

two positions had been recognized and maintained. Unfortunately, Mr Fawcett, perhaps through a desire to give fair play to the holders of different positions, has not made sufficiently clear the contradictions between the two points of view, and in consequence has been unable to reach a synthesis.

The author's failure in criticism thus results in a failure in integration. On different pages of the book opposing propositions are offered to the reader without any attempt at either elimination or synthesis of the opposing terms. Thus on pages 249 ff. there is a fierce onslaught on the use of metaphysics to interpret Christianity, with such remarks as 'Ontologism slammed the door on personal relationship with God' (p. 252), ontologism being Mr Fawcett's term for patristic and scholastic thought. Yet on pages 264–5 the author seems to regret the desymbolization characteristic of the Reformation: 'modern man under Protestantism was left with a natural world devoid of any clear means of being the revelation of the sacred—God had been separated from the world'. But he has already attributed a similar result to the influence of metaphysics in the patristic and scholastic periods. 'The Church tried to maintain its sacramental doctrine of the embodiment of the divine in the things of the world, but against the background of doctrine

framed in ontological rather than in kerygmatic terms, it was virtually impossible to succeed.' (pp. 251–2.) If this had been happening from the fourth century onwards, why later ascribe the same result to early Protestantism, as though it was an innovation?

I must also protest at the way our old friend, primal symbolic man, who conceives of everything in a religious light is once again brought on stage, with, as testimonials, snippets from various religious systems. Surely by now there is plenty of evidence as to the significance of rational, technical, and even sceptical thought in tribal and 'archaic' societies? But Mr Fawcett has a definite taste for excessive generalizations. Thus as a proof of his proposition, 'Desacralization was, of course, accompanied by secularization' (p. 193), he states: 'The Old Testament prophets spent much of their time attacking the injustice of the law courts'—but this hardly proves the point, unless religion and a concern for justice are seen as incompatible.

There are, of course, positive elements in this book. The author, like Peter L. Berger (and this reviewer), approves of angels. The opening chapters provide convenient distinctions of the different categories of analogical speech. But, on the whole, it is disappointing.

ADRIAN EDWARDS, C.S.SP.

GOD EXISTS, I HAVE MET HIM, by André Frossard, trans. Marjorie Villiers. *Collins*, 1970. 125 pp. £1.05.

THE WORLD IS NEW, by Joel S. Goldsmith. *Allen and Unwin*, 1962 (reprinted 1970). 206 pp. £1.50.

THE TESTAMENT OF TRUTH, by Clarice Toyne. *Allen and Unwin*, 1970. 203 pp. £2.25.

These are all rather depressing, though in different ways. Frossard simply relates his life, up to the time of his conversion to Catholicism. The book is not meant to hold together, his chief point being that his life did not in any way lead up to his conversion, which came suddenly, indisputably and totally, within a matter of minutes, in a convent church. He did not *become* a Catholic, he suddenly found that he was one; the very few remarks at the end of the book leave us in no doubt as to the reality of this. It is an authentic testimony to grace in our own day. The only trouble is that, somehow, it doesn't actually come over like that. I think the title gives the game away; I mean, grace doesn't, surely, prove the existence of God. Rather, it conveys the reality and power of salvation, something like that, doesn't it? I find it sad that so much Christian argument (for and against) centres

on the question 'Does God exist?' often with the suggestion that God is really wishful thinking, opium. I can't help feeling that that kind of God is not worth proving, even if he does exist. Where is the awe, the sheer terror of God, the even more terrifying knowledge of his love, his forgiveness, his providence? Is it so obviously a 'good thing' that God exists? Is God the answer to any human question, and not rather the question that shatters all our answers? The Christian proclamation is not that God exists but that 'Jesus is Lord and Christ' and all that that entails. Of course, an experience like that of Frossard can be, in his case certainly was, a genuine experience of grace, of the triumph of Jesus Christ; I am not quarrelling with that, in fact I am not, primarily, quarrelling with him at all (though, to be quite frank, I found his book boring); my quarrel is with a whole kind of theology

(which has a long, long history in the Church) which displaces Christ from the centre of the Christian message, and works with a more or less deistic concept of God, only extrinsically connected with Jesus, and which, when it does advert to Jesus (as it does rather more often nowadays), leaves out the Ascension and Pentecost, so that one is left wondering just what the point of it all is.

This comes out much more clearly and painfully in the other two books, both of which are the kind of pseudo-spiritual mysticism which is all too familiar. Both talk 'Christian' language, to their own ends, which are not much to do with genuine Christianity; Mrs Toyne even, apparently, has the blessing of an Anglican Bishop, and her book contains a Foreword by the Dean of St Paul's. I'm afraid Bishop Pike was not the only one to succumb to the psychic charms of the Siren. It is some six centuries since the *Cloud of Unknowing* warned us that 'the devil hath his contemplatives', a warning repeated recently by Prof. Zaehner; it is high time that we gave heed. It would be tiresome in the extreme to discuss either of these books in detail; it is more important for us to notice that they both reflect the same situation *vis-à-vis* the gospel. God is more or less abstract, Christ totally so. 'We are really God fulfilling Itself as individual being' (Goldsmith); 'one's Ego is indeed God' (Toyne). Goldsmith specifically dissociates Christ from Jesus, in favour of a universal principle, an eternal 'I AM' which each of us should aspire to claim for himself. Evil does not really exist; all we have to do is escape from illusion (Goldsmith) and matter (Toyne). This obviously makes grace unintelligible, likewise petitionary prayer, as indeed they point out to us. Jesus is simply a great 'Master'. In one very significant passage, Mrs Toyne describes how excited she was to

receive a visit from a spiritual Master (via a medium) who had once been a man, like herself. She apparently has never even considered that perhaps Jesus might fit in here too! Entirely absent is the dynamic of salvation, an inevitable concomitant of such an abstract concept of God and of Christ. Gone is the central Christian pair faith and hope. And of course charity cannot go unaffected—Mrs Toyne lets on, unintentionally and *en passant*, that she is a racialist (a very benign one, I'm sure). Purveyors of this kind of spirituality all seem to belong to the same social and political grouping; I knew exactly what Mrs Toyne looks like, even before I noticed her picture on the jacket flap—they *all* look like that!

Now, I suspect that this kind of 'mysticism' would not pass as genuine Buddhism or Hinduism either; but that it should be able to masquerade as Christianity—even with episcopal blessing—indicates that something has gone very wrong indeed with our presentation of the faith. And isn't it really just the same as in Frossard's case? We have displaced the reality of Jesus Christ from the centre of our proclamation, in favour of a more or less abstract God; we have abandoned the Trinity to logical fireworks, unconnected with salvation. We have forgotten all about the Holy Spirit (as Leo XIII complained). Until we preach Christianity complete, bearing witness in the power of the Spirit that Jesus really is Lord and Christ, it is inevitable that people dissatisfied with our materialist and secularized Churches should turn to this kind of pseudo-spirituality, and think that they have found what it is all about. I wouldn't recommend anyone to undergo the tedium of reading this kind of book; but not one of us can escape the challenge they represent.

SIMON TUGWELL, O.P.

MORALITY AND MORAL REASONING: Five Essays in Ethics, edited by John Casey. Methuen, 1971. 208 pp. £2.50.

This well-thought-out symposium on ethics is the product of a good deal of informal discussion by a group of Cambridge philosophers whose work bears the marks of close co-operative effort. While they do not always agree with each other, they have clearly learnt from each other, and several acknowledge the others' contribution to their own arguments. The result, unlike that of many symposia, is a unity of style and tone which makes the book useful, not only for its individual contributions and arguments but because it reflects some-

thing commonly shared, a unity of mood. Instead of having a set of widely differing essays brought together by an editor whose job has been to knock various heads together, this book gives the impression of having grown naturally out of participation in a common philosophical quest.

This quest has two parts, as the editor explains in the preface. The first is with finding answers to the question 'what is it to judge morally?' and the second with the question 'what makes a reason a moral reason?'. With the exception of