

## Book Notes

*The mention of a book here does not preclude future review. All are published in Britain unless otherwise stated.*

Quite a handful of readers of a journal with an outlook like ours should be pleased that *The Dialectical Imagination* is already in paperback (Heinemann, £1.80). The history of the so-called Frankfurt School, recounted here so ably by Martin Jay, presents in quintessential form the dilemma of the left intellectual in our century. Quoting Jay, 'As Yeats reminds us, "The intellect of man is forced to choose between / Perfection of the life or of the work"'. When the radical intellectual too closely identifies with popular forces of change in an effort to leave his ivory tower behind, he jeopardizes achieving either perfection. Between the Scylla of unquestioning solidarity and the Charybdis of wilful independence, he must carve a middle way or else fail'. This is the story, spanning the years 1923-50, of a group of men—the only interdisciplinary aggregation of scholars, working on different problems from a common theoretical base, to coalesce in modern times—who set out to carve that 'middle way'.

One criticism fired at theology of liberation is that it tends to confine itself to broad generalisations and avoid 'wrestling closely with the texts'. The christological study by the Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff, now translated into undaunting French as *Jésus-Christ Libérateur* (Cerf, Paris, about £3.50 in UK), is quite an impressive attempt to meet this criticism.

Vol. 2 of E. Hennecke's *New Testament Apocrypha*, revised by W. Schneemelcher, is now in limp cloth (S.C.M. Press, £6). It is simply a re-issue of the 1965 translation. It contains the handiest collection in English of apocryphal Acts of apostles and Christian apocalypses—but not, alas, the Odes of Solomon. Apocryphal gospels are in vol. 1 (i.e. £3).

The most important additions in the revised *Creeds of the Churches*, edited by John H. Leith (Basil Blackwell, £2.25), are extracts from Vatican II documents.

Ralph Woodhall's *Followers of Christ* (St Paul Publications, £2) is a carefully planned handbook for the education of adults in the Catholic faith. But can live religious truth be presented to people today in this static, compartmentalised way? David F. Hinson's *The Books of the Old Testament* (S.P.C.K., £1.50; 70p. in Africa, Asia, S. Pacific, Caribbean) is vol. 2 of a 3-part introductory course to the

OT. Vol. 1, *History of Israel*, appeared in 1973; vol. 3, *Theology of the Old Testament*, is in preparation. It has a clear, sound text. Like all these TEF study guides designed primarily for students preparing for a third-world ministry, it includes questions, suggestions for discussion, project proposals, etc.

Burns & Oates continue to re-issue in limp cloth some of their best past titles. Among the latest are *The Everlasting Man* (£2.75), G. K. Chesterton's answer (first published in 1925) to H. G. Wells's *Short History of the World* and a rousing presentation of the case for the uniqueness of Christianity; *No Man Is An Island* (£1.95), Thomas Merton's fine treatise of 1955 on ascetics—much of it (e.g. what is said on spiritual solitude) relevant for us today; and Karl Rahner's influential little book of 1963, *The Church and the Sacraments* (£1.75).

The new edition of Geoffrey Parrinder's popular introduction, first published in 1961, *Worship in the World's Religions* (Sheldon Press, £3.95; £1.75 paper) has up-dated bibliographies. Also factual details in the text have been brought up to date.

In *The Charismatic Renewal and the Irish Experience* (Hodder & Stoughton, 50p.) Thomas Flynn sets out to portray the spread of Catholic Pentecostalism in Ireland between the end of 1971 and the beginning of 1974. He is adulatory. But two-fifths of his book is devoted to the American scene. Justly, perhaps. For, if Flynn's picture is right, it would seem that these Irish have uncritically taken over—lock, stock and barrel—the specifically American brand of Catholic Pentecostal theology and worship-style . . . which, at least when it is extracted from an American cultural context, does justice neither to Catholicism nor Pentecostalism. Bearing in mind all we know of the distinctiveness and creativity of the Irish genius, surely, surely we have not been given here the *whole* picture?

Now in Penguin, D. H. Lawrence's last book, *Apocalypse* (35p), is not one of his masterpieces nor a safe guide to Revelation, but it is a moving onslaught against the 'religion of envy'—the chapel religion Lawrence remembers from his childhood, so dominated by images of apocalyptic retribution—and his clearest summons to men to live 'breast breast with the cosmos'.

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