

Thompson's spirited denunciation of Althusser in *The Poverty of Theory*. Althusser's project, says Kelly, is approached most fruitfully as an attempt to minimize the Hegelian element in Marx, to sever the connection that such neo-Hegelians as Georg Lukacs and Lefebvre were anxious to forge between Hegel, the young Marx, and the author of *Kapital*. The attempt to show how Althusser seems to throw out "the Marxist baby with the Hegelian bathwater" takes Kelly on an informative exploration of the subtleties of Althusser's theories, terminology, and alterations. Thanks to Kelly's revelation of Althusser's "rather Manichean view of knowledge" as well as Althusser's oscillations on the role of philosophy and ideology, I now have a far better grasp of the importance of this seminal voice.

Kelly also stimulated my interest in other philosophers: the economist and anthropologist Maurice Godelier, whose structuralist interpretation of *Kapital* is judiciously laid out and criticized here; Tran Duc Thao, whose "rich and astute analysis . . . demonstrates the complexity of Marx's inversion (and reworking) of Hegel"; and Lucien Seve, whose critique of structuralism and influence in promoting a less "star-oriented" style of research among French Marxists prompts some fascinating remarks on Kelly's part. Nor does *Modern French Marxism* neglect more recent names like Pierre Jaegle, Georges Labica, Jacques d'Hondt, and Solange Mercier-Josa. Kelly's bracing, inviting overview makes me hope that these newer voices will be translated into English before long.

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When texts are as unfamiliar as those Kelly discusses, exegesis serves a noble purpose. Not so when the ground has been spaded up many times before. This is the weakness of Eugene Lunn's *Marxism and Modernism: An Historical Study of Lukacs, Brecht, Benjamin and Adorno*. "An historical," groaned a friend of mine when he saw the title; "that is a sure sign of a pedantic mouthbreather." Indeed, Lunn's prose is academese at its most sluggish, and the dullness is compounded by his having nothing new to say. Such books as Martin Jay's *The Dialectical Imagination* have already explicated this turf; and Fredric Jameson's *Marxism and Form* took a more ambitious swing at the subject itself. Listless Lunn suffers by comparison.

Lunn has adopted the pose of a humble laborer in the grove of Marxism, carrying his brick to the site of the great edifice. This is not to imply that he is dogmatic. On the contrary, when he finds himself straying

toward a statement that is too blunt and vigorous, he emits a fog of qualifications. An excellent, thematically organized bibliography only partly redeems Lunn's staid, rambling exercise in Marxology. Enough with the "history of ideas." The topic is ready for more than mere interpretation.

HOW I READ THE RIDDLE: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by Harold E. Fey

(The Council on Christian Unity of the Christian Church [Indianapolis, Ind.] and Bethany Press; 190 pp.; \$8.00 [paper])

Raymond A. Schroth

Among American autobiographies—that exceptionally versatile and illusive genre—it is the journalist's that seems most likely to provide some definition of the American character, a peek at the representative American soul. In the life stories of Lincoln Steffens and Eric Sevareid, reporter-artists attempt both to record the march of history—wars, rebellions, encounters with men even more famous than themselves—and to

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Harold E. Fey, who joined the liberal Protestant weekly *The Christian Century* in 1940 and served as editor from 1956 until he doesn't say when, has told his story in *How I Read the Riddle*, an extended gloss on Psalm 49—"I will set my ear to catch the moral of the story/and tell on the harp how I read the riddle. . . ." He writes: "Here is my confession of the hunger of the heart, the wonder of beauty occasionally seen or randomly heard, the satisfaction of a Presence sometimes truly known." In this spirit Fey's first two pages have some fine first sentences: "I was young for a very long time" and "I know now that our family was poor, but that made no difference then." The eloquence is not sustained.

Fey first experienced "conversion" at a country church while a high school junior, a moment which moved him toward the

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ministry in the Disciples of Christ. He attended first the little, academically feeble Cotner College in Lincoln, then went to Yale Divinity School. From Yale—where, he confesses, his academic achievements were meager—Fey, now married to Golda Conwell, returned to a pastorate in Nebraska, which he left for the Philippines, where he taught at the Union Theological Seminary in Manila and served as a *Christian Century* correspondent.

By 1940, after a stint as editor of *World Call*, a monthly of the Disciples of Christ, and five years as executive secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, he became convinced that he was first of all a journalist, not a religious bureaucrat. From that time on his life on the *Christian Century* staff took on that daily pattern familiar to any journalist writing for a religious opinion magazine: reading the *New York Times*, *Commentary*, *Commonweal*, and *Christianity and Crisis* to see what the competition was up to; squeezing in journalists' junkets to the Middle East; assigning books to independent-minded reviewers who end up panning books by your friends; writing what you think are fair-minded editorials that, to your surprise, set the ecumenical movement back ten years.

If there is an intellectual core to Fey's career it probably is his pacifism. He recounts the split within liberal Protestantism when Reinhold Niebuhr took up the cause against fascism; and Fey maintains to this day—in the most fascinating two paragraphs of the book—that had America remained truly neutral in World War II, Japan would not have attacked Pearl Harbor, European Jews would have been no worse off under Hitler, and we would have had no occasion to develop and use the atomic bomb!

If there is another core to Fey it is that he always has been a Protestant with a capital P. In the 1930s he opposed the formation of the State of Israel because Jewish nationalism was, he said, based on the illusion that Jewish racial integrity was important in God's sight and because this illusion contradicted the popular theory of the American melting pot. Between November, 1944, and January, 1945, Fey published eight articles warning that a militant American Catholicism, organized under the National Catholic Welfare Council, with its headquarters (sinister!) in Washington, D.C., was set to "win" America by "invading" Protestant rural areas, forming Newman Clubs and Boy Scout troops, publishing diocesan newspapers. Read today, the articles are remarkable not so much for overt bigotry as for their naiveté about Cath-

olic power and for the cultural narrowness of their insistence that America be preserved as a "Protestant nation." Vatican II has mellowed Fey a bit, but I suspect he will relax only when Catholicism comes to resemble a minor Protestant sect.

But now I must say something about the physical production and editing of this book, whose publication evidently was subsidized by the Disciples of Christ and Fey's colleagues and friends. Perhaps the thought and effort necessary to make the book acceptable to a commercial or university press would also have turned it into a real contribution to American religious history. Chapters on American Indians and a 1951 trip to Korea are tacked on at the end without being integrated into the context of Fey's life. The various photographs of Fey are virtually useless, poorly identified, and scattered throughout with little reference to the text. When we get to 1960, the year of Kennedy's election, the most memorable controversy seems to have been the *Century's* battle to keep the new Interchurch Center on Morningside Heights from having a Gothic facade that would blend in with the architecture of Riverside Church. There is no mention of the new president.

Next year the *Christian Century* will be a hundred years old. To read the old issues from the 1940s and '60s—including editorials published under Fey's leadership—is to discover the intellectual excitement of the religious and moral debates of our era. The magazine too has been young a long time. (WV)

CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRACIES: PARTICIPATION, STABILITY AND VIOLENCE

by G. Bingham Powell, Jr.

(Harvard University Press; 237 pp.; \$25.00)

Warren L. Mason

The comparative analysis of politics, after a period of vigorous development in the 1950s and '60s, has been wandering of late on a plateau of academic scholarship. The theoretical insights of sociology and psychology failed to yield interesting empirical studies of politics. Much of what has been produced falls in the category of workmanlike, statistically based analysis that has rounded out or synthesized our knowledge of voters, political parties, and the like. Very few of these studies have contributed significantly to the verification of those broad theoretical generalizations that seemed so promising twenty years ago. Among the

relatively few works that seem to have had real success in linking theory and data are those concerned with the survival and problems of democracy. The voting studies generated by the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan and by its European associates have made landmark contributions. Other outstanding examples of work that has joined careful empirical analysis of democratic politics and large-scale theory-building include such modern classics as Robert Alford's *Party and Society*; Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's *The Civic Culture*; as well as Sidney Verba, Norman Nie, and Jae-on Kim's *Participation and Political Equality*.

G. Bingham Powell's new work clearly fits into the small group of important studies of the past generation that combine rigorous analysis of data from a number of societies and theoretical generalizations that have appeared in bits and pieces in studies of more limited scope. The result is impressive. Powell has taken twenty-nine modern democracies—all the obvious ones plus those in the Third World with significant histories of democracy—and asked the classic question: Why do some democracies work better (and last longer) than others?

To answer this question Professor Powell presents a statistical analysis of the relationship between "governmental performance" in democracies and certain key aspects of the social and political setting. To measure performance he uses Citizen Voting Participation (read, voter turnout), Stable and Effective Government (read, the durability of political executives and their ability to command a legislative majority), and Maintenance of Political Order (read, numbers of political riots and deaths). He then looks at these performance indicators in statistical relation to the social and economic environment, the constitutional arrangements, and the political party systems of modern democracies. His analysis of these complex relationships is rigorous and methodologically sophisticated, without losing the clarity and continuity of its narrative line—a combination of skill and lucidity that in itself ensures it a prominent place among recent comparative studies.

The findings of this inquiry are both satisfying and surprising. Solid evidence is marshalled to indicate the truth of hypotheses long held by political observers. For example, constitutional arrangements like fixed-term presidencies and single-member district electoral systems do, indeed, produce the most stable governments. Similarly, extremist political parties do appear to exert a destabilizing influence upon governments. On the other hand, Powell's