

them into a chain along which consecration, not only doctrine, is passed. However, the opposite tendency was also strong in the second century: the gnostics, the Montanists and Clement of Alexandria all emphasized in varying ways the importance of the teacher who, though he has no hierarchical position, has been favoured by the Holy Spirit with spiritual insight which he must share with others. The Montanists' denial of forgiveness of sins in its turn provoked a reaction in the third century; the bishop's sole right to re-admit the sinner into the community is now crystallized. Cyprian carries this view to its limit: there is no salvation outside the Church, i.e. outside the authority of the bishop. The authoritarian nature of the Church's structure is now complete.

The author's utter command of the primary and secondary sources gives his argument immense weight. Nevertheless, at several points it depends not so much on the evidence as on an interpretation of the evidence which looks suspiciously circular. For example, we are told there is no early evidence for the monarchic episcopacy since the Pastoral Epistles must belong to the second century (because they speak of the monarchic episcopacy?).

Catholic ecclesiology maintains that the position of the bishops and the pope is *de jure divino* not *de jure humano* (Vatican I; DS 3058, 3061). That is to say, it seems to be impossible for a Catholic to hold that Christ founded a Church with *carte blanche* to determine its structure, and that the papacy and episcopacy

are simply structures which the Church chose for itself to be the visible means through which grace and teaching should come from the Spirit. If one allows that Professor von Campenhausen's conclusions concerning the gradual evolution of office in the Church are correct (and it has been indicated that these conclusions should not be accepted without extreme caution), are they compatible with this traditional Catholic ecclesiology? Can a Catholic accept the suggestion that there was no church (not even the church of Rome) ruled by a bishop until the second century? In fact the theory should not be rejected *a priori*, because it seems consistent with Catholic teaching to hold that, though the papacy and episcopacy necessarily belong to the Church as founded by Christ, they remained latent in the post-apostolic generation, and did not emerge until the second century. If the author's conclusions are rejected, it should be on historical not dogmatic grounds.

J. A. Baker has translated the book in an idiomatic and even lively style (one sometimes suspects that the translation is livelier than the German). The original version appeared in 1953, and it is a pity that references to works published after the early 50s have not been included in this edition. It is a pity, too, that there is no scriptural or subject index. Nevertheless, the publishers have done historians and theologians a great service in making this magisterial work available in English.

E. J. YARNOLD, S.J.

**WITHIN THE FOUR SEAS**, by Joseph Needham. *Allen Unwin*, and London, 1969. 228 pp. 40s.

This book is a collection of occasional pieces written over the last couple of decades by Joseph Needham, F.R.S., Master of Caius College, Cambridge, and the world's leading authority on the history of Chinese science. They are unified around a single theme: the necessity for a greater understanding of China (and of the East generally) on the part of Western peoples. 'Within the four seas, all men are brothers'. No one, West or East, is better fitted to argue such a thesis than is Dr Needham. Not only has he a knowledge of the history of Chinese culture hardly equalled in the West, but his residences in China have given him an intuitive sympathy for—and consequently a quick insight into—the Chinese character quite unusual among Western scholars. Not surprisingly, since he is himself a scientist (biochemist) and historian of science, it is the

dimension of *science* that takes precedence in his analysis of the relations of East and West. He speaks as a humanist, opposing not only the 'supernaturalism' that he sees as the root of human intolerance and human indifference to social evils, but also the 'hashish of the scientist', the belief that science and technology of themselves will bring in the millennium. He speaks for religion as a sense of the numinous, allied with a social ethic of love and tolerance free from the distractions of transcendence.

The argument of the book is a far-ranging one that only a scholar of Dr Needham's immense erudition could propose with any hope of carrying conviction. Chinese civilization is older than, and until the sixteenth century was, in his view, in significant respect ahead of, that of the West. Its 'bureaucracy of

scholars', the mandarin, gave China a social structure much stabler than that of Western Europe. Thus the socio-economic revolution that (in Dr Needham's view) ushered in the Renaissance in the West did not occur in the East. And so the flowering of modern science that derived (he argues) from the Renaissance never came about in China. Thus, Europe began to draw ahead both in science and in technology; this provided the basis for a political and economic assault on China, and a growing 'superiority complex' on the part of Westerners. In particular, it has come to be assumed that science is somehow antithetical to traditional Chinese thought-patterns. In actual fact, this is far from being the case. These patterns derived especially from the humanism of Confucius and the almost mystic concern with Nature characteristic of Taoism. (The otherworldliness of Buddhism, Dr Needham believes, betrays its non-Chinese origin; he regards it as having had much less influence on the formation of Chinese thought than the two indigenous doctrines.)

Taoism and Confucianism combine to provide a strong basis for scientific humanism (whereas Buddhism, he feels, is suffering from the challenge offered it by the overwhelming naturalism implicit in modern technology). Taken together, these two native Chinese philosophies amount to something startlingly similar to Marxism. 'The perennial philosophy of Chinese culture was from the beginning an organic materialism which left very little place for idealistic systems. In my view, the leading philosophical thinkers of China throughout the ages would have welcomed dialectical materialism most warmly if they had known of it, and would have regarded it as an extension of the characteristic Chinese mode of thought' (p. 156). By far the most sustained piece of argument in the book, an essay called 'The past in China's present', is devoted to documenting this controversial view. The 'materialism' here is a this-worldly naturalism, rooted in the practical realities of the present and manifested in great public works, efficient bureaucratic organization yet a sympathetic concern with the welfare of the individual. The 'organic' character of the materialism is less clearly argued; the notion of Nature as a mechanical system was absent from Chinese thought, and society was regarded as a unitary whole in which every person had a specific function. Dr Needham takes 'organic' to be equivalent to 'dialectical', though two points he

himself makes might have led him to be cautious about this equation. Chinese thought was 'unitary'; it lacked the clash of opposites (matter-spirit, real-ideal, mechanical-teleological . . .), the 'schizophrenia', as he calls it, of Western thought. (Yet is not this clash one of the principal manifestations of the creative and dialectical character of the Western spirit?) And the Chinese bureaucracy did not work for, nor believe in, the continuous progressive transformation of society; yet this was surely what Marx mainly intended by the label, 'dialectical'.

Nevertheless, Dr Needham suggests that an important factor in the rallying of the Chinese intellectuals to the communist point of view 'may well have been a realization on their part that the metaphysics of dialectical materialism allied with the socio-political philosophy of communism is, in fact, the natural culmination of their own intellectual tradition'. One is not surprised, then, to find him assailing the attempt of Western nations to impose alien political and economic systems (parliamentary democracy and capitalism) on China, and trying to stem the development there of what is, in his view the 'native' system, dialectical materialism. In particular, he has harsh things to say of the role of the U.S. in Korea and Viet Nam, the latter a nation whose culture he regards as 'essentially Chinese' (p. 163). Only when the West recognizes the right of China to go its own historic way, a way which (he asserts) has never led to offensive military action against border lands, only when China is helped by massive technological aid to realize the vast potential of creativity of which its history assures it, only then can the mutual good of West and East be realized.

The thesis is a challenging and a disturbing one. To do it even a modicum of critical justice would require much more space than a brief review allows. But a cautionary remark of a general nature seems called for. Almost every essay in the book originated in addresses delivered to English audiences. Their rhetoric is thus a *spoken* one, a rhetoric of persuasion, often of passion. With one exception, these are not academic essays. They are sermons (some of them actually were first delivered in the chapel at Caius). This does not of course invalidate them; indeed, they are better reading than an academic presentation of the same theme would be likely to be. But when the book is considered as *argument*, as an impartial marshalling of evidence in favour of a case, one

begins to worry about the effect on the choice of evidence of such deeply-held and hotly-argued convictions. In this respect, two features of the book risk giving the reader the impression of special pleading: the author's constant delight in thumbing his nose at supposed Western claims to intellectual or moral superiority, and his inveterate tendency to stress the prescience and virtue of the East, with hardly ever a hint of any critical reservation. One can readily sympathize with the tone of these addresses when one remembers that they come from a man deeply versed in China's past

and present, who finds this past and present drastically misunderstood in the West. But one would, nevertheless, hesitate to use his book as the chief ground for making up one's own mind on the difficult and pressing issues involved. This is a pity, for the West is unlikely for quite a while to find as learned a guide to China as is Dr Needham. But perhaps he has done the essential thing by challenging our ignorance of a culture that quite certainly will play a large role in shaping the future of our world.

ERNAN MCMULLIN

**KONTAKION FOR YOU DEPARTED**, by Alan Paton. *Jonathan Cape*, London, 1969. 142 pp. 25s.

This book can be read in two ways. Firstly, as the outline of an autobiography, in the manner suggested by the excellent summaries on the inside flaps of either dust-cover—the life of a school-master who then in turn completely transformed the Diepkloof Reformatory for 700 African boys, became the author of the world best-seller *Cry, the Beloved Country*, and finally took a leading role in the Liberal protest movement against the government's policy of apartheid. Or, alternatively, it can be read as what its title evokes: *Kontakion*, we are told, is a word used by the Greek Orthodox Church to mean a hymn to a saint. And the saint in this case—a warmly, flawedly human saint—is his deceased wife, to whom this book is his own personal tribute. In fact, of course, the book is both, in intimate compenetration.

This comes through in many ways, both direct and more subtle. Directly, we have avowals and confidences of a simple loveliness, which will long linger in the memory. 'The joy of physical reunion. It was to me one of the greatest of all human joys. When I had been so long away from you in 1946–7, I wrote to you, *I want you to know that I have been faithful to you*. I landed in Cape Town. . . . Lanky drove us to the house, and the moment that he left us, we were in each other's arms, loving and wordless. I think I whispered to you, *shall we have a bath?* and you nodded your head. And so we made love, after all those many months. . . . I wish to write down here, that of all the beauties of creation, there is none more beautiful than the spirit and flesh of a chaste

and loving woman' (p. 80).

Then there is the style of the book: so obviously written under the strong impulse of emotions intensely felt, emotions of love recalled and grief gradually redeemed by and transformed into gratitude in the very process of writing the book. The rising and falling rhythms, the swelling periods and the snatches of pungent direct speech, are therefore peculiarly revealing of Alan Paton's own soul, both alike of a direct candour and simple nobility not unworthy of the Bible which is their common source. When the Bible has imprinted itself so much on the very cadences and turns of speech of so honest a man, the person who has been so touched, one feels, breathes a certain holiness.

And this is again the message of the mere structure of the book: it is composed predominantly in a kind of counterpoint between the reminiscence of the gradually unfolding past of their lives together and the journal-like jottings of the present after his wife's death. And this technique, uncontrived as it may be, becomes symbolic, insofar as the gradual merging of these two currents at the end is an apt signal of the new life which, on the penultimate page, the author acknowledges to be re-awakening in him, as 'from long sleep'. For the new life with which the book closes in a mood of grateful acceptance before the chastening mystery of life is now no longer one life only, but the two lives rejoined in one spirit: the *Kontakion* for one departed has insensibly become a celebration of conjugality resurrected.

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