

prosperous society of Holland seems not to inspire much criticism. In a word, the Church in Holland has not as yet entered the 'post-progressive' stage. The solidarity with the world has been discovered, not yet the non-conformity with this world. Nevertheless one finds some traces of the awareness that also the new ideas are provisional and open to criticism. Nobody is willing to leave the Church (the Dutch consider Charles Davis as a conservative), nobody abstains entirely from symbolic actions, the sacraments, and prayer.

For many people, Franck's book can be very refreshing, liberating and encouraging. It is a valuable book, but only if one bears in mind the narrowness of its scope: the registering of emotional reactions of 'avant-garde' Catholics

to a conservative terminology. A criticism of the book could be that the working method itself is not very satisfying. The reactions of the Dutch respondents are a little too short and pithy. Interviews with the respondents, or with some of them, could have been more fruitful. The second part of the book, the interviews with Catholics outside Holland, proves this.

There are two strange mistakes in the book: the initial of Fr Chenu is not N. but M.-D., and the Christian name of Fr van Dam is not Piet but Paul. Another surprise is that the author did not ask for thought-associations on the word 'God' at a time in which the 'God-is-dead' theology was still very much alive. Sheed and Ward have produced the book in an attractive way. ANDREW LASCARIS, O.P.

**MALCOLM BOYD'S BOOK OF DAYS.** *Heinemann, S.C.M. Press Ltd.* 182 pp. 25s.

'How do we speak of God without religion. . . How do we speak in a secular fashion of God?' Malcolm Boyd, a well-known American writer, answers this question of Dietrich Bonhoeffer by saying that 'God is the spirit of relationship'. He does not start by talking about God but by probing people's minds on the question of relationship. He approaches this with the awareness that the individual does not find it easy to relate. One of the reasons for this is that each individual lives in a shell which he can only get out of with difficulty. He looks in at himself constantly and often concludes that he is unfit to help others.

This situation has been reinforced by the Church every time it has reminded its members of their state of sin and their need for salvation. There has been inward-looking to the extent that the Church has become a 'segregated ghetto' withdrawing its members into 'the self-centred web of personal piety' (p. 97).

For this reason, Malcolm Boyd has deliberately taken religion from the Church and set it in the context of relationship—concentrating particularly on the issues of Vietnam, poverty and racial unity. He also considers the damage caused by using words as a 'sophisticated method of keeping people at

arm's length' (p. 76). Once we have inhumanly labelled the other we don't have to listen to him.

His treatment of these themes is in the style of 'Thoughts for the Day', ranging from quotations from other writers to shock tactics of his own—'Jesus had a penis' (p. 72). The thoughts are uneven in quality and some may be obscure to the English reader.

This critique of inward-looking is familiar enough in modern spirituality, but if it is to be discarded altogether in favour of action, the best of the tradition will also be lost. Bernard of Clairvaux expresses it here: 'To feel your brother's sadness in your own heart, you must first know your own sorry state, which will make you aware of his condition, so that you may help him through knowledge of yourself' (*The Steps of Humility*, ch. 3). It is by being combined with self-awareness that action is saved from activism. Malcolm Boyd asks that we should look for the people who live behind the labels and the faces behind the masks, but this means that we must first unmask ourselves. Ultimately a book can only say what needs to be done. It is up to the individual to do it.

JANET HALTON

**METAPHYSICS,** by Emerich Coreth. English edition by Joseph Donceel, with a critique by Bernard J. F. Lonergan. *Herder and Herder, New York, 1968.* 224 pp. \$6.50.

When more than 500 pages of German (more than 600 in the second edition) become 177 pages of English with only the very rare footnote and not so much as a *zum Beispiel* remaining, only those most cynically disposed to the verbosity of German-speaking metaphysicians

will fail to wonder *wie es eigentlich geschehen ist*. The editor says of the book: 'It has been condensed; an effort has been made to keep all its essential ideas, while omitting or abbreviating that which did not seem so important, especially some of the historical passages, which

referred to German philosophy, and most of the references and notes. The task was undertaken in collaboration with the author himself: he read every page of the condensed translation, he rewrote parts of his work for it, he suggested many changes and he approved the final draft.'

In the introduction Fr Coreth, Jesuit professor at Innsbruck, situates himself with remarks on metaphysics as treated by his predecessors. Wolff comes in for the hard words he usually receives from post-Kantian neo-scholastics, whereas Kant's 'pioneering efforts [towards "the transcendental form of philosophical thinking"] must be continued, the self-actuation of the finite subject must be understood in the light of its possibility, conditions which are previous to it and which transcend it' (24). Fichte and Schelling, the latter especially, are praised. Hegel (almost suppressed?) and Husserl (quite reduced?) are given short shrift, while Heidegger understands the phenomenological method 'in such a way that he cuts himself off from a real grasp of being' (28). *One* starting point is to be chosen. This is to be not judgment—though the spirit of Maréchal hovers over many parts of the book—but the act of questioning.

Chapter one looks for the transcendental conditions for questioning, and finds a pre-knowledge which, 'as the movement of pure surpassing and pure anticipation, is the constitutive condition of the possibility of any question whatsoever' (57). (Coreth's emphasis.) But pre-knowledge is always of being, so 'every question is a question about being, which we always already know, yet must always further inquire about . . .' (45).

Since questioning presupposes both a knowledge and an ignorance of being, there is fulfilment, actuation of the questioning being, an attempted suppression of the ontological difference between being itself and the individual being who questions. (Actuation, *Vollzug*, is one of Coreth's key words.) This is possible only if there is an absolute being: otherwise there is no identity of being and knowing. 'Being is never given as an object' (76), only beings are: but we can know beings only because of our pre-knowledge of being. Thus chapter two.

Chapter three examines the individual being (surely not 'being', without the article, as appears on p. 77?) in relation to essence and activity. Essence 'distinguished the existent from unlimited being by limiting it and from all other existents by determining it' (84).

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There is not only a logical but an ontological difference (beware: this is *not* Heidegger's ontological difference) between the act of being and the essence. Activity is 'the self-actuation, the self-realization of the acting subject' (91). A number of old friends appear at this point: substance, accident, finality. . . . Yet this is in some ways the most successful chapter. From this success, however, the section on the 'principles of being' should be excluded, as it is marred by some avoidable logical woolliness.

In chapter four Coreth, who works from the act of questioning, turns to the inquirer, of whom the question is a self-actuation; to man, in other words, but to man as that being which is spirit. 'As a spirit, the finite spirit reaches out towards the infinity of being. But as finite, the finite spirit can never catch up with the infinite range of the horizon of being' (106). This good chapter too is marred, by a rather confusing and confused treatment of analogous and univocal concepts.

Chapter five takes Coreth into an 'explication', in effect, of conclusions of chapter one. Questioning demands being as one, as true, as good, as a condition of its possibility. In discussing being as truth, Coreth distinguishes knowing and willing, which are both attempts of the spirit to realize a subject-object identity. When the identity is realized in the subject, there is knowing: when the identity is realized in the object, there is willing. At this point comes a treatment of 'the problem of evil' which is not only unsatisfactory but integrates very poorly into Coreth's overall plan. Equally jejune and forced are the sections on 'beauty' and on 'freedom and possibility'.

Chapter six introduces the material world briefly, but integrates it well as a response to Coreth's questioning. The human world is less happily integrated. Free behaviour, love, intersubjectivity and historicity are sketchily dealt with: and not really according to Coreth's own principles; though the brief treatment of 'morality' (163-169) gives an idea of what could have been done.

In chapter seven the absolute being of chapter two has become the absolute Being and is also called God. 'Whenever through reflection we make explicit the metaphysically transcendent nature of the human spirit, we have a proof for

God's existence—or rather we have *the* proof of God's existence, which is the ground and foundation of all other demonstrations' (181). As for philosophy, it is finally 'sublated' into religion (194). This is not all: we 'should stand open and ready . . . for a possible word of God to man in the world and in history' (196). *Haec finis*.

The difficulties one normally expects from metaphysics are unduly augmented by Coreth's use of expressions like 'horizon', 'ontological truth', 'ontological difference', in quite a different sense from that in which, after Heidegger or Husserl, say, they are widely understood. Coreth's use of 'univocal concepts' and 'analogous concepts' may be another example of the same order; or it may simply be an instance of a disregard for logical or analytical detail.

The 'proofs for the existence of God' are a voice from the past. The act of inquiring, says Coreth, 'presupposes the possibility of an infinite answer, which puts an end to all questions' (179). This sounds a fate worse than overpublicized death.

The presentation of the book is good, and the proofs have been carefully read. But there is no index: and why, when only some eight references are given, must they be put at the end, on an unnumbered leaf? When the main work has been so ruthlessly pruned, the 'editor's preface' is too long for what it has to say. The Lonergan review article (197-219) of the first German edition is where those already familiar with recent continental philosophy should begin the book: but it comes from a reasonably accessible periodical.

On the credit side, the book speaks for itself. Coreth comes through this edition not only as a philosopher but as a genuine metaphysician, especially in chapters three and four. The tension (ch. 4) between the medieval and the post-Kantian views of the relationship of men and nature is very interesting indeed.

There is a less fecund tension, however, between the book *of* metaphysics which this essentially is and the book *on* metaphysics (which occasionally suggests that it was composed with one eye on the Congregation of Seminaries and another on the American college market) which it sometimes becomes.

LAWRENCE MOONAN

WRITINGS IN TIME OF WAR, by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. *Collins*, London, 1968. 302 pp. 30s.  
SCIENCE AND CHRIST, by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. *Collins*, London, 1968. 223 pp. 30s.

The publication of Teilhard's works in English translation continues steadily. The two under review constitute the tenth and eleventh

volumes from Collins alone (others have appeared in America), and they contain some of the most significant essays for anyone who