

dependent personal acts-worlds. The fundamental questions of personalist philosophy scattered throughout Marcel's opus now receive detailed analysis. Such questions as incarnation, the 'pre-predicative', personal act, life-project, the personalist analysis of cognition, personal space and time, the human community, evolution, the God-question—in all these what Marcel illuminated and yet partly privatized, Fr Winckelmans develops on several interacting levels. For Marcel's philosophy arises from recollection, elucidating via privileged experiences a spiritual situation of estrangement and conversion. Fr Winckelmans' analysis, by contrast, arises from observation, communicating the personalist implications of an integral human experience. Marcel selects in the history of philosophy only those concepts which he sees as illuminating his spiritual journey. Fr Winckelmans can reformulate a philosophical concept (e.g. Aristotle's form-in-the-matter: cf. pp. 13-15) within a personalist perspective. Thus he has understood Thomism as first of all a philosophy of existence and so central to the question of the person. The concept of a personalistic universe is therefore no longer a private insight, but the means for philosophy, anthropological sciences and theology to enter into discussion.

In fact both books point towards theology. Dewart's enthusiastic introduction to *Problematic Man* sees it as a guide through the desert

of a 'God is dead' theology. Students of the theology influenced by Marcel—that of Troisfontaines, Mouroux and of Dewart himself—may be more sceptical. *The World of Persons* is expressly intended as a philosophical basis for a presentation of the whole Christian message (pp. 439f.). It seems in fact to hold out immense possibilities for theology. The concept of interpersonal space and time would provide a new basis for questions in Eucharistic theology (Mystery Presence, Transfinalization) never yet adequately formulated. The philosophy of personal community has never yet been adequate in the theology of the Last Things. Finally, anyone puzzled as to how to approach today the question of angels—their nature, psychology, relation to the world—should read the fascinating section on the Cosmic Persons (pp. 355f.).

If both books express the same basic idea, that authentic existence is interpersonal existence, they do so in very different directions. The heavy language, neologisms and linelong hyphenated expressions in *The World of Persons* bear no aesthetic comparison with Marcel's elegant style and subtlety of judgement. And yet the second book is the more important for Christian personalism. The first book is a commentary on the past, the second an opening to the future.

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FIRST THE POLITICAL KINGDOM, by Brian Wicker. *Sheed and Ward, London, 1967.* 143 pp. 12s. 6d.

This is a readable and lucid account of the nature and development of the Catholic Left in this country, and its relation to the New Left in general. As Mr Wicker rightly says, what these movements need is an adequate philosophical basis, and particularly a doctrine of man. In my opinion, what is required at this point is an account which mediates between the verifiable but impersonal theories of the behaviourist psychologists on the one hand, and on the other the brilliantly suggestive but scientifically questionable, and unfortunately mutually contradictory, schemes of the existentialists and those more or less in the intellectual tradition of Freud. Mr Wicker helps one to see the problem, though to my mind he is not looking for a solution to it in quite the right direction.

The theological question to be put to the Catholic Left is: is the ideal socialist society *an aspect of the Kingdom of God*, or is it *identical* with it? Now as far as one can see from the Bible and the Christian tradition, the Kingdom of God will consist of a renovation of the individual, the community, and the material world. Certainly it is arguable, and in my opinion it is true and important, that the social aspect of the Kingdom of God will be far more similar to the ideals of the New Left than to those of the Old Right; and hence that work for socialism is work for the Kingdom of God. But the fact remains that to imply that the Kingdom of God is *nothing but* the socialist state, however broadly the latter is conceived, is a gross limitation of it.

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