

In so carefully categorizing his subject, Mr Hirn seems to me to have lost sight of the one really important aspect of art, whether secular or religious. He has forgotten that man is a *maker*, that whether he is writing a poem, carving a statue, painting a picture or practising any craft *whatsoever*, he is doing something profoundly important and unique, and therefore something deeply religious. In this sense, *all* art is religious, a participation, however small or remote, in the act of creation itself, and so Rembrandt's self-portraits or Shakespeare's last plays are as much religious art as Rouault's *Miserere* or Eliot's *Four Quartets*. Only David Jones, I think, among modern British Catholic poets and painters, has really managed to express this truth with any clarity. In a brilliant essay called *Art and Sacrament* he says, 'We are committed to body and by the same token we are committed to Ars, so to sign and sacrament', and 'For the painter may say to himself: "This is not a representation of a mountain, it is 'mountain' under the form of paint." Indeed, unless he says this unconsciously or consciously he will not be a painter worth a candle.'

Art, then, is not a means but an end. It is not the embellishment of something already sanctified and accepted; it is at the centre of religion not on the circumference. Mr Hirn, it is true, is concerned with one religion and its artistic manifestations, but his thesis is too narrow to contain the wide and terrifying truth that even where creeds are forgotten, art continues. And, to go beyond the purpose of his book, if there is something wrong with the art we find in so many modern Catholic churches it is because Catholics themselves have tried to make 'religious art' cosy, confined and, consequently, lifeless. Perhaps the answer to this problem is that we have tended to forget precisely what the Incarnation signifies. We have ignored the fact that it is dynamic, devastating, timeless, and demands suffering as well as devotion.

ELIZABETH JENNINGS

POETS' GRAMMAR: PERSON, TIME AND MOOD IN POETRY. By Francis Berry. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 21s.)

Stylistics, which especially since the war has received increasing attention on the continent and in the United States, has so far made little progress in Britain, where its very name still excites a certain hostility. Our best scholars in the field (such as Ullmann and Sayce) have in any case directed their energies to a linguistic interpretation of foreign literatures. Apart from one or two rather unsystematic studies of imagery, and the work of Professor Empson (whose essay on the use of the word *honest* in *Othello* recalls the methods of Leo Spitzer), little attempt has been made here to apply current linguistic methods of description and analysis to English texts.

While Mr Berry's book, at first sight, seems to strike a new note

in this country, his method of starting from conventional grammatical forms shares all the weakness of the French school (Bruneau, Schérer, etc.) and is already archaic when compared with the work of those named above, or of Auerbach, Damaso Alonso and Riffaterre. Mr Berry further lessens the value of his own work by slavishly and clumsily following Kennedy's Latin Grammar, which he turns into a Procrustes' bed for our language and for his reader. Consider what Mr Berry (p. 77) does to about twenty lines from *The Tempest*:

'Prospero's story has a life and authority which Egeon's had not. This tick, this life lies—some would say—in the movement of the verse. It does, but that movement is accomplished by the beat, variation, time-changing semantics (or meanings) of the Verbs. These change their Tense, Mood, and so force a listener or reader to change his gear of knowledge and to shift his perspectives. These verbs are, in the order he hears them: the Present Indicative (twice); the Present Participle; the Past Participle; the "ore-prizd" with its force; the Past Tense ("awaked", carries stress at head of line); the "did beget", a continuous Past; the pathetic Pluperfect "had"; "being" with its force beside the just-preceding "had"; the deceptive Subjunctive of the next pair of lines; the Past Tense; and the Present Participle (twice).'

Even such a raw grammatical description as this might be of some value, were the author to proceed to its analysis, but he does not. Even allowing for the telescopic nature of the writing, one can legitimately ask what on earth is a 'pathetic Pluperfect', or a 'deceptive Subjunctive', or what indeed are 'time-changing semantics'? Linguistic description of this kind, in such primary terms and without the slightest attempt at making a critical point, is as futile as the subjective waffling of scholars of sixty years ago, who at least had no scientific pretensions. The difficulty is that Mr Berry is himself a poet, and everywhere he is making elliptical statements. Consider this: 'Damnation is a state where the Subjunctive does not exist. So, from Act III sc. i onwards, the Present-Future time-swaying is different, and vainer.' What is meant by 'time-swaying' and 'vainer'? The first sentence is superficially interesting; but one could also argue that damnation might be an eternal Subjunctive.

In spite of these eccentricities the book makes very profitable reading. The exploration of tenses and moods and the uses of the pronoun is presented in a series of short studies ranging from medieval poetry to T. S. Eliot. Particularly valuable are the items on 'thou' and 'you' in Shakespeare's Sonnets, and the remarks on the Subjunctive in Chapters VI and IX. The chapter on Prepositions is merely tacked on. Mr Berry might have done better to have offered us separate books,

with more detail, on the main features dealt with in *Poets' Grammar*, but as it is his work shows great promise, though he still has much to learn from other scholars in this field.

FRANCIS SCARFE

THE STORY OF THE HOSPITALLERS OF ST JOHN OF GOD. By Norbert McMahon. (Gill; 16s.)

This is a story indeed, and well told by Brother Norbert McMahon. It is so full of incidents, as well as names, that it seems a pity the work was not crowned with an index.

What a history it has had, this Order of Hospitallers, with its saints and blessed, its heroes and martyrs, in early times and in modern (ninety-eight were massacred during the civil war in Spain), but also its setbacks.

Spain was its birthplace, Italy its first field of labour across the frontier, and now it is world-wide. Thirty years after its foundation, the Order was split in two, a rupture that was to last almost three hundred years; and for a while it was even deprived of its right to be called an Order. Nevertheless, under the providence of God it prospered.

'This is the flower that was lacking in the garden of the Church', said St Pius V of these Hospitallers. And this is the book that was lacking in the English-speaking world, and now provides us with all we want to know about St John of God and his Brothers.

R.P.D.

JOHN WESLEY AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. By John M. Todd. (Hodder and Stoughton; 15s.)

This is primarily an attempt to analyse the exact relationship between early Wesleyanism and Catholicism, and to estimate not only the character of its founder but the character of his spirituality. Mr Todd emphasizes the heroic self-sacrifice of John Wesley's life and the fundamental orthodoxy of his Christian message. It is possible to disagree with some of Mr Todd's interpretations. It is impossible not to admire the spirit of Christian charity that informs them all.

G.M.

CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD. By Arnold Toynbee. (Oxford University Press; 8s. 6d.)

Dr Toynbee delivered the Hewett Lectures in 1955 and chose as subjects the criteria for comparisons between religions, the characteristics of the contemporary world, the relation of Christianity to present Western civilization, and the ideal Christian approach to contemporary non-Christian faiths. These have now been revised and