

version of J. B. Philips. These translations were, of course, made without knowledge of the argument from Hebrew given above. But they do give what we believe to be the correct meaning.

Now that there is an opportunity for an ecumenical version of the Lord's Prayer in our liturgy, it is imperative to face up to all the difficulties in the text, and especially in this sixth petition. With the incessant cry for meaning on all sides, it is impossible to go on saying ambiguously 'Lead us not . . .'. Some other translation based, not on a devious manoeuvre to escape the difficulty, is now surely called for.

Corruption Begins at Home? by Bernard Sharratt

Towards a political theology of marriage

Anyone sensitive to symbolism must normally shudder at the words of eucharistic consecration. Not because of the current English translation. Something that cuts deeper: the priest takes the chalice and says: 'And when supper was ended, he took the cup, saying: This is my blood. . . .' Most chalices are still lined with gold, a mark of respect, the most precious metal alone allowed to touch the consecrated wine. Yet that gold, enshrined at the heart of our celebration of love and peace, is also, still, at the base of the international monetary system; more specifically, it underpins the economy of South Africa, the world's largest gold-producing country: the blood that is relevant here is also the blood of apartheid. The hasty response, that a gold-lined cup is a mere container, can only be dubious in the light of a sacramental theology that recognizes the sign-value of *form*. More honest to admit the contradiction, acknowledge indeed the wider interlocking of the eucharistic community itself with that systematic exploitation revealed in a minor, everyday detail.

The other words of consecration, 'This is my body', have resonance for another sacrament: matrimony. Bellarmine traced a further echo: 'The sacrament of marriage . . . is similar to the Eucharist, which likewise is a sacrament not only in the moment of its accomplishment, but also as long as it remains.'¹ But the eucharistic bread, one might argue, can decay and corrupt; it may not 'remain'; an opening, by analogy, towards divorce appears: individual relationships may cease adequately to measure up to the form of marriage; the core corrupts, the sign decays. Perhaps. But, further, what if the form, the shape and structure offered to receive the marriage, is

¹*De Controversiis III (de Matrimonio)*, cont. 2, c. 6; quoted by Pius XI, *A.A.S.* 22 (1930), p. 583.

already unfit? A sharper parallel with the eucharist emerges, as we begin to ask political and theological questions in conjunction.

Political theology is still stuttering towards strategy, the practice of politics, seeking points of intersection. The current clash between Italian State and Italian Church over a Divorce Bill reminds us that marriage is such an intersection—the point at which Catholic ideology, the ordinary, everyday experience of most adult members of the Church, and a crucial political structure meet.¹ That married life embodies ordinary, majority experience is important: the twin dangers of opposition strategy, either working towards a ‘change of heart’ without structural transformation or labouring at legal reform and shifts in income-distribution without the creation of ‘the new man’, can only be avoided by mining the intermediate area, of lived experience. The incorporation of Labour Party ‘parliamentary socialism’ and Trades Union Congress ‘organized labour’, both lacking internal structures within which democracy and solidarity can be *lived*, is sufficient warning. Marriage is an activity which fuses an intensely personal and intimate experience and an immediate participation in a total social complex; it offers itself as an area in which ‘new needs’ may be generated, demanding transformed patterns of personal and social life.

Certain points about marriage and family, within the context of a political theology, are already clear: for example, the use of metaphors drawn from family experience to block radical change: within a family modifications in individual’s attitudes are normally adequate to overcome internal disagreements; if not, since the family is ‘naturally’ hierarchical, the only option is to leave. By speaking of Church and society as ‘families’, ecclesiastical and political leaders (themselves of course cast as father-figures) can play on deeply disabling mechanisms.² More specifically, in England, the role of ‘the Catholic marriage’ in preserving not just a ‘unity of faith’ but an adult life held within the sub-group confines of a still ‘immigrant’ body (that being the presumed basis for a retained faith) parallels the similar function, for children, underlying the Catholic educational system. Monica Lawlor has reminded us of how highly ‘keeps the marriage laws of the Church’ can rate as a (theoretical) criterion of ‘the good Christian’ in English Catholics’ value-systems—and also how much higher than by adult Catholics this criterion is rated by Catholic schoolgirls raised in that educational system.³ As with most characteristic organizational forms of an immigrant social group caught uneasily between assimilation and self-preservation, Catholic marriages are differentiated from other marriages in English society by some marginal aspects (particularly in the socially invisible sphere of contraception) but in general conform to the standard model

¹Cf. my concluding remarks in ‘Revolutionary Intersections?’, *The Newman*, 5, 3, July 1970. This article develops the final paragraph of the *Newman* article.

²Cf. *Slant Manifesto*, 1966, pp. 42-45; A. Cunningham, in *The Christian Priesthood*, 9th Downside Symposium, ed. N. Lash and J. Rhymer, 1970, pp. 261-3.

³M. Lawlor, *Out of this World*, 1965, pp. 71-73.

offered in England of the normal marriage. And that is where the precise question of this article is located.

Marriage and social advance

We tend both to accede to and yet be slightly jolted by the obviously economic treatment of marriage in, say, a description of Bedouin marriage:

The more settled the domicile, the stricter are their conditions of ownership. Therefore, among the half-Bedouin (small livestock-breeders) and those of fixed abode, the economic bonds of the family-group are firmer than among the full Bedouin (camel-breeders), and much more stress is laid on the bride-price than among the latter. Because of the higher bride-price, divorce is more difficult and less frequently resorted to among the nomads than among the Bedouin. On the other hand, the high bride-price easily becomes an object of tribal speculation, and therefore tends to prevent freedom of choice in marriage, which is more prevalent among the full Bedouin.¹

Yet we characteristically take Western European forms of marriage for granted, part of the 'natural' way of life, the economic ramifications mentally invisible. Christians happily equate 'Christian marriage' with Western European forms, forgetting the long process of gradual fusion that had to take place in this area of life when Christianity was imported into Europe—forgetting it, particularly, when we try to export European marriage-forms as part of a package-deal Christianity. Many missionaries are now acutely concerned with this problem.² But awareness of what one might call horizontal plurality in forms of marriage also raises the question of historically vertical plurality: would we be happy, now, to sacramentalize a form of marriage which seemed culturally and socially out of date, were it proposed—would a parish priest now be willing to have solemnized in the parish church a marriage which was clearly an 'arranged' marriage in the sense in which some mediaeval and Victorian marriages were? More interestingly, what would be his reaction to a proposed marriage which was felt to be culturally 'in advance' of the present accepted forms—and on what criteria do we judge such a claim?

That last question is, clearly, part of the wider question of the criteria of general social advance. One tradition concerned with such problems is the Hegelian-Marxist-Leninist line, and it is perhaps significant that one of the earliest passages in Hegel where one finds the germ of his later concern with surpassing master-slave relations, in all their complexity, is in a fragment 'On Love' in his early theological writings;³ Marx, in his early philosophical and economic writings, not only developed the analysis of master-slave

¹Quoted by J. F. Thiel, in *Concilium*, May 1970, p. 15: the whole issue (vol. 5, no. 6) is devoted to 'The future of marriage as an institution'.

²E. Hillmann: The development of Christian marriage structures, *Concilium*, V. 6.

³Cf. Hegel, *Early Theological Writings*, Harper ed., p. 304ff.

relations generally, but also pinpointed marriage as a central index of social development:

The immediate, natural, necessary relationship of human being to human being is the relationship of *man to woman*. In this *natural* species-relationship man's relationship to nature is immediately his relationship to man, as his relationship to man is immediately his relationship to nature, to his own *natural* condition. In this relationship the extent to which the human essence has become nature for man or nature has become the human essence of man is *sensuously manifested*, reduced to a perceptible *fact*. . . . In this relationship is also apparent the extent to which man's *need* has become *human*, thus the extent to which the *other* human being, as human being, has become a need for him, the extent to which he in his most individual existence is at the same time a social being. . . . From this relationship one can thus judge the entire level of mankind's development.¹

In the early phase of the Russian Revolution, this last sentence was given a practical edge by some socialists, in experimenting with various forms of marriage—though the more important factor in the temporary shaking of traditional marriage foundations was the Civil War; by the time of Lenin's death, the older forms had recovered.² Among the various reasons for the extremely short-lived nature of this experimentation in new forms of relationship (not least of which was Lenin's opposition to 'free love' as bourgeois), it could be argued that the need for a stable economic unit during the New Economic Policy was an important underlying factor. In post-revolutionary China the attempt to forge a new economic unit, while respecting and maintaining monogamous marriage, resulted in the Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives (c. 1955-57), then the Commune system (1958 onwards); but the tensions between traditional forms of 'personal' relationships and new social-economic structures has put obvious strains on this attempt; only in the course of many generations can such tensions be resolved; a 'cultural revolution' is one means of forcing the pace.³ The same elements of tension and strain in a post-revolutionary situation are beautifully presented in Tomas Alea's film from Cuba, *Memories of Underdevelopment*, in which a relationship between an intellectual bourgeois and an unsophisticated Cuban girl is actually presented as both index to and metaphor of the wider problems of Cuban advance.

Obviously, however, family-structures are interlocked with economic and political problems not only in revolutionary situations. Among black Americans, the interaction between matriarchal patterns, male unemployment, divorce rates, loss of ancillary earning relatives, domestic tensions from ghetto conditions, etc., and the

¹*Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. Easton and Guddat, p. 303.

²Cf. E. H. Carr, *Socialism in One Country 1924-1926*, Penguin ed. 1970, I, 37-48; Sheila Rowbotham: 'Alexandra Kollantai', *The Spokesman*, nos. 4, 5.

³Cf. *China Readings 3*, ed. F. Schurmann and O. Schell, Penguin 1968, pp. 87, 176-188, 452.

1967 'riots' has been clearly brought out.¹ The role of particular conceptions of the 'decent' family in maintaining the dominant conservative 'milieu' of Western Germany is a theme in Carl Amery's *Capitulation*.

In Britain the general situation with regard to the political role of the family-home is, it seems to me, very close to that in Western Germany. It is this general British situation that I now want to sketch, as a prelude to raising again the theological question. We can then, perhaps, approach the problem of how marriage might serve as a political *activator* among the Christian minority in England.

British marriage

In Britain we are all aware of some of the general interlocking between the 'domestic' area and the social, economic, political system as a whole. But a reminder of some broad connections might be useful. For example, the present Tory Government's policy of cuts in private taxation at the expense of public and welfare services clearly militates against the low-income, 'lower'-class families, and acts in favour of high-income, middle-class families. The differences in sources of family income, degree of dependence on welfare services and proportion of income spent on domestic *necessities* makes this clear.² But class differences in family income and expenditure are related to the role of the family in the class structure generally: *parental* occupation is, still, a main index of social class. At one end of the social pyramid 'family connections' and 'family firms' still permeate dominant sectors of society;³ at the other, we have the 'home-centred society', to which not only expenditure but leisure is increasingly oriented, resulting in the narrow circle: more comfortable home, so more leisure spent in home, especially in watching TV, which in turn—through domestic consumption-advertising and the pervasive models of 'the home' present in plays, comedy, serials and toothless 'family viewing' generally—reinforces the urge for domestic expenditure and home-centred activity.⁴ This further encourages housewives to enter employment, for the sake of 'the home', so that the main group of working women now are wives, and by 1973 one estimate puts the total at nine million, of whom over 60 per cent will be married.⁵ This perhaps indicates an interesting

¹Cf. e.g. *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*, Bantam 1968, pp. 251-265, 280.

²Cf. *Trade Union Register I*, 1969: John Hughes, A Note on Low Pay, pp. 133-138, and Table 3: Household income and expenditure, pp. 334-335. Cf. also the arguments of the Child Poverty Action Group—e.g. in *Poverty* No. 7 and BRPF *London Bulletin* No. 18; also K. Coates and R. Wilburn, *Poverty: The Forgotten Englishman*, Penguin Special 1970.

³E.g., 30 per cent of the top 116 U.K. companies still have family boards; cf. M. Barratt Brown, The Controllers of British Industry, in *Can the Workers Run Industry?* Sphere/I.W.C. 1968.

⁴Cf. M. Abrams, 'The Home-Centred Society', *The Listener*, 26 Nov. 1959; R. Fletcher, *The Family and Marriage in Britain*, 1966, ch. 5; J. H. Goldthorpe, et al., *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure*, 1969, esp. pp. 50, 99-105, 152-53.

⁵H. Gavron, *The Captive Wife*, 1968, p. 43. For class-differences in motivations of working wives, cf. pp. 112, 117f, 125f.

minor contradiction in the present system: though most girls are still geared towards marriage as the obvious and natural main role of adult life¹ (and women who are restricted to domestic concerns, besides providing an immense unpaid labour-service,² tend to provide Conservative governments with a reliable and crucial habitual vote),³ nevertheless as more women enter paid employment and become unionized, besides raising the important economic issue of equal pay, their electoral support for the Conservative Party should wither.⁴ Perhaps then we would not have a Tory Government cutting family social services.

This point of contradiction is not, however, a very pressing one: it is simply an aspect of the general contradiction in capitalism between consumption and production, and for the most part the family and 'the home' serve not to exacerbate social contradictions but to mute them, to maintain them at a non-explosive level. Some of the specific ways in which the family currently maintains economic and political 'stability' are worth noticing. For example, in terms of the production/consumption contradiction at a very simple level, the role of the wife is partly to provide a domestic manager who will desperately 'make ends meet' (often at cost to herself in food, health, pocket-money, time) in a situation of wage-depression, partly to provide economic slack to be taken up when production booms. But the most general contribution of the family to the maintenance of political stability and stagnation is its socialization function for children; in the present society, as Miliband points out:

The working-class family tends to attune its children in a multitude of ways to its own subordinate status. And even where, as is now ever more frequently the case, working-class parents are ambitious for their children, the success for which they hope and strive is mostly conceived in terms of integration at a higher level within the system and on the latter's own terms; and this is most likely to lead them to try to persuade their children that the path to success lies not in rebellion against but in conformity to the values, prejudices and modes of thought of the world to which entry is sought.⁵

Within this general pattern, various mechanisms can operate, below the level of any specific intention. The narrowly *privatized* home described by the Goldthorpe team in Luton reduces any political or trade union awareness to a minimum, leaving only a *passive* acceptance and *inactive* expectation of collective 'integration

¹T. Veness, *School Leavers*, 1962.

²Figures are not available for U.K., but one estimate for Sweden points out that while industry uses 1,290 million labour-hours annually, housewives donate 2,340 million unpaid domestic labour-hours annually.

³Cf. figures in P. Anderson, *Towards Socialism*, 1965, pp. 276-277. Without the female vote, England would have had a continuous Labour government since 1945.

⁴Cf. Janet Blackman, The Campaign for Women's Rights, in *Trade Union Register 1*; for effect of unionization on voting, cf. Anderson, p. 262f.

⁵R. Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society*, 1969, pp. 263-4.

at a higher level', and a limited perspective on individual advance.¹ This connects with traditional working-class *passive* acceptance of neighbourhood groups, leaving no tradition of the social skills necessary *actively* to establish new relationships in a changed setting.² More deeply, the absence of those social skills is closely related to the generation by certain family-structures and patterns of parental authority, typical among the working class, of importantly restricted linguistic capacities, the confinement of perception and expression within an immediate 'world', an inability to make the necessarily complex connections involved in grasping our society as a whole.³ It is in the interacting combination of all these factors, with the working-class family home as their meeting point, that one could most feasibly locate the wide-spread political apathy of the working class in Britain over the last generation or so. In other words, the characteristic British family-structure, far from contributing to political disturbance, as in the case of an oppressed minority in America, operates mainly to maintain ingrained inaction among a subordinate and complacent majority.

An inadequate theology of marriage?

At this point the theological question re-emerges. If it were a case, say, of a specific family which was clearly generating acute psychological disorientations in its children,⁴ it would seem distinctly odd to claim that this family was a 'means of grace' or 'a point of entry of God's love into the world'; if one could reasonably predict that a particular marriage would produce schizophrenics, it might be questionable whether one could confidently solemnize such a marriage as a sacrament of grace. For anyone concerned with developing a fusion between theology and revolutionary socialism (and I presume that many readers of *New Blackfriars* would at least respect that option), the wider question presses: whether, given the role of the family sketched above, some current theological reflections on marriage can be endorsed at all. How, in this light, can we accept, for example, Schillebeeckx's remarks that 'never before in the history of man has married life been led back in such a remarkable way to its original, authentic shape and form as it has today', that marriage as a sacrament is 'a sacred sign' in which 'God's activity becomes visible to us all in faith', and that it can be 'the appointed means of revealing and expressing, in a human religious manner, God's covenant of grace with men in Christ';⁵ or Denis O'Callaghan's conclusion:

¹Goldthorpe, *et al.*, *op. cit.*, ch. V, pp. 116-156.

²Cf. J. M. Moge, *Family and Neighbourhood*, 1956, and R. Hoggart, *Uses of Literacy*, 1957. Cf. Gavron, *op. cit.*, ch. 11, 'Social Contacts', and Goldthorpe, *op. cit.*, ch. 4, 'The pattern of sociability'.

³Cf. Basil Bernstein's work, most easily available in the Routledge series 'Primary Socialization, Language and Education', or, summarizing the work up to 1967, D. Lawton, *Social Class, Language and Education*, 1969.

⁴Cf. R. D. Laing's work, esp. *Sanity, Madness and the Family*, 1964.

⁵E. Schillebeeckx, *Marriage: Secular Reality and Saving Mystery*, 1965, I, pp. 1, 18, 170.

As a human institution marriage associates man and woman in a family unit in which they achieve their identity and fulfilment and rear new life to responsible adulthood in an atmosphere of loving communion. As a Christian institution marriage is a sacramental and consecrated state in which the various elements of natural wedlock are given a redeeming force and are directed towards the realization of the Kingdom of God. Against this background marriage consent is the dedication of man and woman in partnership to a Christian mission in Church and world.¹

Even fairly recent theological writing on marriage tended to see only the internal problems (mainly contraception);² O'Callaghan at least is more concerned with the role of marriage in the realization of the kingdom, but his article seems to ignore almost all other problems.³ Schillebeeckx is aware of the problem of marriage-structure, but his theological comments echo a 'change of heart' strategy: the christianization of marriage is, for him, 'the making Christian, not of the secular structure of marriage, but of its natural and human inter-relationships, although these are always experienced within ordinary secular patterns of life', and 'permeated by Christian charity, the ordinary secular relationships of the family were not cancelled out, but subjected to a complete metamorphosis. Love achieved authority.' It is significant for our point that Schillebeeckx then adds: 'A parallel process took place in the "natural" relationship of the master to the slave existing in the society of those days. This relationship too was inwardly transformed by Christian love—it became so permeated by the new spirit that in the long run, with the coming of new economic situations, slavery itself could be abolished.'⁴ Whatever truth there may be in this emphasis, we need—just as in the case of slavery—to take more seriously the *form* of the institution of marriage as such; we cannot take a family squabble as the model for restructuring the form of the family itself.

At present, much of the debate in the Church is centred on celibacy and contraception, both of which are only fully intelligible in the context of two wider debates: on the connection between the mission and structure of the Church in relation to secular structures, and on the nature of marriage itself. If we take seriously the notion of marriage as 'directed towards the realization of the Kingdom of God', those two wider debates begin to fuse. If celibacy is claimed as 'superior' to marriage because, either 'theologically' or practically, it is regarded as more appropriate to a life directed towards the kingdom, then it is possible to respond in terms of an emphasis on *marriage* more theologically and practically directed towards the kingdom. Yet our present theology of marriage is largely irrelevant to

¹'Marriage as Sacrament', *Concilium*, V. 6, p. 103.

²E.g. L. M. Weber, *On Marriage, Sex and Virginity*, *Quaestiones Disputatae* 16, 1964.

³Vatican II's rhetoric on marriage is equally irrelevant—e.g. *Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Abbot, pp. 249-258.

⁴Schillebeeckx, *op. cit.*, I, p. 197-199.

practical concern with building anything more than a private 'kingdom upon earth', while our practice of marriage conforms utterly to the modes sketched earlier. Can we attempt to see beyond the present forms? This article is concerned to suggest a fresh context rather than to present a fully worked-through 'solution', but at least one can begin.

From flirtation to communion—via communes?

It is already possible to see the political significance of contraception and celibacy: the argument that the absence of a fear of unwilling propagation, of offering an involuntary hostage to Society, has already had its deep psychological impact on Reich-minded students, releasing them towards the 'festival of the oppressed' in the Paris *événements*, is familiar; so is the spectacle of South American guerillas embracing celibacy or blacks rejecting a married Stokely Carmichael. Other political connections with 'the family' assert themselves: we should take seriously both the Women's Liberation Movements and the 'generational conflict' as potential levers.¹ Each of these is concerned with 'liberation'; if we look more closely at two 'liberation zones' in present English society, a more immediate opening appears. For many people the period between school and marriage remains in memory as a brief interlude of peculiar freedom; parties crystallize and later re-enact that sensation. What both that period and parties share is an element of flirtation, a flexing or exercising of relational skills. But flirtation and serious courting are problematic today: the sense of linguistic decay in terms like 'walking out', 'courting', 'going steady', 'dating' and even 'in love' is an index. The young are caught between an older pattern of encoded courting, with fixed and socially approved 'stages' (first date, first kiss, meeting the family, engagement, etc.) and a variant on the spontaneous combustion theory of love, a 'romanticism' that invites a promiscuous pattern of first meeting/first sex. The move has been rapid from the Monotones' 1958 question in *The Book of Love*:

I wonder, wonder, who
wrote the book of love,
was it someone from above?
Chapter One says you love her
love her with all your heart
Chapter Two you tell her
yer never, never gonna part
Chapter Three remember
the meaning of romance
In Chapter Four you break up
but you give her
just once more chance . . .

¹Cf. the ironic 'Discourse on Birth Control', by Ipousteguy, in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1968 ed. C. Posner, 1970; Juliet Mitchell, 'Women: the longest revolution', *New Left Review* 40; Sheila Rowbotham, *Women's Liberation and the New Politics*, M.D.M. Pamphlet no. 4; E. R. Leach, *A Runaway World?*, 1968, ch. 3; etc.

to Roger McGough's *At Lunchtime A Story of Love*:

When the bus stopped suddenly to avoid
damaging a mother and child in the road, the
young lady in the green hat sitting opposite
was thrown across me, and not being one to
miss an opportunity i started to make love
with all my body.

At first she resisted saying that it
was too early in the morning and too soon
after breakfast and that anyway she found
me repulsive. But when i explained that
this being a nuclear age, the world was going
to end at lunchtime, she took off her
green hat, put her bust ticket in her pocket
and joined in the exercise. etc.

(Compare poor Clough's *Natura Naturans* for a Victorian reaction to the same opportunity!) Some pop can still operate in the old mode (e.g. Siren's coy *God Bless the Bride*, 1970) but intelligent rock has long recognized the incredible difficulty of contemporary 'love', and its links not just with a sense of the nuclear shadow but with deep psycho-social frustrations: the Rolling Stones' *Satisfaction* and *Backstreet Girl* are early examples.¹ A sense of fragility has replaced conventional confidence; silent groping has replaced assertion; solipsistic or anarchic movements have replaced pre-patterned dance. Two related assumptions are openly opposed: the immense social pressure towards marriage as an ending, almost a full-stop in the novel, and the cessation of alternative relationships after marriage.² One response is to try to re-discover a gradual growth in relationship, in which sex (and perhaps formal marriage) is only one stage, implying still only partial commitment—as for some tribal societies;³ and, secondly, the attempt to establish almost a new form of tribal grouping, the *commune* as a wider context within which that gradual growth can be given 'space' and a variety of types and levels of immediate relationship can be exercised.

Communes, located in cities rather than the 'back to the land' experiments of an earlier generation, again offer themselves as an available structure for marriage, and their political intentions are often explicit, whether in German SDS communes or the Blackheath Commune. To view them as peculiarly appropriate carriers of Christian marriage is *not* to argue for communal sex: most communes are, in fact, a context for monogamous relations, despite press

¹Cf. Michael Parsons, Rolling Stones, *New Left Review* 49, for an analysis of *Backstreet Girl*'s 'contradiction between the overtly arrogant and patronizing words and the gentle tenderness of the melody'.

²'Only one couple in the sample still went dancing, though 81 per cent of the wives mentioned it as their favourite activity before they were married', Gavron, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

³Hillmann, *Concilium* V. 6, p. 29.

sensationalism. Though they provide a 'situation' in which the traditional ethical considerations, narrowly preoccupied with sex, may be raised in new ways, it is the political and social significance of their *form* that I want to emphasize. They provide a socializing context for children which may more easily escape the inculcation of passive modes and restricted codes; they dislocate present ratios between income and household expenditure, in the shared consumption of 'goods' from washing-machines to newspapers—remedying the extravagant under-utilization of some items, making available shared 'luxury' and leisure items hardly within the scope of one family income; they accommodate a wider range of differentiated living space, etc. Above all, they offer the *experience* of communal living, of democracy and solidarity painfully achieved and precariously maintained, in which atrophied social skills can be re-discovered; and they release members for alternative 'production'—the gradual production, through social work, political agitation, area projects, of a society in which to live as a community is the social experience. In Marx's terms, they can surpass the struggle for certain fetishized needs, leaving energies free for the recognition of new needs, for the sensitive realization of others *as* needs, and for the necessary response to the needs *of* others, both within and beyond the commune-group. One of the needs that might be genuinely felt within such a group would be the need for an adequate language and celebration of community, the need to say, socially, with full recognition, 'This is my body' and 'This is my blood'.¹ Communes are, potentially, permanent liberated zones.

Conclusion

One could spell out further the ramifications of communes (the headaches of the Inland Revenue or Housing Committees, e.g.) but they are not the only possibility. The concluding point is therefore one of principle—theological principle. At present, the Churches and cultural Christianity are among the important blockages on experimentation with married forms of life; in that sense they help to legitimate a shell—the pre-packaged family home as economic unit of capitalism—which militates against the establishment of a kingdom, one stage on the way towards which is a socialist society, and which in any case (if one refuses that particular eschatological interpretation) shores up a system directly and immediately repressive. Yet one aspect of Jesus's divorce saying was to break through an inherited view of marriage, not simply by undercutting a legalistic 'contract' view of it and restoring it to a context of 'covenant', but by emphasizing a mutuality, an assertion, if you like, of female emancipation: 'a man can be answerable to his own wife as an adulterer (cf. Luke 16, 18a)—the obligations of a woman to her husband, formerly one-sided, are now *mutual*. Man and wife

¹Cf. my remarks on baptism, *Absent Centre*, *Slant* 25, pp. 15-20.

are shown to be equal partners with equal rights.¹ In English law a double standard, as between husband and wife, concerning the grounds on which each could sue for divorce remained till 1923. Now that one breakthrough implied in the divorce saying has been belatedly recognized (albeit inversely), perhaps we can begin to grasp the wider implications for us, now, of Jesus's refusal to accept the form of what was not, in his day as in ours, just a 'religious' structure but also a crucial social and political structure. We might also take seriously two other sayings: Jesus's rejection of the excuse 'I have just got married and so am unable to come' (Luke 14, 20), and his enigmatic comment about the kingdom: 'For when they rise from the dead, men and women do not marry' (Mark 12, 25).

¹Paul Hoffmann, Jesus's saying about divorce and its interpretation, *Concilium* V. 6, p. 53.

Rational Man on the Dark Margin by Adrian Edwards, C.S.Sp.

The lady in Muriel Spark's latest novel, eagerly looking out for her murderer, was surely an anthropologist manquée. For one element in the anthropologist's complex fate is the dialectical compulsion to achieve the synthesis of contraries. The anthropologist's charter—the cohesiveness and interpretability of all the works of social man—is part of the legacy of the Enlightenment surely; yet this volume¹ suggests that it is in the very area where the hidden and the hateful come nearest to receiving the guilty approval of social man that anthropologists can do their finest work, marked by that passionate rationality and clear-eyed empathy which do at times reward painstaking research and patient reading. It is true that the best essays are by historians, or by anthropologists using history to gain a wider range; but the historians, Professor Norman Cohn, Mr Peter Brown, Dr Alan Macfarlane, and Mr Keith Thomas, have adopted the anthropological approach, which examines the interplay of ideology and institution, rather than work in the historian's tradition of the placing of men in their milieu.

This collection, then, dedicated to exploring the dark margin of society's self-consciousness, is intended as a commemoration of Professor Evans-Pritchard's *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande*.² Now this is one of the classics of anthropology in more than one sense. The ease of style depends on the extreme clarity of the

¹*Witchcraft, Confessions and Accusations* edited by Mary Douglas, Tavistock Publishers Ltd. A.S.A. Monographs 9, pp. xxviii, 387, London 1970. 63s. (£3.15).

²First printed Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1937.