

The logical credentials of a policy by no means always guarantee successful practice. The patient and meritorious application of the experimental method by parapsychologists indicates, however, that the policy is likely to bear fruit. Pieces of the puzzle are indubitably being disclosed. They point, not toward a simple solution, but to an increasingly complex picture which at the moment exhibits no particular design. The psychological researcher is in the fortunate position of having ever more questions to ask, more points from which to attack.

It is in the sense that there are more problems to be solved rather than fewer that parapsychology may be said to be progressing as a science. For example, one would like to know why ESP is apparently inhibited under a wide variety of conditions. Some of these conditions are, attitude of the subject towards ESP and toward the experimenter, duration of the experiment, alcohol, artistic creativity of the subject (for some ESP tasks but not

others), the personality of the experimenter—the list could be extended. What is important is that experimental techniques are available by which psi inhibition can be detected and to some extent measured. One might also suggest that the ease with which ESP may be suppressed points to ESP as being a rather widespread latent mode of cognition.

I would like to have seen some mention of the recent experimental work with animals and an evaluation of the attempts to find physiological correlates of ESP. These are little-explored topics that are likely to be heavily emphasized in the future. A more extensive treatment of telepathic dream research would also have been welcome. The book remains, however, a splendid critical account of what psychological research is about and how it is conducted. Both the general reader and the scientist familiar with experimental methods will find it of inestimable value.

ROBERT HARVIE

**THE ABSTRACT SOCIETY. A Cultural Analysis of Our Time, by Anton C. Zijderveld. Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 1972. £2.75.**

The subtitle of this book indicates the author's earnest intent, which is to transcend Weber's insistence on value-free objectivity in the study of society, and recover some of the metaphysical spirit in which both Durkheim and Marx attempted their interpretive understanding. The careful delineation of its own methodological approach does not absolve the book from being almost as abstract as the society it sets itself to interpret. It is hard to see how it could be otherwise: the theoretical model that the sociologist constructs cannot of its nature come to life, and is not in much danger of being taken for reality, except possibly by another sociologist. Indeed, one is left wondering where exactly such an observer is to be located, his role is as problematic in its omnipotence as the nineteenth-century novelist, and, needless to say, considerably less illuminating.

However, many readers will recognize in Zijderveld's diagnosis a genuine expression of the 'social ambiguity' which he designates as our inescapable fate. He describes the present situation as one in which an increasingly abstract and conformist society produces increasing protest in certain individuals. This is expressed by withdrawal to privately meaningful spheres, or to action intended to disrupt the existing structures. The inner world

of total reality and the outer one of total freedom, sought by mystic and revolutionary alike, display a 'Romantic Absolutism' which characterizes most contemporary protest. The developing plurality of society since the Renaissance has brought man into a more and more alienated position, something unknown to all traditional societies, where man is free, because his social reality is meaningful—he *lives* society, modern man *faces* it.

This argument is passed, rather like a torch, from authority to authority, until in the final chapters we come to the remedies. Here, as the author points out, we are presented with the result of what he had put in at the beginning, namely the notion of *homo duplex*, a double being belonging equally to the external world of the collective and to an inner, subjective one. This being is neither Philistine nor Bohemian, neither a member of the new left nor a fascist, all roles which are still tied to the structure. What is he then?

He is Creative Man, and one must grant him some endearing features. He is a professional amateur, he combines play with seriousness and learns to live in society and master its forces by a change of individual consciousness.

The picture cannot fail to appeal to those of us who do not have any certain or radical

answers to our predicament. All the same, it will not quite do. The label-words, the theories and generalizations in which this social philosophizing is shaped, have emptied it of

conviction. The argument, while often perceptive and entertaining, does not finally have very much to offer.

TOVE REVENTLOW

**ST THOMAS AQUINAS: SUMMA THEOLOGIAE**, Vol. XLI: Virtues of Justice in the Human Community (IIa IIae ci-cxxii), by T. C. O'Brien. xx + 232 pp. £3.50. Vol. XLIV: Well-tempered Passion (IIa IIae clv-clxx), by Thomas Gilby, O.P. xvi + 260. pp. £3.00. *Blackfriars*; London: Eyre and Spottiswoode; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.

It may be well to recall that the *Secunda Secundae* falls into two distinct and unequal divisions, dealing respectively with the virtues that are proper to all men irrespective of their special states of life and with those that pertain to particular vocations. The first of these deals with the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity and then with the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. The volumes now before us are concerned with certain aspects of justice and temperance respectively.

It is probably true that for most readers these will be two of the less exciting and inspiring volumes of the series and indeed both the editors offer explanations that have a suspicion of apology in them. Dr O'Brien points out that by academic custom the theologian was obliged to adhere to the authoritative statements that he had inherited: 'the operation of the technique of authority, not only in the present treatise but throughout the *Summa*, often determines the language, the phrasing of problems, the argumentation' (p. xvii), but he adds that 'frequently . . . the understanding and interpretation that St Thomas intends is quite removed from that of the author he quotes, even if this be Aristotle or Augustine' (*ibid.*). He warns us, too, that 'the Questions here are not a "natural social ethic"; they are rather a theology in which it is presupposed that natural values of justice are presented still in the life of grace, and are ultimately transformed through the workings of the Gift of Piety under the Holy Spirit' (p. xix). And, in line with other modern students of St Thomas, he admits that the Angelic Doctor's thought underwent development and that his writing contains apparent, though explicable, inconsistencies. Fr Gilby in his turn admits that 'the author records without criticism the theology of his background' (p. xvi) and opines that 'his treatise would have been more compact and better proportioned had he been less deferential to his respected predecessors and less inclined to dwell on minor points. The student of theology', he adds, 'may skip through these passages, yet he will be well advised to keep

alert, prepared to stop and take another look' (*ibid.*).

In both these volumes two of St Thomas's most admirable characteristics are more than usually conspicuous. The first is his determination to consider attentively every conceivable objection, wise or foolish, to his own position, even at the cost of tediousness and repetitiveness. The second is his anxiety to admit whatever element of truth the objection may contain and to incorporate that element into his own synthesis. Only rarely does he say: 'No, you are entirely wrong'. Almost always his attitude is: 'Well, if you mean so-and-so there is no doubt a good deal of truth in what you say, though you haven't perhaps found the clearest way of saying it'. The method of the *distinguo* is constantly applied, in a way that one could wish was more common in modern writers.

Both Dr O'Brien and Fr Gilby have provided their volumes with frequent and ample footnotes, and Dr O'Brien gives two useful appendices on the distinction between legal and moral debt and on *epiieikia* respectively. Both have translated their texts with a good deal of freedom, as is commendable when, as here, the translation is printed opposite the Latin original; Fr Gilby's renderings manifest his accustomed verve and his gift for the *mot juste*.

For all their moralism (and how can a treatise on morals avoid being moralistic?) these two volumes provide a splendid example of the way in which, for the Angelic Doctor, nature is not just a foundation on which grace can build but is the material in which grace works and which grace, working in it, does not denaturalize but supernaturalizes. Thus, for example, having discussed the virtue of humility in Question 161 and the contrary vice of pride in Question 162, he devotes the next three questions to the temptation and sin of Adam and the penalties deriving therefrom, incorporating into a moral treatise a strictly theological theme, in a way that would have been impossible to Aristotle and which the Stagyrte no doubt have thought highly improper.

E. L. MASCALL