tioned by Grayling. But it is hard to write an introduction to a whole area of philosophical inquiry, and Grayling has done a good job. His book is informative and lucid, and it can be warmly recommended to those who want to start learning about its subject matter. It is less demanding, and yet in some ways more wide-ranging, than either Haack's *Philosophy of Logics* (Cambridge, 1978) or Harrison's *Introduction to the Philosophy of Language (London*, 1979), with which it is likely to be compared. Students and teachers of philosophy should both find it invaluable.

The same, I think, cannot be said of Nielsen's book (though having recently published a work with the same title as Nielsen's, I am open to the charge of bias). An introduction to the philosophy of religion, like any introduction, cannot be expected to cover everything. But students turning to such a work can reasonably expect to be told about topics like the classical theistic arguments, the problems involved in discussion of particular divine 'attributes', the philosophical questions arising from notions like 'immortality', 'miracle', 'providence' and so on. But Nielsen's book is basically an extended essay on religious assertions in general. As far as I can see it adds little to his earlier works *Scepticism* and *Contemporary Critiques of Religion*. Nor is it likely to be welcomed with enthusiasm by the many theistic and non-theistic metaphysicians who are now as numerous as their verificationist predecessors of the 1950s, with whom Nielsen has much in common. Nevertheless, Nielsen has a good line on his hobby-horse of 'Wittgensteinian fideism'. He should certainly be read by those who are interested in his subject.

BRIAN DAVIES O P

THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF VATICAN II by Rodger Charles S. J. with Drostan MacLaren O P. *Plater Publications, Ignatius Press,* **Oxford and San Francisco, 1982. pp xxvi + 569. £12.75.**

This useful book is the first major venture to issue from Plater Publications, which aims to assist in the study of Catholic moral teaching. The authors work at Plater College, Oxford, and their text is the outcome of several years teaching experience both at Plater and at the Catholic Institute of Social Ethics (founded in 1972), which merged with Plater in 1979. The book can be primarily recommended as a text-book. Its expository value is considerable, for it provides analyses and commentary on the social teaching of the Council, together with numerous references to contemporary writing on social ethics, and documentation including Council statements, Encyclicals, and papal addresses. Topics dealt with include natural and divine law, conscience, marriage and the family, and the ethics of political and economic life. The ethical judgments of the Holy See provide the principles promulgated in the text, and some readers may think that alternative principles are given less of a run for their money than the best of all possible books would allow. But the ideal implied in such a criticism is meaningless, and this book does much to defend its overall position. It also acknowledges the existence of alternatives and the way in which, at certain points, ethical agnosticism is both necessary and reasonable. Students of Vatican II will find it invaluable, as will teachers of moral theology and Christian ethics. The book is well produced and is very clearly written. It contains an excellent annotated bibliography.

BRIAN DAVIES O P

THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS Volume XX, by Karl Rahner. *Darton, Longman & Todd,* **1981. pp 191 £14.50**

This book contains about half the essays in what Rahner himself has described as his final volume of *Schriften*. They date between 1977 and 1979. Admirably translated by Edward Quinn, they repeat familiar themes in Rahner's repertoire. None is heavy going. On the contrary, age seems to have released him into a new luc-

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idity of style. Vatican II remains the great turning-point: the "caesura" in 1962-65 is comparable only with the breakaway from Judeo-Christianity in the middle of the first century (chapters 6 and 7). He frequently alludes to post-conciliar attempts to slow down or neutralise the changes. The papacy will have to scale down its claims (chapters 8, 9 and 10). The Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith "may perhaps show some traces of the influence of conciliar theology, but it is still too neoscholastic in its nervous opposition to modern theological experiments" (p 95). The arguments in the Roman "declaration" of 1976 that women could never be ordained are not convincing (chapter 3). Perhaps one day it will be possible to have freedom of conscience together with the authority of the magisterium in the Catholic Church (chapter 4). Far from its being an optional

extra it is the duty of the Church to promote economic development in the Third World (chapter 5). Catholic spirituality will have to become far more concentrated on essentials ("we shall speak of Jesus and not of the Infant of Prague"), personally committed, communal, but also traditional and ecclesial (chapter 11). The reunification of the churches around the papacy is nothing like so difficult a task as many suppose (chapter 12). Catholics today have to learn "to think and to live the Incomprehensible very comprehensibly" (chapter 1). Catholics must not be driven out of the Church just because they can make little or nothing of some dogma (chapter 2). The book concludes with a characteristic meditation on "the inexhaustible transcendence of God".

FERGUS KERR O P

THE PHILOSOPHICAL FRONTIERS OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: Essays presented to D. M. MacKinnon, edited by Brian Hebblethwaite and Stewart Sutherland. *Cambridge University Press,* 1982 pp ix + 252 £17.50.

Donald MacKinnon retired in 1978. A fine photograph (by Ramsey and Muspratt) and a list of his published writings (compiled by Paul Wignall) enclose this splendid collection of essays offered to him by colleagues, pupils and friends. He taught in Oxford from 1937 to 1947, then in Aberdeen until 1960, and finally in Cambridge. Stories about him abound. When pupils meet they soon fall to exchanging anecdotes, attempting to reproduce that extraordinary voice (Winchester and Oxford no doubt, but the cadence of Argyll). My own tales go back to the moral philosophy classroom at King's College, Aberdeen, more than thirty years ago. But he introduced Victor White to John Layard; Gervase Mathew and Ian Hislop were among his friends; he wrote the foreword to Cornelius Ernst's essays. So one could go on. It may not seem like it from the standard literature, but MacKinnon has been the most effective and influential philosopher of religion in Britain for the

past twenty or thirty years. But he has never had a "line", and he has been a *teacher,* rather than a writer.

This collection does him proud. None of the twelve essays is make-weight. Some contain passages of great beauty: Ronald Hepburn's remarks on mortality, for example: "exchanging, if we can, fear and resentment at the certainty of death for wonder at the life which it will close". Geoffrey Lampe writes instructively on the Magi; Christopher Stead scrutinizes the notion of God as "mind"; Nicholas Lash and Roger White, very differently, focus on questions about analogy; Stephen Sykes returns to the need for systematic theology. Moule, Cupitt, Bernard Williams, Torrance, and the two editors make up the round dozen. Well designed, and beautifully printed, the collection makes a worthy offering to a great teacher. It is also, appropriately, an important contribution to the philosophy of religion.

FERGUS KERR O P

FREUD, MARX AND MORALS by Hugo Meynell. *Macmillan,* 1981 pp xii + 209 £18.00.

This book covers more than its sensibly abbreviated title suggests. For there are chapters on Laing and Lorenz as well as Marx, while that on Freud deals with Jung also. The over-riding object is to construct, and to vindicate against opposing views, a

morality which is rational; and hence, it is argued, objective as well as non-relative. It is as part of this project that the author "summarises a number of influential accounts of the nature of man, and the moral conclusions which have been and

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