Sidney Spencer: Mysticism in World Religion. A Peican

It is a rare fact that a Protestant minister shows such a personal and sympathetic
approach towards mysticism as is seen in this useful little booklet. We are concerned here
only with the chapter on Sufism which is, compared to the other chapters, much shorter
than it ought to be—a common fact in all books on comparative mysticism or comparative
religion. The author gives first an account of the development of Sufism in early times but
restricts himself on the time of formation, neglecting the later, not less important, develop-
ment; then he gives some glimpses of the doctrine of man and God, the way of life, and
the Goal of Sufism. He has used mainly Nicholson's works and Kalābādhī's kitāb at-
ta'ārruf in Arberry's translation, and some other European standard works. But in spite of
his endeavour one feels that he is not quite at home with this peculiar subject; thus his
definition of ta'ārid lacks lucidity, the role of the ṭariqa in later centuries is completely
neglected, and the importance of mystical poetry in Iran and neighbouring countries is
just touched at random. P 312 one finds "Ishraq Maqtul" instead of Suhrāwārdī Maqtūl.

One would like the author to add some more pages to this chapter in the next edition—
there is enough material in English available.

Annemarie Schimmel (Bonn)

Doreen Warriner: Land Reform and Development in the
Middle East, published for the Royal Institute of Interna-
tional Affairs, by Oxford University Press. Second edition,
1912. 238 pages. Index. 21S. net.

This is a commendable work by an authority well versed on the subject of land develop-
ment and its complexities in the Middle East. When Miss Warriner sought to expand on
her earlier work, Land and Poverty in the Middle East, nearly a decade after its publication,
she discovered that although poverty still persisted changes had taken place "far more
than seemed possible ten years ago". From renewed efforts to study these changes emerged
her second book, Land Reform and Development in the Middle East, first published in 1957.

The second edition provides extensive treatment of the effect of land reform laws in
Egypt, Syria and Iraq on problems of land development. As she sees it, the basic problem
obstructing agrarian reform is typical to all "underdeveloped" lands: prevalence of in-
stitutional monopoly on landownership linked with a monopolistic supply of capital to
agriculture.

Although she attempts to bring the first edition up to date, important innovations in land
finance and reform since the revolution of 1958 in Iraq have not been incorporated in the
subsequent edition. The author has taken the position that to analyze the provisions of
the agrarian reform law enacted by the revolutionary government three months after its
coming to power is not as important as to assess the results of such a law and to analyze
the methods most likely to promote economic development. Yet in her "Postscript", written
largely to bring up to date the course of agrarian reform since 1957, progress made by
Iraq in the area of land distribution and development still received no coverage.

Such an observation should not detract from the author's well-executed study of a diffi-
cult problem; expert and scholar can not fail to appreciate Miss Warriner's expertise in
extracting the essence and in relating lucidly the extent of agrarian changes brought about
in recent years. The resultant study takes into account valuable data illustrated abundantly
with maps and charts. In her search for useful information and in her conscientious effort
to present as accurate a picture as may be available to the Western observer, the author
undertook personal visits to Egypt, Syria and Iraq in 1956 to acquire first-hand information
on the subject and to observe for herself pilot projects currently underway in the field
of agrarian reform and development. Extensive acknowledgements evince the range of her
consultations with local experts. References depend heavily on statistical compilations of
United Nations agencies and of the relevant government departments of the countries
under study.
Following two brief prefaces to the first and second edition, the author divides her work into four major chapters, a conclusion and a postscript, followed by a useful short bibliography and a comprehensive index.

In the "Introduction" the author clearly sets forth the aim of her study: "to consider the need for agrarian reform as a means of raising the standard of living, in relation to the economic development of each of these countries". The approach is critical yet instructive. In the chapter entitled "The Agrarian Reform in Egypt", the background of land development is related and the nature of the land system explained; the merits of the Reform Law of 1952 are assessed in terms of its effectiveness; the controversial debate around state vs. co-operative farming is treated in a detached fashion, and the progress resulting from the experimental Liberation Province pointed out. It is the view of the author that "the Egyptian reform is so far the only serious attack on rural poverty in the Arab world, and the hopes which it raises outside Egypt are inevitably as important as its achievements inside the country".

Following a brief chapter on the categories of land classification and their impact on social structure in the Fertile Crescent, the role of technical change is set forth in anticipation of the narrative in the chapter devoted to "Private Enterprise in Syria". After a careful presentation of background information, the author enthusiastically proceeds to account for her opening statement, "Few underdeveloped countries in the past ten years have made such rapid progress in agriculture and industry as Syria". Transformations in the agrarian structure are detailed, as are changes in the laws related to land and tenure. Most of such progress is attributed to private initiative as the "Syrian governments have done almost nothing to promote agricultural development" (p. 74). Alterations in the agrarian structure, the effect of mechanization, the opening up of new regions around Aleppo and in the Jazirah, the role of the "merchant-tractorists", and the prospects of improvement in the lot of the peasant class in Syria are related with optimism. The author here voices the conviction that Syria is more fortunate in this regard than Egypt or Iraq.

In the chapter on "Money in Iraq" Miss Warriner presents the view that the role of government there was more of a deterrent than a contributor to the enhancement of agricultural development: "In the past Iraq was poor because its people could not master their environment. Today Iraq is poor because it has more money than it can invest; and the reason why this is so is that the social structure of the country is not adapted to expansion" (p. 122). Too much had been invested in dam building projects while not enough on draining Dujaylah, a pioneer settlement, or on providing such basic needs as spare parts for tractors. Crisis is averted because "expenditure on deep investment need not show a profit"; inflation is checked by rising imports and an elastic supply of labor. Instead of more irrigation work, the country needs more investment in human resources and an active agricultural policy for "little, lamentably little, has been done to increase and improve agriculture" (p. 131). Concentrated tribal ownership of land, insecurity of tenure, and the high level of rents account for rural poverty not shortage of land. If not expropriated, large landholdings would not enable the enactment of legislation in favor of sharecroppers and tenants, owing to the complete domination over the serfs by the large landowning class; the problem of reform in this respect is regarded as a problem of political power: "That the sheikhs of Amara should rule over the civil servants of Baghdad and the merchants of Mosul seems incongruous to the outsider" (p. 172).

The foregoing picture is based largely on the status of agrarian development under the monarchy. What has transpired in Iraq since the 1958 revolution is a matter of conjecture, and the reader cannot assess fully the cause of land reform in Iraq until this important section of the book is brought up to date.

The dynamic of change is analyzed in the "Conclusion". The author is of the conviction that private enterprise alone cannot measure up to the task of agrarian development, nor can it provide stability and higher standards in view of the adversity of natural conditions. The revolutionary dynamic comes from Egypt which country has developed an advanced agricultural economy without profuse expenditure. The "Postscript" is devoted largely to a post-Revolution analysis of agrarian reform in the United Arab Republic based on a continual evolutionary economic trend as well as a revolutionary revival launched in 1961 with the issuance of a new decree which further reduces maximum individual land holdings.