

gloomier productions of the worthies in the modern literary pantheon, from Dostoevsky to Beckett, but survived intact.

All in all, the book should be a fine stimulus for people embarking on courses

of religious studies; which is the purpose for which this series of 'Issues in Religious Studies' is designed.

HUGO MEYNELL

A HIDDEN REVOLUTION. The Pharisees' Search for the Kingdom Within
by Ellis Rivkin, SPCK, 1979 pp. 336 £12.50

The Pharisees are very important both for Jewish and Christian scholarship, and yet current research has not reached any consensus about who they were. The amount published is really quite small, and for that reason alone any new book has value and attracts comment.

That is perhaps the most that can be said in defence of the present publication. It is a badly edited work written in an odd, indeed I hope unique, form of American English.

Above all it is important to point out that the position it adopts is idiosyncratic. Someone working on the New Testament might not be aware of this, and could be misled into thinking that here was the agreed position of contemporary Jewish scholarship. In fact, there is no such agreed position, rather a polarisation of opposing views, which some might connect with the names of Professors Mantel and Neusner. Dr Rivkin's book (and this is the meaning of the title) is concerned to prove that the Pharisees were "the most ardent advocates of the kingdom of God *within*. They were the grand *internalizers*" (p. 297, my italics). I put this thesis to a learned colleague at the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, who reacted

with some vigour that if this was the hidden revolution of the Pharisees, it was very hidden indeed.

The publication of this work does not represent an advance in Jewish scholarship. I was alarmed to read on page 15 that it was "thirty-nine years aborning". It seems to me to mark a deterioration from Dr Rivkin's work of ten years ago. I would unhesitatingly recommend anyone to read his article in the *Hebrew Union College Annual* of 1969-1970 rather than buy this book, which in any case is in part a vulgarisation of the article. As a production it is aesthetically outrageous, and an ominous footnote declares that "to facilitate reading, diacritical marks for transliterated Hebrew have been omitted". This sentence is an absurdity because the purpose of diacritical marks is precisely to facilitate reading; and the same holds true of transliterated Greek because one can only distinguish *omicron* and *omega* here from the context. To lodge a couple of copies of this book in the copyright libraries would be quite adequate, and then the SPCK could ship the rest of the consignment back across the Atlantic.

RICHARD JUDD

CE QUE CROYAIT DOMINIQUE by P. R. Régamey *Mame, Paris. 1979 pp. 178 28F*

Père Régamey, a venerable French Dominican, is clearly one of those French theologians, like Danielous, Bouyer, Le Guillou, who are profoundly unhappy with the general drift of modern French Catholicism. His book is deliberately set on a collision course, and it is accordingly 'reactionary' and angry. But it would be a big mistake just to dismiss it as unthinking conservatism or refusal of Vatican II. What Régamey refuses is what he sees as a pre-

dominantly negative modern stance which is itself a refusal of essential values contained in Catholic tradition, especially those associated with the supernatural life of faith. He invites us to "refuse the refusal".

But he sees St Dominic as representing a very particular kind of refusal of the refusal. In his view, it is necessary for the would-be apostle of orthodoxy to know within himself why heresy is attractive,

whatever heresy it may be that he has to combat. The apostle must feel in himself the tensions that threaten to tear the church apart. He must be able to react positively even to the things he must most condemn.

Whether Régamey himself succeeds in making the same kind of apostolic link with the elements in his own milieu of which he disapproves is a question better left to a French reviewer. But it seems to me that he makes important points which can profitably be pondered. At times he seems to be defending positions largely because they are the extreme antithesis of popular modern positions; for instance, his insistence on strict regularity of life, and his slightly externalistic interpretation of the necessary primacy of contemplation seem to be more conditioned by polemical than by theological considerations. But he is surely right to recall us to the need to be courageous in our believing. Faith, in his view, of itself tends towards a certain kind of extremism. We need a kind of naivete, of foolishness, if we are to escape from the brainwashing processes which permeate our environment. But this does not mean having a vague, undefined sense of belief in God: it means a fierce adhesion to revealed truth. St Dominic is held up as a model of an unlikely but essential yoking together of an almost fanatical evangelicalism with an unshakable confidence in the institutional church.

The book falls into three parts. The first is a survey of the life and work of Dominic; the second is concerned with making sense of the basic traditions of the Dominican Order, as re-affirmed in the new Fundamental Constitution. The third is a brief outline of an approach to the Dominican modality of being Christian (*le tonus dominicain*). The whole book is in-

tended to show that it is possible to be a Dominican in the twentieth century, without being a harmless and possibly amusing anachronism.

The historical interpretation follows that of Père Vicaire very closely. There is little that is new, and the presentation is more rhetorical than scholarly. It is unfortunate that Régamey adopts without reserve the tendency to see the continuities between Dominicans and Canons Regular as being infinitely more significant than the discontinuities. Of course this serves the purpose of pleading for a fairly old-fashioned kind of regular observance. But it leads to (or perhaps derives from) some questionable handling of evidence. For instance Régamey offers us an enthusiastic commentary on the Prologue to the Primitive Constitutions, which he rightly says the Dominicans took over from the Praemonstratensians. He then reminds us of the general dependence of Dominican legislation on that of the Praemonstratensians. But if he had charted the relationship between the two texts more thoroughly (which Dominican historians are curiously reluctant to do), he would find that the Dominicans have omitted an immense amount of legislation, and that in fact they have left out most of the material which actually cashed the programme announced in the Prologue. This kind of evidence is surely extremely important.

In general, this is a powerful and stirring book. But the reader should be warned that it is a very French book. It is written for and from a French situation. And it is written in an impassioned rhetorical style which does not generally survive very well the journey across the English Channel.

SIMON TUGWELL O. P.