

traditional authorities in the interests of clarity and coherence. The discussion of divine simplicity and the account of material properties as possibilities known to the divine mind rather than eminent properties of God himself represent a real advance; and the treatment of intrinsic value and purpose casts new light on the teleological argument and, in some measure, on the relation of God and goodness. The high metaphysical, a priorist approach should not discourage the aspirant reader, who, taking the book with a few pinches of selectivity, will find much that is worth digesting.

## Reviews

**MEISTER ECKHART, ed. and trans. Edmund Colledge and Bernard McGinn.**  
*Classics of Western Spirituality* (New York and London), 1981. pp xviii + 366. \$8.95.

Amid the flurry of translations of Eckhart's German works, it is a welcome change to receive a volume which contains substantial selections from the Latin works too – almost half of the material contained in the *Classics of Western Spirituality* is taken from the Latin. As the editors point out, it is only by giving equal weight to the Latin and German works that a balanced picture of the author can emerge.

The historical and theological Introduction is judicious, informative and interesting. The selection of texts is sensible. The sample of McGinn's translation from the Latin works which I tested suggests that he is a reliable translator, and I am sure he is right to retain a rather technical language, explaining difficult words in his notes.

The disappointment comes when we reach Colledge's translation from the German works. Unfortunately, judging from the sample which I tested, this is inelegant, imprecise and seriously inaccurate far more often than one would have expected

from so distinguished a philologist. And, granted the generous provision of notes, more could have been done to draw the reader's attention to significant ambiguities in Eckhart's vocabulary. For instance, to understand the famous treatise on Detachment, it is necessary to appreciate that *abegescheidenheit* has metaphysical connotations as well as moral; and the link between *einicheit* and *abegescheidenheit* becomes much clearer when it is remembered that *einicheit* means "aloneness" as well as 'unity'. These ambiguities probably cannot be reproduced in translation, but there is no reason why they should not be pointed out in the notes.

For the German works, then, it is better to stick to Walshe's translation, where it is available; and the four Treatises are all available in Clarke. The value of this new publication is in its reminder of the importance of the Latin works, and in the ample selection from them, and in the excellent Introduction.

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