

perception of God's will for his Church is shared by all its members. Reception by the laity, while not legitimising clerical decision, is the final indication that that has fulfilled the necessary conditions for it to be a true expression of the faith. But what is it—unanimous approval, or approval by the majority (and how is the majority ascertained?)? Rome sees the role of the layman, nourished by sacramental and other graces, as to glorify God in his world, to consecrate the world of home and work, to win people for Christ in the Church. This is ever more so when priests and religious have recently come in such short supply; many continental parishes are now run by lay folk. (Lyons being twinned with Birmingham, the Bishop has seen at first hand). Anglicans see the role of the layman more directly, as participating in Church government: by 1920 there were 387 lay members of the Church Assembly, including 34 women. The equivalent of jobs in the Curia are held not by *monsignori* but by lay folk. General Synod has a lay house. Lay theologians abound. 'The role of the laity is not exhausted by reflection, reception and assent' (General Synod 1985): so for Anglicans the ARCIC proposals require modification.

A welcome chapter on 'The Mother of God Incarnate' tells us how little modern Anglicans know of the veneration in which Mary was held not only in the medieval but in the primitive Church. The Bishop deals with both the 1854 Immaculate Conception and 1950 Assumption definitions, finding that they go beyond the evidence of Scripture and early tradition. He notes that, compared with the past, the language of *Lumen Gentium* 8 is 'very cautious and restrained'. Anglicans have, in worship and study, been even more cautious: 'as for the doctrines of the perpetual virginity of Mary, her Immaculate Conception and her Assumption, no mention is made of them in official Anglican documents...they cannot be said to be requisite or necessary to salvation (Article VI)'. Much Roman mariology seems not to conform with sound learning, but only to definitions resting on the Pope's authority. Though the formularies of the Church of England clearly state belief in the virginal conception, its members are accorded liberty to be agnostic about it. (Footnote 10 discusses the Bishops' Statement of June 1986 apropos Dr David Jenkins—amazing in a book produced in August!) There is the dilemma in reunion negotiations: Rome has gone perhaps too far, despite our modern understanding of a hierarchy of truths; and Anglicans have gone not far enough. The gap has not been negotiated.

The book concludes with a pair of chapters on ethics and sexual ethics, a necessary chapter on the limits of pluralism, and a long study with an Appendix (p. 107—20, 131—47) on 'Women and the ministerial priesthood', reminding us that the Bishop has been forward in that recent and still current debate. He believes that Anglicanism will accept women priests, and Rome will accept an accommodation to this. He wants reunion, and that is his prayer.

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**RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION**, edited by James P. Mackey, *Edinburgh University Press*, 1986, 217 pp., £12.95.

This book offers a rich diet. Some eleven distinguished contributors have been asked to focus on the question—is there a cognitive role for imagination in the specific area of the god-question? Produced to mark the retirement of the very revd. John McIntyre from the Edinburgh Chair of Divinity, the book is in three sections, the first of which is historical—from classical times to Kant. The second section is more strictly philosophical, the truth claims of imagination being challenged by A.D. Nuttall, and asserted by Mary Warnock. The third section has contributions on the prophetic, evangelical and mystical imagination.

There is an excellent introduction by the editor, Professor James P. Mackey, who in the interest of unity has asked the contributors to use *Imagination* by Mary Warnock as a

common point of reference. The only contributor to adopt a negative position is Nuttall who concludes that because imaginative insight claims something other than ordinary perception its arousal fails to guarantee reality. Keat's claim, therefore, that what imagination seizes as beauty must be truth cannot be substantiated. Warnock starts from where Nuttall leaves off. Citing Sartre's definition of imagination as 'the ability to think of what is not', she sees imaginative perception as the power to refer to what is past, absent, and yet to be; and citing Kant's 'all our knowledge of God is symbolic', Warnock argues that there is every reason to treat the aesthetic and the religious imagination as one, since it is the use of symbols that is central to the imagination. This argument has the congenial implication that to be taught to cultivate an aesthetic sensibility is to become predisposed to religious belief. Furthermore, Warnock argues, since a personal God must have a history, the story aspect of the Christian religion must be central.

Here is the nub—how, in the words of Dennis Nineham, do we mesh in our religious symbols with the rest of our sensibility? One obvious way is to bring our religious and literary studies more closely together. But, even here, the irreducible nature of symbolism seems deliberately to thwart a simple enmeshment. Symbols are like the untamed creatures of the wild wood who, for the enlightened tower dwellers of Academe, are as hard to understand and make sense of as a dance or a street party. It is the obstinately primitive form the God-question takes which it seems to be the function of imagination to preserve. The more powerfully emotive and expressive our religious insight, the more primitive and unenlightened its form in symbol and story. Socrates dies the death of a gentleman, Jesus that of a malefactor; and the last supper is not noted for its conversation. The story of the empty tomb will survive all attempts at its reduction.

To paraphrase Coleridge, what the imagination seizes upon is what, if we accept it, extends our consciousness: 'The truth is, we stop in the sense of Life just when we are not forced to go on—and then adopt a permission of our feelings for a precept of our Reason.' For Coleridge, the extenders of consciousness are sorrow, sickness, poetry and religion.

JOHN COULSON

**A HISTORY OF ANCIENT ISRAEL AND JUDAH, by J.M. Miller & J.H. Hayes  
S.C.M. 1966. Limp, £17.50.**

This history of ancient Israel and Judah is enormously valuable for anyone wishing to understand what kind of sources are available for reconstructing what happened in and around Palestine from the Twelfth to the Fourth Centuries B.C.E., and how those sources may be used judiciously. It eschews the extreme positions of fundamentalism on the one hand and complete scepticism on the other.

An introductory chapter sets the scene chronologically and geographically, placing Palestine within its broader context of Middle Eastern history, a perspective which sheds light on every period under review. Black and white maps, photographs of artefacts and translations of relevant texts from non-Israelite cultures helpfully illustrate the points made in the history. Summary charts punctuate the narrative and focus the material.

The title of the book indicates that the authors regard the two groups of Israel and Judah as essentially separate communities, while, naturally exploring relations between the two in every period. The thesis is successfully maintained throughout. The book ends just before Alexander the Great's conquests because the history of Palestine before Alexander has to be understood in the context of the Fertile Crescent, whereas the subsequent events drew Palestine into the Mediterranean world, a change which brought with it major cultural reorientations.

Miller and Hayes have produced an ideal textbook for undergraduate and other courses of study.

MEG DAVIES