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Today's Catholic: His Doubts and Beliefs: Beyond Questions and Answers

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rules than to undertake things that were useful to the sovereign and beneficial to the people.

Such an imperial policy, while fully consistent with the nature of autocratic rule, was hardly conducive to efficient government. The Ch'ing emperors succeeded so well in rendering officialdom politically innocuous that, except during the first and closing years of the dynasty, no official was known to have harbored treasonous designs against their regime. At the same time, however, they enervated its administrators, and many of them were willing to leave vital tasks of government largely undone. This basic administrative defect was aggravated by a number of unfortunate imperial practices. The official salary and remuneration scale, which was ridiculously low to begin with, did not adjust itself to the rising cost of living and thereby rendered "squeeze," bribery, and extortion inevitable and increasingly necessary. The large-scale selling of official posts, especially extensive in the second half of the 19th century, constituted another invitation to corruption.... Inadequacy and inefficient administration was the high price that the Ch'ing emperors paid for the uncertain political stability which they laboriously tried to maintain by means of an otherwise ingenious system of control." (pp. 504-505).

We paint a dark picture. A brief review, of course, lends itself to over-simplification, and our review may give its readers an overly one-sided impression. One great merit of Professor Hsiao's fine work is his loyal refusal to oversimplify. To appreciate that fact, however, one must read this long book in full. It is a work which opens up many avenues of research; it seems deservedly established as a guide-book for the research students it will awaken. It merits a place on the Sinology shelves of every college library.

CHARLES J. MCCARTHY

TODAY'S CATHOLIC: HIS DOUBTS AND BELIEFS

BEYOND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, *The Creed for Today's Catholics*, by Timothy S. McDermott. New York: Herder and Herder, 1968. 173 pp.

Catholics still believe that the answers by and large in the question-and-answer catechism of one's childhood are true and will always be true. The problem is that these answers which are provided in black and white categories are not quite enlightening anymore. If

these answers have satisfied the faithful before, they certainly have failed to do so now. Today's Catholic must turn to new and adult catechesis such as this one by the Rev. Timothy S. McDermott, O.P., who has gone *Beyond Questions And Answers*.

The author who hails from Liverpool University and Cambridge is at present teaching scripture and theology in the Dominican Study House in Stellenbosch, South Africa, where he has gained reputation as a lecturer, preacher, and writer.

Written in a popular and conversational style by a master teacher, *Beyond Questions And Answers* is specially recommended to laymen who are seeking, amidst today's welter of sophisticated religious language, new theological concepts, and new configurations; a clear, concise, and down-to-earth explanation of their basic Christian tenets.

The subtitle and content of this readable book is *The Creed for Today's Catholic*. Father McDermott goes over the familiar Apostles' Creed article by article. He divides the Creed into three main parts, namely: God the Father, Jesus Christ Our Lord, and the Holy Spirit. A preliminary section and introduction to the Apostles' Creed make up an interesting and revealing foreword.

Father McDermott opens each section with related and familiar questions-and-answers taken from the catechism of yesterday. Working on the principle that "new glimpses of truth must be in continuity with old glimpses," he goes beyond these questions-and-answers by bringing out their implications and enriching them in the light of contemporary theological studies and biblical research.

An example would be the first question-and-answer with which he opens the preliminary section: "Who made you? God made me." If the definition for God as 'the person who made me' was substituted, the answer would read: "The person who made me made me." Quite true but not very enlightening. So Father McDermott takes up the current problem on the diverse formulations of the God-concept and comments on Bishop John Robinson's criticism of the God who is "out there," and on the Protestant theologian, Tillich's popular description of God as 'the infinite and inexhaustible depth and ground of all being.' All of which relate to the 'God-is-dead' talk. And Fr. McDermott observes:

At the limits of understanding or power, when men become puzzled or afraid of the empty abysses opening up around them, there they put God. God is used to cushion men against the infinity of life. But now that man's understanding and power seem to be growing without end, God—as a cushion against life—is dead.

And from the deceptively simple catechism answers that God has no body, no beginning, yet is everywhere and knows and sees all things,

even one's most secret thoughts, Father McDermott shows the balance of this traditional 'all *and* nothing' concept of God, that is, God is no thing but present to all things.

All our ways of talking about God are only images or 'myths' which are useful negatively, for they help us to know something of what God is not, even when they are misleading positively. Their limitations must be properly understood, underlines Father McDermott. Hence, a dogmatic formulation may enshrine a timeless truth we deny on pain of heresy, but the formulation itself remains always historical, human, and therefore susceptible to discussion and more meaningful reformation.

Beyond Questions and Answers unmistakably brings out the promise and potentiality of post Vatican II faith, and in the best tradition, adds to the growing number of excellent adult catchesis.

JOSE B. CHANCO

MARANAO-ENGLISH DICTIONARY

A MARANAO DICTIONARY, compiled by P. McKaughan and Batua A. Macaraya. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967. xxxviii, 394 pp.

This work really consists of four parts: (a) a structural sketch of the Maranao language, (b) a bibliography of the more important works on the language, and a dictionary of (c) Maranao-English and of (d) English-Maranao.

The grammatical sketch deals with all aspects of Maranao grammar-phonology, morphology, and syntax—but in a broad and general manner, without going into minute details and without touching on the fine points of the language's structure. Indeed, one gets the impression that the main purpose of the structural sketch is to enable the reader to understand what is contained in the dictionary.

Take, for example, the phonological sketch. Here, McKaughan gives an inventory of the vowels and consonants of Maranao together with their main variants. He also gives a general statement about the feature of accent in Maranao but leaves the question on whether and how stress and length are related unanswered. After reading the phonological survey, however, one feels that one has sufficient information to read the entries in the dictionary, as far as their pronunciation is concerned.

The morphological section is devoted to the discussion of (a) the pronominal forms and their inflection paradigms, (b) the particles, and