

document. It is a pity that we call it a 'rule', or even 'order', cf. 'all those who enter the order of the community shall enter into a covenant in the presence of God' (1: 16). Astronomical and liturgical calculations are only important because the loving service of God needs to be orderly. The Rule enjoins upon new members not celestial mathematics but the study of the Torah, God's Word. (Cf. Rule 1: 1-9, 8: 14-9: 17-). We are much nearer the heart of the Rule in the magnificent closing hymn which cites Ps. 13: 5 and sings 'the mercies of God are my salvation for ever', and which tells of a strong conviction of personal vocation by God who is a Saviour and from whom comes forgiveness.

More than a quarrel with Jerusalem Jewry lies behind the sectaries' fine conviction of the value of spiritual sacrifice, and by their 'plans for founding a spirit of holiness in eternal truth'. Somehow the whole *donné* of sacrifices in the Jerusalem sanctuary was to be replaced by an attitude of life and mind which opted 'to atone for the guilt of transgression and the treachery of sin . . . more than by flesh of burnt offerings and the fat of sacrifice' (9: 3 and 4). In phrases such as these we are surely much nearer the whole tone and true meaning of the Rule.

ROLAND POTTER, O.P

MAN'S PLACE IN NATURE by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. *Collins* 1966. pp. 124, 18s.

HOMINISATION: THE EVOLUTIONARY ORIGIN OF MAN AS A THEOLOGICAL PROBLEM by Karl Rahner. *Herder-Burns and Oates*, 1965. pp. 119, 15s.

The popularity of Teilhard continues to grow in spite of the devastating reviews from the specialists which greeted the *Phenomenon of Man*. What makes him so irritating to the specialist and so interesting to the layman is his disregard for the established boundaries between the disciplines. But the layman feels quite rightly that anyone who offers to satisfy the fundamental thirst for a unified understanding of reality is worth a hearing. The appeal of his message is felt particularly by those who find themselves unable to accept the spiritualities of pre-scientific ages, yet who still look to Christianity for a revelation of meaning.

A further source of irritation to the specialist is the fact that there are a good many patches of indisputable nonsense in Teilhard's writings. But there are also a good many indisputably genuine insights which are important enough for everyone's attention.

This present work was written some ten years after the *Phenomenon of Man*. Some of the nonsense is still there but the message is clearer for being briefer and less encumbered with neologisms. Much of the imagery sounds convincing especially in the account of hominid evolution and the special characteristics of man as a biological group. He has developed the interesting image of the races of a rapidly developing group as a 'fascicle' of 'leaves' united to a common stock and developing along directions which are parallel in some respects but divergent in others. This is typified by the early hominid races radiating out from centres in Africa and S.E. Asia. They seem to have developed along

the same lines both in tool-using and brain development. Only in *Homo sapiens*, as in a kind of 'leading shoot', were these trends brought to perfection. What is remarkable about the human fascicle is the extreme rapidity of differentiation and expansion of races. Like the radii on a spherical surface they appear to have been diverging while in fact they were destined to converge because of their powers of communication and the shape and size of the earth. Teilhard sees the later stages of the process as a kind of social thermodynamics in which the critical pressure of races has brought about transitions to new states of organisation. These are characterised chiefly by increases of consciousness and invention. 'Compress some vitalised matter and you will see it reorganise itself'. This is an attractive idea. Certainly, advanced social co-operation and research are the two great necessities created by population pressure. Whether these will lead us on to further cycles of compression and changes of state remains to be seen. The work of Teilhard should at least give an imaginative impulse to social philosophy.

The biggest question remaining for a reader of Teilhard is: what does he see as the moving principle of cosmic evolution? One answer is God, but he gives some indication in the text that he is worried by the difficulty of connecting inorganic, biological and social evolution in one history. Since he was by no means a philosopher or a theologian in the conventional sense we must look elsewhere for a proper treatment of the problems raised by his work.

Rahner provides a very scholarly and worth-

while essay in this field in his *Quaestio Disputata* on Hominisation. The greatest difficulty for a unified concept of evolution is the church's insistence that man as such was specially created by God. For all kinds of reasons spirit may not be derived from matter. So the tendency has been for us to think of man's appearance as a miraculous intervention of God quite different from his creative activity in the rest of nature. The soul of man is often conceived as a late inhabitant of a body prepared by evolutionary processes. Rahner shows clearly that this view is a lazy dualist compromise and that the church's statement is not a conclusion but a principle that engenders many problems. For it is also necessary to hold that man is a substantial unity, so that any statement about his body implies one about his soul and vice versa. In view of the Incarnation, among other things, 'Ecclesiastical theology has never been swift and eager to accept a proffered harmonisation of science and belief which delivers the body to science in order to save at least the soul for theology'. In the Christian tradition the finite spiritual order is to be thought of as completely involved with the material order such that matter is for the outward expression and self-revealing of personal spirit, and the perfection of one involves the perfection of the other. Therefore any statement about the evolution of man's body is a statement about the 'pre-history' of his soul. How then are we to reconcile these statements of Christian principles, brought into apparent opposition by evolutionary theory?

Rahner argues that man's creation is not unique in the sense of being different in style but only in the sense that what is produced is a unique creature. Certainly it is a case of a creature with a radically new relationship to God appearing at a point in time. But this can be comprehended by a metaphysics of becoming which sees it as an instance of true self-transcendence of the pre-human made possible by the fact that it has infinite Being as the ground not

only of its own being but also of its own becoming. It is the essence of creatures not only to be what they are but to become more than they are. There is no reason why, according to this concept, the rest of evolution may not be brought into line with the creation of man rather than the other way about. The earlier scholastic metaphysics was developed on the assumption of an immutable order of creation and so it is not surprising that it could not provide us with an adequate theory of becoming. As a result, the Catholic imagination has often resorted to a conceptual scheme of miraculous intervention when faced with a notable instance of becoming in nature. However, God is to be seen as the ground not of a static world but of a world in motion in which really new things appear and give meaning to all that preceded them. Although he does not mention it, Rahner is, in all this, supporting Teilhard's imaginative outline with some very solid arguments.

The first part of the essay consists of a convenient summary of the church's teaching on the nature of man and evolution, and a fruitful discussion of the relationship between natural knowledge and revelation. It is instructive to note that it is not possible beforehand to decide on a division of their subject matter and that real tension may result in a genuine dialogue between the two which has a history 'surprising and unpredictable to both and which really influences both, including revelation.' The second part is an attempt to define the literary genre of Genesis and what it states unequivocally about man. There is an interesting attempt to reconcile the biblical doctrine of man's initial perfection and subsequent decline with the evolutionary idea of upward development. Indeed anything that Rahner writes is interesting and it would be difficult to find fault with work so soundly based on Christian truth and at the same time so imaginative.

ALBERT RUSTON, O.P.

CREATIVE PERSONALITY IN RELIGIOUS LIFE. Sr. Marian Dolores, S.N.J.M.  
*Clonmore & Reynolds*, 25s.

Here is an optimistic beginning to what one hopes may be a whole crop of simple, accurate and straightforward books for the average reader, on the 'psychological structure which underlies the spiritual life of every religious'. It is neither over-popularised nor high-falutin'. The examples chosen by the author to illustrate her points will be familiar enough to anyone

living in a religious community. It is written in the kind of language we might use among ourselves, and strikes one as curiously 'English' – I had to remind myself that the author was an American religious. One cannot but stress its 'ordinariness'. Here is a highly qualified writer who knows how to communicate with those who need to benefit from her experience, and yet has