

should all school ourselves to tolerate and live with such disagreements'. (p. 89). Should tolerance imply that beliefs are unimportant, especially such central and decisive beliefs? Furthermore, concerning the question of a personal creator, Hick suggests that an attitude of 'agnosticism' on such questions may help us properly concentrate on the *real issue* of transforming human existence from self-centredness to Reality-centredness (p. 93). This view presupposes that religious beliefs are totally unrelated to salvation or the ways of life in which they are formed and form.

Hick's presuppositions concerning this Reality-centred criteria emerge when he counters the claim that the value of 'universal human equality and freedom have arisen' from within Christianity. Such values apparently constitute the nature of 'Reality'. He writes: 'These *modern liberal ideas* have indeed first emerged in the West; but they are *essentially secular ideas*'. (p. 85, my emphasis). Whether or not this is true or relevant, it does indicate that in Hick's attempt to accept all religions and, in his refusal to allow one to be considered more legitimate or valid than another, he is forced to adopt some criterion of truth *outside* of the various religious traditions by which to judge them—perhaps 'modern liberal ideas'? Furthermore, in proportion to his disassociating the ways in which beliefs shape action (and vice versa), Hick's analysis becomes increasingly abstract and removed from the ways in which beliefs are held by believers 'ultimately in the assumption that they are substantially true references to the nature of reality'—as he acknowledges elsewhere in the book (p. 16).

The Experience of Religious Diversity contains some extremely stimulating essays—the overall thrust being that from within the traditions of the various religions it is possible to view other religions as valid paths to God—or in some cases the Ultimate, or in other cases, Sunyata. Clearly, some of the contributors views of 'Ultimate Reality' differ considerably, such as those of Hasan Askari (Islam), John Cobb (Christianity) and Masao Abe (Zen Buddhism). Nevertheless, a significant view held by nearly all the writers is that while remaining committed adherents to their respective traditions, they are not compelled to claim that their own religion contains the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Given this basic assumption, there are a plurality of views regarding the relation of religions: running from the common core of mystical experience (Askari) to the apparently legitimate recognition of different ultimates operating in different contexts (Cobb). There is also a particularly fascinating debate between Abe and Cobb and although the essays vary in style and sometimes in quality, I would strongly recommend this book to all those interested in the diversity of views about the diversity of religions.

The typological conventions of the latter book are sometimes erratic as is the behaviour of the word processor. Furthermore, the index is often inaccurate as are the internal references in the footnotes as well as the chapter numbers in the 'notes and references' section at the end of the book. For £18.50, this is lamentable.

GAVIN D'COSTA

ONE WORLD: THE INTERACTION OF SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY by John Polkinghorne *SPCK, 1986. Pp. 114. £4.50.*

A few years ago, John Polkinghorne resigned his Chair of Mathematical Physics at Cambridge in order to devote himself to the Anglican Ministry, and he is now Vicar of Blean near Canterbury. He is thus exceptionally well-qualified to discuss the interaction of science and theology, and has written this book to defend the thesis that 'they are both exploring aspects of reality. They are capable of mutual interaction which, though at times it is puzzling, can also be fruitful'.

He sets the scene by a brief chapter on the Post-Enlightenment World, and then considers the nature of science. His familiarity with quantum physics enables him to sketch rapidly and surely some of the main strands of modern research, and the interpretations

given by several philosophers of science. He recognises the role of personal judgement in research (Polanyi), considers Kuhn's paradigm shifts to be 'very curious and greatly overdone', and dismisses Feyerabend as absurd. He defends the rationality of science against those who claim it to be socially-conditioned, and affirms robustly and correctly that scientists are embarked on the discovery of reality: 'scientific theories are corrigible, but the result is a tightening grasp of a never completely comprehended reality'. He is not impressed by Popperian falsification, or by the positivist and idealist accounts of science.

Many of the popular books about God and Physics show an exceedingly impoverished understanding of theology, and the chapter on the nature of theology should be a valuable corrective. God is a hidden God, who respects our freedom and cannot be put to the test. We cannot hope to comprehend God, but what we do know is not contrary to our reason. Although he is unknowable, he has acted to make himself known through the person of Jesus Christ. There are useful analogies between the ways of thinking in theology and science. To be intellectually respectable, theology must be coherent, economical, adequate and existentially relevant, and this is also true for science.

The scientific view of the world is characterised by ten qualities: it is elusive, intelligible, problematic, surprising, the result of interplay between chance and necessity, extended in space and time, tightly-knit, ultimately futile, complete (within its domain) and incomplete (considered absolutely). Each of these is considered in turn, with perceptive illustrations. This is followed by discussions of several points of interaction between science and theology, including miracles, design in nature, the origin of the universe, the anthropic principle, minds and bodies, and the nature of man. He is unconvinced by Capra's attempt to establish parallels between occidental science and oriental mysticism, but believes that modern science is raising questions that demand a theological answer. Our world is highly complex, and its many levels are unified by science. God the creator is the source of their connection, 'the one whose creative act holds in one the world-views of science, aesthetics, ethics and religion, as expressions of his reason, joy, will and presence.'

From the brief summary it will be clear that Polkinghorne has written a concise yet wide-ranging survey of many of the central problems of the interaction between science and theology. It would have been greatly enhanced by a more detailed consideration of the historical connection between science and Christian theology. It was precisely the very special beliefs about the material world inherent in Christian theology that made possible the development of science, and this shows the basis of their relationship. In several places in the book Polkinghorne affirms the essential indeterminacy of the quantum world, although it is possible to hold that this is no more than a feature of the present formulation of quantum mechanics. It is exceedingly hazardous to try to deduce such far-reaching conclusions from experimental results; as he so rightly insists elsewhere, the world is more subtle than we imagine, and there are certainly many surprises still in store. As a final theological comment, his account lacks a discussion of the role of the Church as founded by Christ with authority to teach in his name. It is here that some of the most delicate interactions occur.

PETER HODGSON

AGAINST THE NATIONS: WAR AND SURVIVAL IN A LIBERAL SOCIETY.

Stanley Hauerwas. *Winston Press, Minneapolis & Geoffrey Chapman, London 1985, 208 pp. £14.95.*

It would be hard not to be grateful to Stanley Hauerwas, who provides the study of Christian Ethics with an imaginative excitement which it generally lacks. His restless fertility has kept his thought moving from phase to phase, reacting to the stimulus of successive thinkers who have influenced him, taking up new problems at each turn. And it would be