

he pleads well for a re-valuation of 'waiting', he underestimates the complex processes involved, and the kind of activity that undergirds a fruitful dependence. I

think he would not mind if readers declined to be dependent on his book if they were stimulated to receptive thought of their own.

KENNETH GRAYSTON

AUGUSTINE ON EVIL by G. R. Evans. *Cambridge University Press*, 1983. pp xiv + 198. £15.00.

Dr Evans tells us that the following premisses are those of Augustine: 'that God is good and the author of all things; that all things are good; that man is the cause of his own troubles; that those troubles are an illusion – that evil is, in other words, no more than a deceiving appearance' (p xi). But 'troubles' are only reportable by referring to 'things'. So God is the author of 'troubles' and 'illusion'. And, since an illusion has no reality, both God and man cause what has no reality.

If this is what Augustine is saying, it is hard to make sense of him. And his treatment of God and evil is indeed problematic. Consider, for example, his teaching on freedom and grace. Augustine came to insist on man's need for grace in order to do good, but he also held that, when man goes wrong, the cause is man and not God. Yet even if (as Augustine insisted) evil is a privation, there are evil *acts*, which are perfectly real temporal processes. Now these are either caused to be by God, or they are not. If they are, then God is their cause (even if man is too). If they are not, then a temporal process can occur which is not caused to do so by God, and one wants

to know why God is required to account for any process at all.

Yet Augustine is an important figure in Christian theodicy. And this book is a useful account of his views on the subject as they developed over a number of years. Dr Evans has read widely in Augustine, and she provides a lively and readable survey of his treatment of subjects such as Manicheism, knowledge, ideas, truth, scripture, and Pelagianism. Since she also offers a fair amount of biographical material, her book (in spite of its title) may reasonably be recommended as a worthwhile introduction to Augustine in general. And, as such, it ought to be much appreciated by students. Much of what Dr Evans reports is very familiar, and she has little to offer by way of critical comment on the thinking of Augustine. But she has produced an attractive essay in the history of ideas. One hopes that it can soon be reprinted at a price that will make it more readily available to the kind of audience likely to benefit from it most.

BRIAN DAVIES O P