

to appreciate its deep historical roots (significantly there is no reference in the book to Dr Frend's study of the movement), and consequently oversimplifies the complexities of Augustine's relations to an important strand in the skein of African society. This apart, Fr Van der Meer has succeeded in getting inside the skins not only of the bishop, but also of his flock. His book is a major contribution to religious and to social history, a work not only of immense learning, but also of a fine historical imagination.

The publishers deserve the gratitude of English readers for placing the book at their disposal, and for doing so at a very reasonable price. Apart from poor photographic illustrations and a worse map, the book is beautifully produced. The sixty-odd pages of notes are—wisely, for once—placed at the end of the volume; but their use is made almost impossible by the adoption of a system of abbreviations which it is not extravagant to call lunatic.

R. A. MARKUS

THE TRADITION OF EASTERN ORTHODOXY, by M.-J. Le Guillou, O.P.  
Faith and Fact Books; Burns and Oates, 8s. 6d.

The title of the original French version, *L'Esprit de l'orthodoxie grecque et russe*, gives a clearer indication of the scope of this study. Père Le Guillou has confined it to the Byzantine rite and the Greek and Russian Churches in particular, and he has reduced the historical content to a minimum, in order to place the Eastern Orthodox Church in the contemporary ecumenical picture, within the compass of a small book.

In the first part he sets out to show that the whole spiritual life of the Orthodox Church is bound up with the great theological themes of the patristic age. The treatment is inevitably rather general and fragmentary but the point is important: too often in recent years books about the Orthodox Church have concentrated on the more peripheral and esoteric aspects of Orthodox spirituality.

There is a very useful chapter on the estrangement between East and West, and the final chapter on the renewal of Orthodox consciousness and its implications for closer relations with the Catholic Church contains much helpful information and many interesting perceptions. The author, who is a member of the Dominican *Centre Istina* in Paris, has first hand knowledge of the Russian emigration there and has also spent some time in Athens. He writes with sympathy and affection for the Orthodox, while retaining the detached viewpoint of a scholar. By avoiding the historical approach, however, he has made his task much more difficult. The problems and weaknesses he discerns in Orthodoxy—such as an over-emphasis on nationalism—are so closely linked with the historical vicissitudes and aspirations of the people that to present them in isolation is misleading, and the lack of historical context deprives the book of any coherent perspective.

One misses too the home-spun quality of Orthodox parish life and evidence of the sturdy faith of the ordinary people which has survived centuries of Moslem oppression and now makes its witness under atheist communism. Orthodoxy is the least sophisticated of all contemporary Christian traditions and in this lies much of its charm and approachability for Catholics and Protestants alike, giving that sense of recognition and timeless continuity one finds only in the company of the very young and very old.

Père Le Guillou touches delicately on the problem of educating the will, and the disparity between faith as professed by the Church and as expressed in the lives of its members. He sees Eastern piety in danger from 'an external worship', Christian life made to look as if it consists in the liturgy alone with no direct influence on day-to-day living. This of course is not a problem confined to the Orthodox and Père Le Guillou's analysis here is hasty and open to question. The peculiar problem for the Orthodox is that the normative piety for the faithful has been presented traditionally as the ascetic discipline of early monasticism, and this has been reinforced by the hesychasm of Gregory Palamas and his followers who have extolled the 'angelic life' as the model of spirituality even for the devout layman. Since this is incompatible in any practical sense with the natural conditions of human society, it has opened the way to a 'double standard' in Christian life. It is significant that all reform movements within Orthodoxy contain a strong puritan element.

These however, are minor criticisms of a book which is a valuable addition to the literature on the Orthodox Churches. There is an introduction by the Director of the *Centre Istina*, Père C. J. Dumont, O.P., and Mr Donald Attwater is responsible for the excellent translation.

HELLE GEORGIADIS

ON CONSULTING THE FAITHFUL, by J. H. Newman, edited by John Coulson; Chapman, 12s. 6d.

This small book has an importance out of all proportion to its size. The greater part is taken up with Newman's essay, which it seems is less widely known than generally supposed. He is urging that the Church has, when formulating her doctrines, to take into account the *sensus fidelium*. Newman points out that what the faithful believe is of paramount importance, and that to 'consult' them is one of the necessary parts of taking the laity seriously, a part of treating them as responsible members of the body of Christ. He makes clear that his use of the word 'consult' does not imply the hierarchy's submission to the views of the laity; 'it is doubtless a word expressive of trust and deference . . . It includes the idea of inquiring into a matter of fact, as well as asking a judgment . . . Doubtless their advice, their opinion, their judgment on the question of definition is not asked; but the matter of fact, viz. their belief, is sought for, as a testimony to that apostolical tradition, on which alone any doctrine whatsoever