

afford pleasure or enjoyment; 'the employment of art as a dispenser of solace' is a 'perverse bourgeois practice' (p. 2) and 'a compensation for everyday life under capitalism' (p. 461), which is a prostitution of art. We are told that 'people enjoy works of art the less, the more they know about them, and vice versa', and that 'if you ask a musician if he enjoys playing his instrument, he will probably reply: "I hate it"' (p. 19). This again is breath-taking; I have by me just two books on instrumental technique and each in its chapter on 'Practice' makes the same point: 'You may, even when playing quite by yourself, be too carried away by the musical pleasure of what you are doing to listen critically enough to small technical points' (Evelyn Rothwell in *Oboe Technique*); 'Many players spend time simply playing through one piece of music after another: enjoyable though this may be it is less profitable ... than systematic practice' (Rowland-Jones in *Recorder Technique*). But it is not only the pleasure which is a mistaken function of art; Kant's disinterested delight is also too subjective, for the justification of art must be 'objective'. All subjective considerations are unimportant, including the feelings of the artist: 'the manifestation of subjectivity in the result, i.e. the work of art, tends to be immaterial' (p. 85).

I do not find Adorno's book 'objective' justification of art easy to understand; it seems that the essential thing about works of art is their truth; 'works of art do not lie; what they say is literally true' (p. 8) and it is this truth that (rather irrelevantly) gains the subjective admiration of the observer. I do not doubt that Adorno means something by this, but what it is I do not know, I cannot imagine what could be meant by saying that a sonata or an abstract painting was literally true. David Pole once wrote: "to be sure I can imagine that a critic of a certain sort who, looking at a porcelain vase, should exclaim 'How true!' or 'What moral insight!'. But I fear I should not wait to hear how he would go on". But I do not think that we can dismiss Adorno quite so easily for he is clearly a sensitive man, an intelligent man and a learned man. From time to time he allows himself to speak in a simple way and to say, nonetheless, something profound. Certainly the reader of this book will find much to enlighten and interest him; and quite possibly he may make more of the grandiloquent theses than I.

It should be added that Adorno died before he had made a definitive version of this work. It was edited by Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, who have published as appendices those fragments which had not been incorporated into the text by the author himself. Judging from the evidence of the published English text alone, both they and the translator, C. Lenhardt, have performed what must have been a very demanding task thoroughly and well.

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CHRISTIANS AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM (Patterns in the Christian theology of religions) by Alan Race. S.C.M. 1983 £5.95.

The appearance of a book on this subject is long overdue. It is more welcome because it presents a large amount of complex material in a lucid and comprehensible way. The first four chapters set out the problem which faces Christianity as a result of modern advances in the knowledge of other religions. In the face of an increasing awareness of similarities, as well as differences, between the major world religions, this is a problem which cannot be shelved but must be tackled. Christian theology has traditionally made an absolutist claim over against other religions. This absolutist claim is closely related to the understanding of the doctrine of the Incarnation. Race outlines the various approaches to the Incarnation that have been developed in recent years and discusses their significance in relation to a possible Christian theology of religions. Recognising that "what is at stake is the 'finality' of Christ, a notion that is linked with, though distinguishable from, the Incarnation", Race finds the most satisfactory approach to other religions is the pluralist one.

He develops three typological approaches to the Christian theology of

religions—exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism. As an example of the exclusivist approach Race cites Barth's attitude to other religions as developed in *Church Dogmatics*. Exclusivist theories tend to see the declaration of the absoluteness of Christ, and therefore, potentially, of the Church, as an integral part of the concern to defend the total supremacy of the sovereign freedom of God to act as he wishes. In his discussion of inclusivism Race draws on the writings of Rahner and Küng. Since Vatican II the Roman Catholic Church has moved away from its previous exclusivist approach towards an inclusivist stance. This newer approach begins with a consideration of the mind and will of God for the whole world, as this has been made known in revelation—shifting from an ecclesiocentric to a theocentric view. Both the exclusivist and the inclusivist approaches have their roots in Christian tradition, whereas the pluralist stance is a modern development. The changes that have taken place in the area of historical consciousness in the last century are of key importance in this approach. Using the writings of Troeltsch, John Hick, A.O. Dyson and Cantwell Smith, he concludes that the important common element in all religions is religious experience.

Although Race favours a pluralistic approach to the Christian theology of religions he does not accept that all religions are equal. He sees the nub of the problem to lie in the question of religious truth. In the past religious truth was seen only from the perspective of one religion, but now it has to be seen from a world perspective. A possible answer to this problem might be the adoption of an eschatological perspective—the genuineness of any religious encounter being demonstrated from an eschatological viewpoint, since it cannot be verified by rational means.

In recent years philosophical arguments relating to the Incarnation have moved from the discussion of nature, substance and person, to the question of logical coherence. Action christologies, which involve concepts of myth and paradigm, seem to be incompatible with substance christologies. Making use of Schillebeeckx' writings *Jesus and Christ*, Race attempts to develop a theology of religions approach to the Incarnation. According to Schillebeeckx Jesus in his humanity is so intimately "of the Father" that by virtue of that intimacy he is "Son of God", so that in the definition of what he is, the man Jesus is indeed connected with the nature of God. Race would speak in similar terms, but places his emphasis on the moral dimension, Jesus as love in action, rather than in purely ontological terms.

An exclusivist approach to a Christian theology of religions in these days would seem to fly in the face of our knowledge of the religious experience of people of other religions. There is more to be said for the inclusivist approach, but it is only the pluralist approach which takes serious account of changes in the understanding of cultural and historical consciousness. To follow the pluralist path will make great demands on personal faith, for the acceptance of pluralism does not only offer the best opportunity for the dialogue between the religions which will be necessary in order to arrive at an adequate Christian theology of religions, it *demand*s dialogue and there will be many who will find this disconcerting.

A significant amount of the recent discussion of relations between the major world religions has taken place in the context of religious and multicultural education. In his remarks on the significance of religious experience Race touches on an area in the field of religious education which has been bedevilled by Ninian Smart's category error in describing religious experience as *one* of the six dimensions of religion, rather than as the basis for the other five. It would have been useful to have had a book such as this ten years ago to clarify the issues involved in new approaches to religious education. This book can be confidently recommended to those concerned with the problems of inter-faith dialogue for Christians and it should be a 'must' on the booklist of all engaged in training teachers of religious education.

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