

concerned with their happiness. This is because if P is responsible for the existence of B by designing it, and if B has the characteristic of being capable of happiness, it seems reasonable to believe that P has some 'concern' with the happiness of B. What might be inferred from a 'non-selective and impartial view of the universe', whatever that may be supposed to

be, is that the designer is not interested in laying on a certain kind of happiness for certain individuals who are as they are by virtue of his designing activity. But that is a different matter and a subject for something other than a book review.

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RUSSIAN MYSTICS by Sergius Bolshakoff *Cistercian Publications. 1977. pp. 303*
£10.50 (hardback); £3.75 (paperback).

This is a useful, though necessarily rather hasty, survey of Russian monasticism from its first beginnings up to the present day (as Thomas Merton points out in his preface, the title is misleadingly narrow). A few of the more outstanding spiritual writers are treated at slightly greater length, with an outline of their doctrine and brief extracts from their works. The style is at times a bit reminiscent of the old second nocturns, and there is a certain coyness apparent in references to "circumstances" which mysteriously cause people to leave their monasteries sometimes, or even, in one case, cause someone to lose his chastity (at which, we are told, he was much upset); but there is a mass of information here which it would be difficult or impossible for most of us to get hold of otherwise, and that alone should secure for Dr Bolshakoff's work an honourable place in our libraries. Unfortunately the presentation of this material is somewhat haphazard; the over-all chronological plan is only very vaguely followed—Abbot Naz-

arius, for instance, who died in 1809, features in the chapter on twentieth century monasticism. This, combined with the lack of an index, rather impairs the usefulness of the book as a work of reference, which is what it ought to be. The bibliography is also slightly out of date—the book is essentially a revised translation of an Italian edition published in 1962. There is no mention, for instance, of Meyendorff's work on Palamas, nor of Spidlik's book on Theophany (Rome, 1965), nor of the English translation of the Counsels of John of Kronstadt (ed. W. J. Grisbrooke, London, 1966). The book is also marred by frequent misprints (in one place we even meet a contemplative mink!), and occasional inconsistency in nomenclature (the unexplained *Imyabozhniki* movement on p. 237 is the same as that of the *Onomolaters* explained on pp. 245ff). But in spite of all these defects, this is a very valuable contribution to Cistercian Studies.

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