

tion of a festival for which there is no direct and unequivocal description in the texts. To set out the context for his discussion of Deutero-Isaiah, he provides what he terms an 'Outline of the ... festival' with 38 subheadings – a somewhat formidable list; but they are not an outline of a festival, since there is no clear order, and while the subdivisions are intelligible, there is a degree of overlap between many of them to suggest a certain arbitrariness in presentation. A grouping of the various themes would have given a clearer picture, since separation suggests precise moments where only a more general appraisal can be made.

The subsequent handling of the individual sections of Isa. 40-55, with which is included discussion of 60-62 within the following chapters, illustrates the presence of the same ranges of metaphor as can be seen in the psalms. But this is without any correspondence with a supposed order for the festival or the festal drama. If the order of these chapters is significant, then it would seem more just to see in them reflections on the meaning of various themes, rather than the following of a particular pattern. That the whole section is seen to cohere is proper, and a separate chapter is devoted to arguing for distinctive levels within the 'servant' concept as here presented while maintaining the interconnections. The relationship of this section to

other parts of the book of Isaiah and also to other prophetic material is taken up in a main concluding section, followed by a short summary and outlook. But the division of Deutero-Isaiah from the rest of the book, while conventional, does less than justice even to the understanding of the 'Isaianic circle' which Eaton propounds here as he has done earlier. The inter-relationship between the thought of these chapters and that of other sections of the book points rather to a more complex re-handling of older themes, suggesting that we might be better served with a theological exposition of royal themes in the book of Isaiah rather than with the narrower concern with Deutero-Isaiah. A certain looseness in the discussion appears when comparisons are made and it becomes clear that the texts being compared do not use the same language (e.g. p. 41); this may suggest either that the themes are not identical or that the supposed underlying dramatic structure is even less reconstructible than Eaton supposes.

As a contribution to the study of Deutero-Isaiah, this is valuable and full of insight; if it does not fully convince, it offers a real appreciation of the richness of language and thought in the incomparable poetry of these chapters.

PETER R. ACKROYD

**INCARNATION AND MYTH: THE DEBATE CONTINUED** edited by Michael Goulder  
SCM Press, 1979 pp xi + 257 £3.50

This is a much better book than *The Myth of God Incarnate* from which it arises. The original seven essayists met in Birmingham for three days to hold discussions with seven of their critics and this book is the result.

Brian Hebblethwaite, who is no less, and in fact a very great deal more, representative of Anglican clergymen than Don Cupitt (they are both Cambridge college chaplains), insists very firmly at the outset that the views about the Trinity and the Incarnation expressed in *The Myth* are not "Christian views, in the sense of views which the church could ever endorse as permissible variants within the broad spec-

trum of its official doctrine" (p. 16). He goes as far as to say that "the church ought definitely to repudiate those views", although he does not make clear *how*. Of course Roman Catholics generally suppose that "anything goes" in the Church of England, which is by no means the case. The Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure of as recently as 1963 legislates for offenders to be charged for heresy as well as for 'conduct unbecoming the office and work of a clerk in holy orders', and after due process, if found guilty, a priest can even be deposed from holy orders. The main reason for Anglican reluctance to resort to these procedures is the memory of the traumatic

experience during the closing decades of the Victorian era when clergymen were sent to prison for defying canon law by introducing liturgical practices apparently subversive of Anglican faith. It is not clear that Canterbury has much to learn from Rome about how to put down heresy; it may even be the other way round. But it should be evident that the authors of *The Myth* do not speak for the Church of England.

The *Myth* people and their critics are divided, fairly explicitly although apparently insuperably, by presuppositions which have nothing directly to do with the Incarnation as such. One of the problems all along, for instance, is that, as Nicholas Lash insists here, the *Myth* people have no difficulty in understanding the early church's doctrine. On their own principles, the radical difference between our way of thinking today and any previous way of thinking might have made them puzzle more, but they seem satisfied that the early councils formally committed the Church to monophysite heresy. That the human nature of Jesus has no hypostasis other than the Word of God could only mean the total absorption, or indeed destruction, of the human nature by the divinity. But proximity to divinity does not necessarily involve diminution of humanity. The doctrine of Thomas Aquinas, or of John Damascene, on whom he depends so heavily, is rather that the human nature (which extends to what we nowadays ordinarily mean by person and personality), far from being diminished or oblit-

erated, is rather enhanced and fulfilled by dependence on the hypostasis of the Word. "Conjunction with something higher", as Thomas quaintly says, "does not weaken, but increases, power and dignity". The more intimate our union with God the more human we become; by a union which is hypostatic Jesus is only incomparably more human (free, loving, etc).

The other contestable presupposition relates to what a doctrine – any doctrine – is supposed to do for us anyway. As Professor Moule remarks here, the *Myth* people keep talking as though the language of the early councils was meant to explain something, whereas it was intended only (in his word) to 'peg' certain convictions about Christ. They were negative convictions at that, ruling out, as the New Testament itself already does (cf Graham Stanton's paper), the idea that Jesus was *simply* a prophet or that he was God in the shape of some gnostic revealer of heavenly truths. But blocking off these alternatives does not give us any insight into what it is like to be Jesus. People do expect doctrines about God to take us inside God, and they have constantly to be reminded that that is a misuse of doctrines. In the same way, the *Myth* people seem to want the doctrine of the Incarnation to let us into the secret of how the God-man functions. And such a procedure we should certainly repudiate. But it does not follow that we need settle for a version of Christianity without the Trinity or the Incarnation.

FERGUS KERR O. P.

**ON THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY** by Frederick Copleston, Search Press Ltd 1979  
pp 160 £7.95

This book is a motley collection of essays only two of which have been previously published. And it must be said at once that, though there is nothing here to shock or stagger (apart from a horrendous misprint on p 102 and notification of Bertrand Russell's resurrection on p 118), we have in the text a useful and thoroughly readable volume marked by a sense of humour and by the balance and solidity for which Copleston is famous. The first two essays deal with problems involved

in writing about the history of philosophy. Chapter 3 is concerned with ethical and metaphysical views in East and West. Chapter 4 looks at some odds and ends in medieval philosophy. The remaining chapters are entitled 'Reflections on Analytic Philosophy', 'The nature of Metaphysics', 'Marx and History' and 'Peter Wust: Christian and Philosopher'. In all his comments Copleston, if not terribly exciting or original, is judicious, methodical and well worth reading. As one might