

to Marxism. The general reader, Christian or otherwise, who is not very familiar with Marx's ideas, their origins and significance, should find the book worthwhile; there are more comprehensive and perhaps more satisfactory introductions but this one has the merit of cheapness and brevity without becoming superficial or uncritical.

However, the more sophisticated student of Marxism will probably find the exposition both over-familiar and rather irritating since, despite the author's spare style of writing, he can hardly do otherwise in the space of little more than 100 pages than skate over many of the great controversies that have raged amongst Marxists and filled thousands of pages of polemic literature. This fault has been accentuated by MacIntyre's failure to mention that there is any controversial background to many of his statements and perspectives. This reviewer was particularly irritated by his references to the Soviet Union as 'state capitalist' as if this were an accepted fact rather than the particular interpretation of some groups (notably the International Socialists) and his side-kick at Isaac Deutscher, that great Marxist humanist, for 'allowing Marx's notion of revolutionary working-class power to be confused with the administrative manoeuvres of the Soviet bureaucrats' is a gross distortion which reminded me of MacIntyre's vicious attack on Deutscher in the C.I.A.-financed *Encounter* in the early sixties. Even where one agrees with the position that MacIntyre takes on a particular issue one feels his case is made less plausible by his failure to put the difficulties and objections raised against his own conclusions.

A central example. MacIntyre sees an ambiguity in Marx in that in some places he allows for alternative outcomes to historical sequences but in others implies that capitalism must inevitably lead to socialism: science is confused with prophecy and a trend is treated as if it were a law. Engels is given the main

responsibility for this confusion and for rejecting Hegelian modes of thought in favour of scientific metaphysics accompanied by deterministic and mechanistic formulae. Marx, on the other hand, while he was obviously influenced by his principal disciple and collaborator, never rejected Hegel in the same way in his most central development and, most importantly, retained the concept of alienation as evidenced by the *Grundrisse*. This view sharply contradicts the fashionable Althusser, who is not even mentioned, however. Refutation of Althusser's arguments are crucial: if he is right, that there is a sharp break in Marx's thought and that he rejected his earlier humanism, the acceptability of Marx's ideas and in particular the connexions that Christians can make with them must be seriously undermined.

Finally one should remark that MacIntyre is properly scornful of the attempts of some liberal Christians to demythologize Christianity: the 'essential' meaning which is alleged to remain at the completion of these exercises he rightly sees as largely platitudinous, because it is presented as a way of life in accordance with the 'liberal values and illiberal realities of the established order'; this serves to undermine the function of religion which is to promote radical criticism of the secular present. This effect of one sort of 'radical' Christianity has already been exposed by such writers as Brian Wicker fairly thoroughly, but it is good to have their analyses confirmed by such an intelligent man as MacIntyre, who understands Christian perspectives even though he no longer shares Christian beliefs. Moreover, it is heartening that MacIntyre does not believe that liberal platitudes are the necessary outcome of an attempt to realize the human meaning of the Gospel so long as, that is, we worry more about our inheritance from Pontius Pilate and Caiaphas than from Gnosticism.

KEN FLEET

**EUCCHARIST AND ESCHATOLOGY**, by Geoffrey Wainwright. *Epworth Press*, London, 1971. 237 pp. £5.

A study of the eucharist in an eschatological perspective, supported by a wealth of biblical, patristic and liturgical documentation, leading to clearly formulated ecumenical, liturgical and pastoral recommendations, is undoubtedly to be welcomed. There is, indeed, much in this book for which one is grateful. Nevertheless it

is, in the last resort, profoundly unsatisfactory.

Dr Wainwright describes his 'primary concern' as being 'to show how our understanding of the eucharist may benefit from the rediscovery of eschatology experienced in biblical and systematic theology; secondarily I shall try to indicate how the eucharist may,

in turn, contribute towards a sound eschatology in theology as a whole' (p. 5). To these ends, he devotes successive chapters to the eucharist as sign and taste of the kingdom; as pre-figuration of the coming of Christ in judgment; as the first-fruits, in the Spirit, of the kingdom; and to the ecclesiological implications of the eucharistic imagery which he has described.

Unfortunately, however, he overestimates both the originality of his study and the extent to which it is possible for one man adequately to master all the relevant material from the Scriptures, and from the liturgy and theology of all succeeding centuries. Thus, he concedes that 'a few theologians have suggested that [in the eucharist as meal there] is a fundamental theological category for building a whole eucharistic theology' (p. 18)—and refers to three studies by Pascher, de Broglie and Markus Barth, dating from 1947, 1949 and 1945! He asserts that the identification of the Church with the kingdom 'continued to be popular throughout the medieval West' (p. 45), and that Aquinas 'shows himself rather more aware than most of the medievals of the eschatological scope of the eucharist' (p. 172). In a popular work, such sweeping assertions would pass unnoticed. But Dr Wainwright clearly regards this as a scholarly, not a popular work (a judgment suggested by the inclusion, in sixty pages of detailed notes, of quotations and references in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, Russian, French and Dutch). Has he studied 'most of the medievals'?

The hymns of the Wesleys are an important source for liturgical scholars. Dr Wainwright is a Methodist, and therefore it is even more right and proper that he should give the Wesleys an important place. But, when we are told that, after the end of the patristic era, 'It was not until the Wesleys' *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745) that the Western Church achieved again a rich appreciation of the eucharist as the sign of the future banquet of the heavenly kingdom' (p. 56); when an historical survey moves directly from 'Maximus the Confessor' and 'Theodore of Mopsuestia' to 'John and Charles Wesley' (p. 73), then we may be forgiven for suspecting that some imbalance has crept in.

There are three major weaknesses in this book. Firstly, the lack of a sense of history. Phrases are taken from here, there and everywhere in liturgical and doctrinal history, with little or no attention being paid to their historical or cultural context. Secondly, some of the less critical of his own doctrinal assumptions have survived so extensive an enquiry remarkably intact. For example, when arguing that admission to the eucharist should, in some cases, precede baptism, he says: 'No one should be refused communion who has been moved by the celebration of the sign then in progress to seek saving fellowship with the Lord through eating the bread and drinking the wine' (p. 134). He adds: 'A man who then refuses baptism is not in earnest about his decision to enter the kingdom' (p. 135). How does he know?

Thirdly, his decision to write within a set of assumptions which he invites his reader to share is clearly stated (cf. p. ix). But, from within such a methodological 'bracket', how is it possible to make specific, concrete, liturgical and pastoral recommendations? Such recommendations must surely be grounded, not only in the inherited images of liturgical history, but also in the findings of a wide variety of hermeneutical, epistemological, psychological and anthropological enquiries. Otherwise, what is being offered is just one more abstract solution to concrete human problems.

I had not intended, at the outset, to write so ungenerous a review. There is much useful information in this book. There are passages of persuasive argumentation (for example, the section on 'The bread, the wine and the transfigured creation', pp. 104-110). Future discussion of intercommunion should take into account the provocative theses on the ecclesiological implications of the view of the eucharist here propounded. Had Dr Wainwright set himself a more modest goal, had he not tended to confuse the possession of a wide range of data with critical, disciplined, theological scholarship, then he would have written an important book.

NICHOLAS LASH

**PATHWAYS OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT.** Essays from *The Wheel*, edited by the Ven. Nyānaponika and selected by M. O'C. Walshe. *Allen and Unwin*, 1971. 256 pp. £3.40.

This is a miscellaneous selection of essays from the Theravāda Buddhist series, *The Wheel*,

which was founded by a German Buddhist monk, Nyānaponika Mahāthera, to provide