

of the emergence of our world as a matter of God's producing, appearing and peacemaking from start to finish.

Lash modestly describes it as "a reading" of the Creed. That is a fair enough description, if we take it to imply using the Creed as a kind of *aide memoire* to stimulate constructive reflection on some of the great central themes of Christian thought about God. But I worry whether there may not be a touch of false modesty about the description. Lash certainly hopes to oust "widespread contemporary misreadings" (p. 13). And these clearly include those who are said "to misunderstand the grammar of the Creed" by treating it as a list of things that Christians believe (p. 16). But is there not a false dichotomy here? The Creed functions as "identity sustaining rules of discourse" precisely by way of listing things that Christians believe. That seems to me to be how it was historically and to make good logical sense. It is entirely legitimate to concentrate attention on the former role, but that does not invalidate the other approach. To assert that it does is an evasion. Lash, and others who follow the same line, do so, I suspect, out of what I shall provocatively call an unconscious residual element of triumphalism. If we allow the latter approach, we are bound to end up as Küng does, in a critical attitude to some of the Creed's contents. We have been through it with Scripture, and we are reluctant to have to do it with the creeds also. But just as a critical reading of Scripture should neither be refused nor treated as a purely negative enterprise, but something that needs to be integrated into any constructive, spiritual reading of Scripture—so too with the creeds. Lash, I suspect, would agree, but my reading of his text suggests a desire to bypass the issue.

These are both valuable books. They tackle a central issue for contemporary faith with rough-hewn courage on the one hand and creative imagination on the other. Above all their juxtaposition is serendipitous. They need each other in the kind of way that the Synoptic and Johannine gospels might be said to need each other. Küng's approach could only benefit from a broader grounding of the kind reflected in Lash's creative imagination, while Lash needs to continue to wrestle with the sort of problem that Küng faces so fearlessly if his talk about Jesus as "God's complete appearance" where "there is nothing missing nothing more to see" (p. 80) is to escape vacuity. I hope that the critical stance that I have taken in this review in relation to both books will be seen as a tribute to their stimulus and a commendation of their worth.

MAURICE WILES

**AT THE HEART OF THE REAL**, edited by Fran O'Rourke. *Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 1992. Pp. 427. No price given.*

This book is a volume of essays in honour of Dr Desmond Connell, Professor of General Metaphysics at University College Dublin from 1972 to 1988, when he became Archbishop of Dublin. Few reigning Roman

Catholic prelates in England, Ireland and Wales have distinguished careers as academics behind them. Apart from Dr Connell, I can only cite the example of Cathal Cardinal Daly, who played an enormous part in the development of the Department of Scholastic Theology at Queen's University, Belfast in the time when he taught there. So this book is unusual on at least one front.

But it is also unusual on another front. It is intended to mark Desmond Connell's sixty fifth birthday. As the editor notes, "that is the occasion when a philosophy professor is normally rewarded with a life of leisure as the crowning of his labours". Yet the person celebrated in this *Festschrift* has clearly not embarked on a life of leisure. At a time of life when most of us would hope for a graceful retirement, Dr Connell is engaged in a new and demanding career.

The volume is divided into five sections, reflecting the interests of Dr Connell. They are entitled: "Classical and Medieval Thinkers", "St Thomas Aquinas", "Philosophy of Religion", "Modern and Recent Thinkers", and "Philosophy of Man". There are twenty six essays. The volume also includes a profile of Dr Connell and a select bibliography of his writings.

A notable feature of the book lies in the fact that its contributors come from many different quarters. As one might expect, a majority write from Irish contexts. Thus, there are essays by Andrew Smith (Dublin), John Cleary (Maynooth), Eoin Cassidy (Dublin), Dermot Moran (Dublin), Gerard Casey (Dublin), Maurice Curtin (Dublin), Gerald Hanratty (Dublin), Michael Nolan (Dublin), Patrick Masterson (Dublin), Joseph McCarroll (Dublin), Colm Connellan (Dublin), Richard Kearney (Dublin), Patrick Gorevan (Dublin), Fran O'Rourke (Dublin), Brendan Purcell (Dublin), and Liberato Santoro (Dublin). But there are also essays by Gerard Verbeke (Leuven), Wolfgang Kluxen (Bonn), Fernand Van Steenberghen (Louvain), Georges Van Riet (Louvain), Timothy Mooney (Essex), James McEvoy (Louvain), David Walsh (Washington), and Josef Pieper (Munster). And the essays by these writers make for a most distinguished volume. Its scope is impressive. And its individual contributions are uniformly of very high quality, as one might expect from the list of authors just given.

A brief book review is not the place to try to comment on or engage with the many articles in this volume (a lengthy and commendable review article on the book by Hugo Meynell is due to appear soon in the *International Philosophical Quarterly*). Suffice it, therefore, simply to say that *At The Heart of the Real* can be highly recommended and is a most impressive text to present in honour of Dr Connell, who will surely approve of it and be grateful for it.

BRIAN DAVIES OP

**THE PLAN OF GOD IN LUKE-ACTS** by John T. Squires. *Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993. Pp. x + 233. £30.00.*

Over the past fifteen years, steady progress has been made in locating the literary character and religious purposes of the New Testament's longest composition, Luke-Acts. From one side, a series of intratextual

426