of the authors in the context of mission countries. Cardinal Jaim L. Sin of Manila gives us a panoramic view of the situation in Asia, stressing the need for the Church to become incarnate in the Asian cultural context. Julian Saldanha's article is a thorough analysis of *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Pope Paul VI. In "Gandhiji's Great Challenge" A. Chirapanath examines Gandhiji's view of Christianity and Christians. The article draws the conclusion that only spiritual men bearing authentic witness to the humility and simplicity of Christ can make an 'evangelical' appeal to the non-Christians in India today. Bishop Robert Kerketta of Dibrugarh, Assam, himself an Adivasi, presents a well-documented study of the situation of the Adivasi Christians and their social problems. Sister Pakumala gives an account of the role of religious sisters in the missionary field, and Bro. Thaddeus deals with the same subject from the point of view of Missionary Brothers. Offering a forum for the frank sharing of personal experience of men involved in preaching religion, the *Review* has great significance for the religious world.

K. T. K.

Vandana,

Gurus, Ashrams and Christians,

London : Darton, Longman and Todd, 1978, xi + 129 pp.,
\$ 3.10.

The book is an attempt to bring out the necessity of inculturation for the full Christian growth of the Church in India. Its primary orientation is to the Western God-seekers. As the author puts it "Today thousands of Westerners come to India seeking God and *Gurus*, hoping that this country has some riches to offer them of a

kind not to be found in their own materialistic environment. Numerous attempts are currently being made in the West to set up Ashrams, but in most cases so far the results seem to lack one or the other of the essential features of a true Ashram." Having this situation in mind, Vandana tries to provide a picture as well as to serve a guide to Indian Ashrams with special emphasis on the daily life of the inmates, the historical and theological background, their spiritual and religious motivation, and so on. Moreover, "In the horizon of the present time, where the deep cry for indigenization is echoing, this book may be of some help also to the Christians in India especially to the vowed religious, who are looking for a simpler way of life and which is indigenous to India."

In an Ashram the "Waters of Contemplation" water the seed of the divine word, which is sleeping buried in the ground, slowly awakening it into being. Solitude, a simple life style, work, an open community life and the guidance of a Guru, all enable the young sapling to grow gradually into a tree. Birds of the air from both the East and the West may come to rest, to build their nests, and the leaves and fruits of the tree will provide shelter and food for the weary man (p. x).

The first part of the book gives a detailed explanation of the author's personal experience at Shivananda Ashram at Rishikesh, the life-style of the Ashram, and the central role played by the God-experienced *Gurus*. The second part describes the genuine characteristics of a *Guru* from the Indian point of view that is, he is a man who is able to initiate others into the knowledge by the experience of the mystery of God, which he himself has had. He is the intermediary between God and man, who can truly lead others from darkness to light (p. 22). An Ashram is depicted "as a group of people who have put in effort towards God-realization before all else; all that matters is that they should drop anything in their way of living which is found to be an obstacle to this goal. *Sadhana* must be of primary importance in an Ashram" (p. 19).

Viewing *Gurus* and Ashrams from the Christian point of view, Jesus Christ remains "the Christian Guru", who is light himself, who leads to the true light men and women who have dark corners of pride, jealousy and worldliness in their hearts; all others are *Upagurus*, or little *Gurus*. Simplicity, humility, poverty, courage to speak with authority, are some of the other characteristics of a *Sat-Guru*, of which Jesus Christ is a resplendent example; and a Christian *Upaguru* has to practise all these. Ashrams are characterized by peaceful atmosphere, simple

life-style, hospitality of the heart, open community, harmony between man and man, nature and animals, etc. The Indian liturgy, by using *agarbathi*, *arathi*, garland, Indian amps, prostration and *nāmjap* “respond to something deep within the hearts of Indian Christians, which the Western forms of prayer have not been able to evoke” (p. 44).

This book as a whole, reflects the author's deep knowledge of indigenous religion, her openness to acknowledge the Ashram values wherever she finds them regardless of the differences in religion. She also has a keen desire to deepening her Christian religious commitment by doing this. The present publication is the result of long years of sincere work and her long cherished desire to make Christianity more fruitful in the Indian soil. Indian Christians have a double heritage, of the Bible and of the Indian Scriptures. It is upto the individuals to make a new start. As the author envisages there will be troubles and difficulties which one has to face, but in the near future we are sure to find the new dawn of an Indian Christian heritage which can nourish the Church with its own contributions, and not remain merely a “aping of Western culture” (p. 23).

The account of the Ashrams which the author visited is very helpful for those who are looking for more information about Ashrams and *Gurus*; and for those who have a thirst for Ashram life some very practical help is offered in this work. Variety is an essential part of life in the Ashrams, and the author has not hesitated to give an honest description of the life lived in particular Ashrams. Vandana has done well in giving an authentic account of Ashrams and *Gurus* in such a way that Indian Christians can accept them in their own religious practices without hesitation.

The style of the book is simple and practical, with many quotations from the Bible, from the Indian Scriptures as well as from other sources. The detailed explanations of the special words used, and the maps with the Ashrams marked on them are special features of the book. This work is a source of inspiration for those who work for indigenous Christian life-style.

Sr. Noel, S.Sp.S.

Leon-Joseph Cardinal Suenens,

Your God,

London : Darton, Longman and Todd, 1978, 109 pp., £ 1.99.

Your God is a fascinating collection of four addresses delivered by Leon-Joseph Cardinal Suenens in the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford. To a vast audience, mostly young people, the Cardinal expounds the centrality of Christian faith, revolving around the Triune God. The first two talks "Glory of God" and "God as my Father" are made interesting and easy to understand by means of references to classical literary works, apt quotations from great men and women of history, and the Bible. He invites every one to a new commitment by being a renewed creature with "new eyes to see, new ears to hear, new heart to love" (p. 23). The author conveys the message to his listeners in clear terms that God is a tender, affectionate and intimate Father always at hand, loving and caring for all His children.

The third and fourth talks "The Living Son, My Brother" and "The Holy Spirit My Breath of Life" deal with the intimate and dynamic nature of the Son and the Spirit in Triune God. In the book Jesus is presented as a person "here-living-more real than we are ourselves" (p. 57). Typical citations from Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Dom Helder Camara (p. 27), are very inspiring and convince the people of the need especially the youth of today to come closer to their ideal Jesus. The author presents the Holy Spirit as the breath of life, a dynamic force always present among us. He sees that the role of the Holy Spirit is "to make Jesus Christ present in every generation, to give him actuality, make him contemporaneous" (p. 81). Here lies the process of bringing the past and the present together to prepare for the future. It is a challenge to "renew the self, renew the community and renew the Church" in order to be directed and guided by the Holy Spirit. The comparison made between the Church with the Holy Spirit and the Church without the Holy Spirit clearly brings out the centrality of the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church. The life and love principle of the Spirit must force and push one to translate the love into action. What the author means is this kind of action when he speaks of our participation in "the social or political level, to go from the prayer-meetings to the marketplace, from praying together to face together (p. 95), to give the people bread and at the same time the Sacred Host in the Eucharist (p. 98), to confront imperialist oppression, economic domination, military

might, religious conformism, state bureaucracy and a continuous temptation to violence in support of causes, good as well as bad" (p. 99).

As a dynamic speaker and an outstanding figure in Charismatic Renewal, Cardinal Suenens' words have a special power to impress people. The message of faith, hope and joy the book, gives, really makes the readers reflect upon the nature of God with whom one can enter into a relationship of love. The book is certainly rich in theological insights and is very useful for the practice of Christian religion in depth.

Thomas Manninezhath.

J. Feys,

**The Life of a Yogi and A = B, An Inquiry Into the Upanishads
Basic insight,**

Calcutta : Firma Klm Private Limited, 1976, 54 pp. and 64 pp.

The two slim volumes by the same author, though modest in their claim, are original in the areas of their special study. The idea of presenting an autobiography of somebody by an author might sound very queer. But that is what precisely J. Feys does in his book *The Life of a Yogi*. The work describes Sri Aurobindo's career as a Yogi. It is, however, based entirely on autobiographical data. Although Sri Aurobindo did not write his own life history, he did leave a mass of autobiographical information. With a view to bringing out Sri Aurobindo's spiritual experiences, the author has made a careful, analytical study of the autobiographical material published in the volume *On Himself* by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, in 1972. The book makes an attempt to classify and label the varied spiritual experiences of Aurobindo, without daring to make any value-judgements. From a historical point of view that itself is the great merit of the book under review.

The book on the basic insights in the Upanishads discusses the central issue of the identification of Atman with Brahman. Quoting S. Dasgupta he writes : "The sum and substance of the Upanishad teaching is involved in the equation of Atman = Brahman." The author once again goes back to the original sources and examines in detail the identity-texts to see whether the identification theory is justifi-

fiable or not. He arrives at the conclusion that for the Upanishads the ultimate is at the heart of man; it is his self. Brahman then is Atman. To the question whether the Upanishads lend themselves to idealistic interpretation, the author's attitude is one of cautious scepticism. Logically building up the arguments, the book provides interesting reading material for the general reader.

K. T. K.

Ewert H. Cousins,

Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites,

Chicago : Franciscan Herald Press, 1978, xx + 316 pp., \$ 12.95.

One of the names closely associated with recent efforts to recover the tradition of Bonaventure is that of Professor Ewert Cousins of Fordham University. *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites* proposes a hermeneutical key for unlocking Bonaventure's "theological metaphysics" (12) thereby promising profound insights for theology. Cousins claims a "coincidence of opposites of mutually affirming complementarity" as the indigenous logic of the entire system of Bonaventure. Such an exegesis opens to two specific dimensions : a dynamic Trinity unfolding into a Christocentric cosmology interwoven as a unitary whole.

Not unlike the twin towers of the Cathedral of Chartres, these two pillars form the parameters of Bonaventure's vision. Gazing at Trinity through the eyes of Bonaventure, one is struck by a remarkable coming together of opposites: dynamic self-expression coincides with intimate interpenetration, supreme communicability with individuality of persons, supreme consubstantiality with plurality of hypostases, supreme similarity with distinct personality, supreme equality with ordered procession, supreme mutual intimacy with a sending forth. If awe be fitting before the mystery of Trinity, wonder is also appropriate before Christ, the other towering dimension of Bonaventure's theological vision. Here again, one cannot fail to be moved by an extraordinary coming together of complementary opposites: Christ is both uncreated and yet created, God, and yet Man, eternal and yet temporal. Christ unites "the first and the last, the highest and the lowest, the circumference

and the centre the 'Alpha and the Omega', the caused and the cause, the Creator and the creature, the 'book within and without'" (92) In the words of Bonaventure, Christ is the centre, the *medium metaphysicum, physicum, mathematicum, logicum, ethicum, politicum, theologicum*. Bonaventure's *Hexaemeron* and *De Reductione* offer his explanation of the sacred "exitus-reditus" process unfolding within these pillars. It is, thanks to Professor Cousins, that we may now have discovered a hermeneutical key appropriate for entering into the Cathedral-like vision of Bonaventure. Yet Cousins does not leave us stranded at the portals; his detailed interpretation of the "coincidence of opposites" elaborates an extraordinary guide to the profound inner beauty characteristic of the reflections of Bonaventure. An application of this hermeneutical principle enables us to sense not only the profound unity but also gives intensified dimension to the mosaic of complementary opposites coinciding within the vision of Bonaventure. Contemplating Trinity and Christ with the assistance of Bonaventure reawakens a deep sense of sacred awe before the mystery and depths of existence.

A unique feature of this book is that it does not abandon us in the world of the medieval Cathedral; rather Cousins explicitly attempts to draw the treasures and richness of Bonaventure's thought into our milieu. Certainly, Cousins is well aware that the vision of Bonaventure arose before such classic ruptures as the dichotomies between action and contemplation, epistemology and ontology, nature and grace, science and humanities and, especially, philosophy and theology had been so clearly articulated. Nevertheless his chapters on Mandala Symbolism, Twentieth Century Thought, and Ecumenism within a Pluralistic Setting, all argue cogently that Bonaventure's wholistic thinking has much to offer to us and our world. This, indeed, is a real plus for the work.

Bonaventurian scholarship is currently enjoying a promising renaissance. *Bonaventure and the Coincidence of Opposites* invites us into the innermost sanctuary of this magnificent cathedral by offering a key hermeneutic coupled with the explicit suggestion that we apply the richness found therein to our age. Clearly, Professor Cousins has written a valuable and important book.

Frank R. Podgorski

Raimundo Panikkar,

The Intra-Religious Dialogue,

New York : Ramesey, Paulist Press, 1978, xxviii + 104 pp., \$ 5.95.

Raimundo Panikkar is a creative theological artist whose reflections contribute a great deal towards understanding contemporary religious aspirations. Unfortunately, much of his most challenging thought is still not available everywhere in contemporary theological circles. *Intra-Religious Dialogue* is a first step towards filling some of this vacuum. An overwhelming generosity of spirit and personal courage are two characteristics which leap from the pages of this slim volume. The format is relatively simple : five previously unavailable articles are woven together around a single theme which both introduces and serves as a frame for a beautiful portrait. For Panikkar, "Religious Encounter" is that creative act in which the very vitality of religion manifests itself most clearly today. Not simply inter-religious dialogue but rather genuine "intra-religious dialogue" is the compelling challenge which the "kairos" of today demands.

From this perspective, Professor Panikkar argues a very persuasive and appealing thesis. "I 'left' as a Christian, I 'found' myself a Hindu and I 'return' a Buddhist, without having ceased to be a Christian" (p. 2). Accordingly, "the real religious or theological task begins when the two views meet head-on inside oneself, when dialogue prompts genuine religious pondering, and even a religious crisis, at the bottom of a Man's heart; when interpersonal dialogue turns into *intra-personal soliloquy*" (p. 10). The goal would be a multi-religious act which aims at an existential penetration or veritable "incarnation" into the religious experience of another while still attesting to the faith and belief which the searcher has uncovered through personal experience. To assist in this process, Panikkar offers a valuable distinction between Faith and Belief. Faith is the primal anthropological act, the constitutive human dimension, whose task is to link or open one to Transcendence; by its very nature, Faith, then is ever-inexhaustible, always open, and ultimately unutterable. Belief, on the other hand, expresses Man's trust in a particular anthropological dimension through which "salvation" is thought to be attained; being part and parcel of Faith itself, Belief strives to express concisely the intellectual, emotional, and cultural embodiment which Faith takes within a particular tradition. As Panikkar rightly points out, when isolation occurs and dialogue breaks down, Faith seems inevitably to become identified with a

particular expression of Belief, which in turn degenerates into exclusivism. Therefore, the "*kairos*" of today demands the purgative of genuine religious dialogue and encounter as the corrective for overcoming narrow parochialism.

Moreover, genuine "Religious Encounter" is primarily "a religious act and hence a sacred act through which we are taken up by truth and loyalty with no further aim or intention" (p. 37). Therefore, "Religious Encounter" demands absolute freedom from all forms of apologetics, openness to the possibilities of conversions, as well as an awareness of the limitations of relying exclusively on historical methodology. Furthermore, "Religious Encounter" is not merely a "Congress of Philosophy" nor only a "Theological Symposium" nor even the fruits of specific "ecclesiastical efforts." Rather Panikkar claims that the nakedness of the human quest can be clothed only by the garments of authentic faith, hope, and love.

Therefore, the so-called "phenomenological *epoché*" is critiqued both as an inadequate methodology as well as being incompatible with true religious encounter. Although an "*epoché*" may be extremely helpful for all the necessary preliminary investigations and clarifications essential for dialogue, ultimately, the phenomenological, *epoché* is: (1) psychologically impracticable, (2) phenomenologically inappropriate, (3) philosophically defective, (4) theologically weak and (5) religiously barren.

For a genuine "Religious Encounter", Panikkar instead proposes the model of "constant growth." Inter-religious dialogue may become a stepping-stone to that "intra-religious dialogue" wherein living faith constantly demands ever-recurring *metanoia* and total openness which is described as maturing growth. Nonetheless, authentic growth cherishes continuity as well as novelty, development as well as assimilation while yet always remaining open to the continuous transformations that genuine religious experience demands.

As an example of such "religious encounter, Chapter V describes a crossing of the way" between Christianity, Buddhism, and Humanism. When "dialogical dialogue" occurs, *homo viator* may, from a Buddhist enhance his wonder at the "Mystery Immanent", from a Christian enrich his understanding of the "Mystery Transcendent", and from a Humanist sensitize himself more fully to the intersection of these two dimensions,

Panikkar, then, is calling for that radical "intra-religious dialogue" wherein living faith constantly demands a total renewal or genuine *metanoia*. Thus he concludes that the "sincere and committed *studium* of religion" is one of the most authentic religious acts for our day (p. 93).

Intra-Religious Dialogue is a persuasive, well-organised, and well-argued thesis. It points to the many volumes yet to be written in this important area. If there be a weakness in *Intra-Religious Dialogue*, it is precisely because the fruits of mutual cross-fertilization of which it speaks have not yet fully ripened. It is still not clear what enrichment genuine "intra-religious dialogue" will yield. Fortunately, the Preface of this book tells us that *Myth, Faith, and Hermeneutics* will soon give us Panikkar's further reflections on the mutual fecundation that is already occurring. In the meanwhile, we will have to content ourselves with deepening our reflections on *Intra-Religious Dialogue*, an extraordinary introduction to a dimension of theology that is bound to become more significant in the very near future. *Intra-Religious Dialogue* is an important germinal work whose "seeds" deserve to be carefully cultivated.

Frank R. Podgorski

James Dupuis S.J.,

Jesus Christ and His Spirit,

Bangalore : TPI, 1977, viii + 258 pp.

Presented as a collection of "theological approaches" to the mystery of Christ and His Spirit today, this volume contains thirteen articles and an epilogue falling under three main headings: Tradition, Reflection, Dialogue. Part I, Tradition, contains a study of the contributions of the early Fathers Justin, Irenaeus and Clement, towards a theology of history; a reflection on "Western Christocentrism and Eastern Pneumatology" which is a key issue that separates the Churches of East and West; a discussion on "Christocentrism of Vatican II" which is a new breakthrough in Catholic theology; and a timely reflection on faith in relation to a pluralistic society, "Unity of Faith and Dogmatic Pluralism." The major thrust of this

section seems to be directed towards giving a new glimpse into the totality of the mystery of Christ present in the Church, but which goes beyond her juridical structures. The pneumatological and Christological dimensions of this mystery are complementary. Such a faith requires a diversity of expressions. "Unity of faith does not require uniformity in the discourse of the faith; it allows for a certain pluralism both dogmatic and theological" (p. 82).

Part II focusses on the complementarity of Christ and the Spirit in the experience of faith, "Knowing Christ through the Christian Experience", and in its celebration, "Christ and the Holy Spirit in Liturgical Worship." "Faith is indeed an experience which needs to be interpreted, and that interpretation precisely brings about knowledge of faith" (p. 85). The touchstone of this experience is life in the Spirit. But the Spirit is not the centre, for he is the Spirit of Christ. A renewed consideration of the role of the Holy Spirit in liturgy shows the awkwardness of concepts such as "essential rite" and "valid celebration." "Institution-Anamnesis-Epiclesis form together the core of the Eucharistic prayer" (p. 109). Thus the Church's sacramental and liturgical life appropriately illustrates the complementarity of the roles of Christ and of the Spirit in the realisation of salvation today. The last two articles in this section deal with the new christological studies of P. Schoonenberg and W. Pannenberg. At a time which has seen the emergence and death of radical theologies and secular christologies, Schoonenberg from the Catholic side and Pannenberg from the Protestant side represent a new trend which, according to Dupuis basically preserves the Church's faith in the mystery of Christ.

The articles in Part III are motivated by the actual situation of Christianity in India. In the context of the cultural and religious pluralism, how does Christianity look at itself in relation to other religions and how does it look at them? The ultimate norm of salvation cannot be 'Church-ianity' but 'Christ-ianity.' Christ touches the individuals in non-Christian religions not in spite of, but in and through their institutions and scriptures. Thus, for example the categories of Nirguna-Saguna Brahman and Trinity in Hinduism reflect presentiments of the mystery of Christ and the Holy Trinity. "These presentiments may originate in an existential experience of that mystery" (p. 177).

The awareness of the presence of Christ in Hinduism leads to a consideration of the presence of the Spirit in it. Unless dialogue

rises to the level of the Spirit, the partners will never meet. True dialogue is "a spiritual communion arising from a shared experience of God in his Spirit" (p. 203). In a last article in this section, Dupuis meditates on the quality of Christ's consciousness of his relation to the Father, and regards it as the source of Christian *advaita*. A Christian shares in this *advaitic* experience of Jesus. The Epilogue "The Holy Spirit and Evangelisation," written especially for this volume, stresses the supremacy of the action of the Spirit in the mission of the Church.

Though the book contains papers presented on various occasions and one does not expect to find a strict systematic development of a single theme in such a work, the present volume does have a central focus as implied in the title. The work throws some new light on the chrismatic structure of the Church. The complementarity of the roles of Christ and of his Spirit is a basic assertion all through the book. The Church is the sacrament of the risen Christ, which is realized through the presence and action of the Spirit in the Church and outside it. This is a vision which can transform the relations between churches and their attitudes towards the non-Christian religions. Thus the learned author has made a relevant contribution to the fields of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue. At times the language used to express the appreciation and recognition of Christ in Hinduism is not very happy, especially in the context of dialogue. For example, a statement like this: "A parallel study of the Hindu, and Christian categories should attempt to show how the former relate to the latter as imperfect recognition based on a real experience" (p. 171). Perhaps such use of language is unavoidable from the Christian standpoint. Another remark which deserves to be made pertains to the structure of the book. The first article "The Cosmic Christ in the Early Fathers" could have well been placed in Part III, since it deals with the presence of the word in world-religions and in creation.

J. P. Muringathery

J. N. M. Wijngaards, *mhm*,

Communicating the Word of God—Practical Methods of Presenting the Bible Message,

Bangalore : Theological Publications in India, St. Peter's Seminary, Malleswaram West, India, 1979, 304 pp.

Here is a very useful book for all those who are engaged in the ministry of the Word of God. This book is well got up with an

attractive cover-design, 39 inspiring illustrations and clean printing. The methods advocated to convey the Word of God have been so effectively employed in this book that even a lazy reader will soon be drawn into reading the whole book, from cover to cover. It offers to the readers practical methods of presenting the Biblical message in a way designed to appeal to the modern man. It is a long-awaited book of our time, meant to assist teachers and preachers of the Bible, who often find themselves helpless before their irresponsible audience, and cry out for new methods of effective communication of the Word of God. It resulted from the strenuous efforts of the author and is based on his conviction that the "Scripture should be both message and medium" (p. 23). The author's scholarly analyses of the Bible passages help to convince the readers that the Sacred Scripture not only conveys to us the Word of God, but also provides us with a methodology of effective communication.

This book has two parts. The first part deals with Scripture as Message and Medium, and the second part provides the techniques which are found employed in the Bible. They are presented here with systematic elaborations. It is pointed out that the narrations of Bible-stories become more effective if they are always kept centred on the main purpose of such stories. The book presents several practical rules such as the rule of specific and concrete presentation (p. 81), a thorough analysis of a Biblical story to realize the meaning of its cast, place, time, motifs, direct speech and suspense (pp. 100 ff.), the story-reflection-story approach (p. 129 ff.) and the visual impression created on our minds through colour, outline and movement (p. 145). Other techniques like portrait-reflection approach, the one-point example, motif-inspired exposition of a text, imaginative elaboration, simple-guided reading, and commentated-reading also help the reader to improve his ministry of the Word of God. The book also provides some model reflections and homilies with exegetical insights. This book, therefore, can be of great use to any teacher or preacher of the Word of God.

Lucius Nereparambil

William Johnston S.J.

The Inner Eye of Love : Mysticism and Religion,

New York : Harper and Row, 1978, 208 pp., \$ 7.95.

Continuing to explore various dimensions of the East-West dialogue, William Johnston's *The Inner Eye of Love* is his most recent

book since *Silent Music*. While *Silent Music* attempted to reveal the various layers of consciousness in meditation and prayer, Johnston's new book traces both the historical and personal development of what he calls, the mystical experience. He tells us that he has set for himself "the task of finding a place for mysticism in the overall discipline which we call theology" (p. 10).

Beginning with an historical sketch of the word *mystica*, Johnston locates the development of western mysticism in the pseudo-Dionysius and his treatise *Mystica Theologia*. Furnished with a number of historical Christian figures, ranging from the Church Fathers to Saint John of the Cross, the book includes numerous citations from Buddhist literature, including a two-part chapter entitled *Encounter with Buddhism*. For Johnston, "mysticism is a human experience limited to no one religion; it is, I believe, the high point is man's search for fulfilment" (p. 61).

Johnston, drawing on a distinction between *infrastructure* and *superstructure*, corresponding to the mystical interiority of a religion and the way in which it manifests itself historically, suggests that on the interior level all mysticism is a question and quest for love, being the most profound human activity that a human heart can actualize. He locates the union of Eastern and Western mysticism in this eternal quest for love. Coupled with his insistence that all genuine theology and religion are an outgrowth of an integral mysticism of love, Johnston seriously challenges any division between mysticism and theology.

There are three irresistible chapters entitled *Journey Into the Void*, *Oriental Nothingness* and *Christian Nothingness*. Johnston's juxtaposition of the Japanese *Mu* with the Christian *Kenosis*, which leads to an invaluable discussion on the role of nothingness in religious experience, is a genuine contribution to understanding the East-West dialogue. Also, his contemporary descriptions of the mystical life as a series of passages into the deeper layers of consciousness is a helpful updating on the phenomenology of mysticism.

While Johnston's book provides a number of genuine East-West insights, the book suffers from a lack of clear design or purpose. Except for a three-part section of chapter two, where the problem of mysticism in theology and religion is explicitly thematized, the chapters are so varied in themes that the claim to find a place for mysticism in theology is hardly tenable. The book is primarily a tapestry of various themes in Christian and Eastern mysticism, with an emphasis on the

Christian experience. Though Eastern and Western scholars of religion may find Johnston's claims a bit larger than his actual delivery, the book contains enough insights into the East-West dialogue to warrant a careful reading. Also, for the cautious Christian, who is interested in Eastern spirituality yet reluctant to seek an East-West synthesis, *The Inner Eye of Love* can be a necessary step in broadening the Christian experience.

Thomas Davis