

to sort out sophisticated London intellectuals), I confess to a slight chill at the prospect of these bombs being 'acutely posed' (how do you pose a bomb *acutely*?) 'with a guiding compassion'; but what appals me is the assumption that, while a course of (guided) masturbation and multiple love-play should do for Hampstead, it will take strikes and bombs to sort out the men-women relationships among less sophisticated middle-class and working-class people.

Cooper's book deserves attention, then, not only because it asks some important questions about the effect of being brought up in a family, but also because he offers some terrifying answers, which, given his indisputable charisma, are bound to satisfy a great many people. It is a relief to turn from this 'manifesto for revolutionary social change' to Henri Lefebvre's eloquent plea for a 'festive Marxism', *un marxisme en fête*.

Lefebvre is a distinguished French sociologist, two of whose books have already appeared in English (*The Sociology of Marx* and *Dialectical Materialism*). There are some oddities in the translation: I was bemused for a moment when I found him attacking the Communist Party for 'politism' (p. 195), but having re-read the word with the accent on the first syllable I realized that he was deploring their 'politicism', not their excessive politeness. He belongs to the distinguished company of errant

French Marxist intellectuals, and I suppose the heart of the book is his argument that the revolution must be *cultural* as well as economic and political. Lefebvre is rather like a Richard Hoggart or a Raymond Williams who has never been submitted to the discipline and the particularity of judgment implicit in the post-Leavis world. In fact he often sounds exactly like McLuhan. Some of his generalizations are astonishing ('We cannot close our eyes to the fact that whole nations are bored, while others are sinking into a boredom at zero point', p. 186). His definition of the sense in which our own society is 'terrorist' (p. 147) is very close to Herbert Marcuse's, as is also his final vision of 'the city as play' and 'the Festival rediscovered' (p. 206). I find Marcuse more rewarding—believe it or not, less abstract and less ponderous; but even if one never knows quite what he is saying (a sentence at random will illustrate what I mean: 'Our object is, in fact, to expose the non-quotidian as the quotidian in disguise, returning to the quotidian to hide it from itself; this operation is carried out to perfection by means of language consumption (or metalanguage consumption), more successfully even than by means of display consumption, which in any case it assists', p. 142), I certainly feel a good deal safer contemplating Lefebvre's festive Marxism than playing Cooper's anti-family game. FERGUS KERR, O.P.

**FAITH AND PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY**, by D. Z. Phillips. *Routledge and Kegan Paul*, London, 1970. 277 pp. £2.50.

This is a thoughtful and thought-provoking collection of papers by a writer who has tried, consistently, to bring Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy to bear on the Philosophy of Religion. The reader who comes to them for the first time should find them refreshingly different. It is likely that the argument will appear elusive at times, but if he perseveres in its pursuit he may well find the effort philosophically rewarding.

It is widely assumed that it is the philosopher's task, with respect to religious beliefs, to examine and evaluate the reasons that can be urged in their support. And it is this assumption that Phillips is most concerned to discredit: hence the difficulty. In challenging the basic assumption of so much Philosophy of Religion, he has laid himself open to the charge of irrationalism in religion, or fideism—albeit up-to-the-minute 'Wittgensteinian fideism'. A careful reading of these papers should make it difficult to sustain this charge.

As Phillips conceives it, the role of the philosopher is not to justify—or disqualify—religious beliefs, but to understand them. His investigation is, in Wittgenstein's phrase, 'grammatical'. His task is to discover and describe the rules which are operative in a particular language practice (or language game), and make explicit the connexions which obtain, or may obtain, between concepts employed in that context.

The first casualty of such an approach is the assumption that 'religious belief' is, like any 'belief', a poor relation of 'knowledge'. Instead of assuming that 'belief' *must* mean a state of mind approximating to knowledge—a conjecture or hypothesis, more or less well founded—Phillips' counsel is to assume no more than that a religious belief is religious. In other words, don't think 'belief' must mean this or that: look and see what it does mean in the context proper to it.

Simple and salutary as this advice seems to

be, it is fraught with difficulties. An objection which immediately arises is the following: religious belief is no doubt best understood in its own context, but surely its truth—or credibility—must be established independently? The major part of his argument is taken up with showing the confusion on which this objection rests.

To ask for an independent, non-religious justification of religion is, he argues, like asking for an independent, non-scientific justification of science. It is another example of seeking justification beyond the stage where it makes sense to do so: like asking 'Why be good rather than evil?', or 'Why bother about the truth?'. The believer who is pressed to give an account of his belief, and to show that it is credible, or not without foundation, will find himself trying to do justice to a whole way of life, and a whole way of looking at life. He will be taken up with the attempt to give a true account of the values to which he subscribes, not only in thought but in fact; and the criteria by which he determines what is true and false, what is right and wrong in this context, will themselves be integral to, and definitive of, his faith.

Phillips is particularly concerned, at this

point, to emphasize that he is not seeking to *protect* religion from philosophy. He is simply stressing that the philosopher's brief is to *understand* the religious man and his way of looking at things; and he will succeed in this only if he takes pains to study the form of life—the social context, living tradition, behaviour pattern—which is the total framework in which the religious man thinks. And he wisely reminds the philosopher that it is by their fruits he will know them, not by the accounts (often philosophically confused) that believers give of their faith.

Phillips' treatment of this vexed and much-confused question of the relationship between faith and reason does not lend itself to brief summary. One should go on from here to consider the relationship between language games and forms of life, and to notice how he proposes 'love' as a better key to the grammar of 'belief' than 'knowledge'. Which is only to say that one should go on from here to read the book. Besides Wittgenstein, the reader will find the spirit of Kierkegaard breathing new life into a discussion that is still not fully recovered from the winter of Logical Positivism.

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**VOCATION AND FORMATION and CONSECRATION AND VOWS**, by E. F. O'Doherty. *Gill and Macmillan*, 1971. £1.50 each.

A reviewer's lot is not—often—a happy one. Books have to be evaluated, as St Augustine pointed out, in respect of the merits or demerits of their contents, not of their authors. Nevertheless, it grieves me, knowing what an immense amount of good work Dr O'Doherty does for the health and happiness of religious, to say that I find his two books very bad indeed.

If one can disassociate the psychology from the theology and philosophy in their pages, there are perhaps a few useful pickings to be had. For example, the chapter on feminine psychology argues very strongly that the differences between men and women 'which we have traditionally assumed to be innate are in fact psycho-cultural artefacts . . . stereotypes formed by a particular culture and projected on to girls'. Also the discussion on the 'middle years' could stimulate religious of the 'B' generation to live more productively and imaginatively.

However, not only does a large part of both books consist of theological reflections on religious life, but the author's theological and philosophical viewpoints inevitably colour and

direct his psychology. The theology I found on the whole to be obscure, arbitrary and sometimes incredible nonsense.

For example, the question is asked: 'How does religious life differ from the lay apostolate?' The answer given is that just as 'the very breathing of a baptized child is different from that of an unbaptized child, though not in any visible dimension(!) . . . so the sacred acts of a consecrated person show forth the glory of God in ways nothing else can'. Of course, as baptism itself is a fairly big deal, 'there are ways in which the actions of lay people can be said to be sacred, but they are not sacred in the sense of consecrated and set apart'. And if you object, dear lay persons, then you simply evince a lack of faith because, you see, 'there is no way of proving all this by evidence'. As a matter of fact, 'in the visible, tangible dimension the act of the lay person may be measurably better than the act of the consecrated person . . . yet what the Sister is doing is immeasurably more valuable in the order of faith because of its sacred nature'. It is particularly consoling to read that, as a religious, I am not quite but almost transubstantiated.