

L'UNIVERSITE ENTRE L'ENGAGEMENT ET LA LIBERTE, by Hervé Carrier, S.J. *Presses de l'Université Grégorienne*, Rome, 1972. 261 pp. Pb, price unstated.

Can an institution which is expected to turn out 'good' civil servants/clerics/managers, and which is lavishly maintained, largely in the belief that it will, also pursue free research and provide importantly unbiased teaching? If not, why pour enormous funds into a futility? And what if those maintained in such an institution want to make it into a base for disrupting the society which is maintaining them? And are there not better things to do with limited resources than to maintain universities, even *douce* and well-behaved ones? Is there not something seriously wrong with teaching/learning fiddling in an inflammable city on funds made available by skimping on the Roman fire brigade? As for teaching/learning fire-raising . . ., some might wish to add.

Those are some of the questions which a reading of this book is likely to raise; and some of the questions the answers to which, if attempted, are likely to benefit from the material provided. Chapters 1 and 3, in particular, may warmly—though with provisos—be commended to discussion groups of guilt-afflicted bourgeois academics who are already concerned, as many are today, with such questions and might even provoke such discussion where it has not yet been entertained. In addition, chapters 4-6 give much material more specifically concerned with the kinds of problem—often complicated instances of those already touched on—likely to afflict those running Catholic universities, faculties or programmes of study, or are wondering whether such things should be run. Since the author, a noted sociologist who is also Rector of the Gregorian University, is as well placed as anyone to experience such problems, those chapters should be of particular interest to people like masters of studies in religious orders or diocesan catechetical commissioners. This said, it is only fair to insist that Carrier explicitly set himself a more circumscribed task in this book: a sociologist's inquiry into the transformations to be seen going on today in universities (and in Catholic ones in particular), and in the relationships between universities and the rest of the cultural or social systems within which they can be seen to work; and how such transformations are in turn modifying what universities can do or can reasonably be expected to do within the societies which maintain them. Since he allows himself development

and evaluation of the evidence as well as primary description, it is clear that he is taking a pretty generous view of the proper scope of a sociologist's activities.

Chapter 1 concerns the socialization of the functions and structures of the university. By socialization he means (1) becoming a matter of indubitably public concern, as when the Krupps family business expands to the point where it is obviously not sensible to treat its doings as one may treat the doings of Aunt Jean, who makes toffee apples for the school fête; (2) 'acculturation', as when a child or a cultural stranger takes on the accepted ways of a given culture; and (3) becoming answerable publicly for one's doings, as when states awake to the realization that (1) has occurred. Socialization in all these ways, he says, is going on within universities, and can be seen in the relationships between universities and other bodies. Universities are no longer [if they ever were] sanctuaries dedicated to research and learning, but are and ought to be answerable in many ways to the state, to industry, to public opinion. This is a good chapter, and raises a number of interesting questions, especially on the tension between social responsibility and academic freedom. Chapter 2, 'The university in post-industrial society', covers much of the same ground, though less satisfactorily. Chapter 3 raises issues of first importance. Are universities for perpetuating a culture by transmitting, as faithfully as they can, the accepted values of the culture concerned, or are they for making it possible or easy, or likely, for such values to be questioned or rejected? What else may they be for? To that he suggests: '*L'université être la première institution dans la cité des hommes à s'interroger sur les mythes du progrès, sur les présupposés de l'ordre social en vigueur, qui trop souvent laissent subsister des injustices intolérables*' . . . '*critiquer la signification d'un ordre social donné, . . . ses préjugés, ses motivations inconscientes. L'inconscient collectif est plus difficile à percevoir que le subconscient de la personne . . .*' (107). The idea of a university as a group therapy session for a sick society has its attractions, but a group therapy session, in the measure in which it is successful, is also self-dissolving. Also, knowing what one's sickness is, of itself leaves one sick; and is there in any case a real hope that this would lead in the not-too-distant future to a correct diagnosis even

of the principal ills of current society? And in the meantime it is those who are in many ways suffering least who would be taking part in the therapy sessions, which as part of the world of the haves are being held at the expense of the continuing suffering of the have-nots. *Je participe, tu participes . . . les souffrances des souffrants continuent*. This whole section raises more questions than it even attempts to answer, and the answers that it does give may provoke as much disagreement as assent; but it does make worthwhile points, like '*Liberté ne veut pas dire abstraction des problèmes les plus urgents du monde ambiant*' or '*La liberté de la communauté universitaire se spécifie par l'exercice sans entraves de l'intelligence, de l'imagination, de la créativité au service de la culture*' (107). Such points are highly debatable—how, for instance, do you square '*sans entraves*' and '*au service de la culture*'?—but it is perhaps precisely by leaving readers dissatisfied in this kind of way, and stimulating some into working out other answers, that this book is most praiseworthy. Chapters 4-6 have already been commended to those whom they chiefly concern, yet they should not be dismissed by others as irrelevant to consideration of the tensions or conflicts between searching for truth or even avoiding falsification in exposition of uncongenial doctrines, on the one hand, and fidelity to a determined cultural position (and that of the society which is maintaining the university or other institution) on the other. While such considerations can be ignored by classical liberals, though less convincingly in these post-Warwick days than formerly, they cannot be ignored by catholic Christians (and hence, one trusts, by Catholic Christians) who are aware of what is going on, save at great risk of bad faith. Catholics, like serious Marxists and (perhaps) unlike classical

liberals, cannot sensibly and plausibly maintain that they could never even be tempted to sin against liberal academic ideals, for the good of the cause.

Many judgments in the book cry out to be contradicted or rejected; others should be justified and are not; some of the factual statements must be false and others are false: e.g. on the maintenance of universities, etc., in the U.K. Also, evidence from carefully conducted studies is too often given the same apparent weight as the dicta of some ephemeral catch-penny. One recognizes that good sociological method makes for a certain promiscuity in the collection of data; but the result presented should not look like a jackdaw's nest. Such things, however, are at most mildly infuriating and should not deter those interested in the kinds of problem raised from reading this stimulating book.

There are two indexes, a bibliography, two tables of contents (one fairly detailed, yet not always clearly indicating the actual contents of individual sections) and remarkably few proof-slips, when one remembers that at least part of the book could not have been set up before February of this year. 'Pin Emile' on the cover should be Émile Pin.

The book ends with a quotation from Paul VI: 'Catholic universities are a necessary element in the Church living in the world and at the service of the world'. Either that is plainly false or the Church, for many centuries, was not living in the world and at the service of the world. Which, in view of the Church's professed mission, would seem rather worse than being plainly corrupt. It is Mgr Carrier's own view that those words of the Pope are '*à la fois réalistes et convaincantes*' (244).

L. MOONAN

**CONFESSION: OUTMODED SACRAMENT?—An Enquiry into Teenage Opinion, by Sister Laurence Murray, S.N.D. Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1970. 189 pp. £2.**

For most Catholics confession is the first sacrament they actually experience, generally just before first communion. This is widely considered too young an age for confession, but things will probably stay this way for a time since the General Catechetical Directory issued from Rome last year insists that confession should precede first communion.

This first experience colours our whole approach to confession and our understanding of it: we get stuck in the attitudes of children. Indeed, this is sometimes even encouraged—witness the stories of saints whose confessions are precisely commended as those of a child.

If these attitudes are rejected there is not much underneath to replace them.

Often enough confusion arises while people are still at school. So the views of teenagers as collected in this book—and Sr Lawrence Murray's reflections on them—can be applied fairly generally to the situation of Catholics at large.

The first part of the book is a survey of the replies given to a questionnaire by over 1,600 16-year-old girls in England, Scotland, the U.S.A. and Lesotho. The questionnaire seems to have been put a few years ago (no date is given for the original survey) but the replies