

attempt to place counselling within a whole culture conceals a new kind of dynamic individualism beneath its social commitment.

Because of this superficial attitude to politics, Professor Halmos misses some of the crucial questions which social work raises. How far is the real improvement it effects *in tension* with long-term radical change by virtue of conservative ideas of social adjustment and conformity, how far can it be a sop to a disturbed society, treating symptoms without reference to basic structural factors? How far, in fact, can counselling, carried on in isolation, become the reserve of humane concern in the margin of an inhuman society? This question itself raises issues which Halmos fails to treat: how far, in conceiving of 'The Counsellors' as a body, are we allowing the reality of common effort and responsibility to be undermined by the dangerous paternalism of a network of trained consoler? This is the danger implicit in the otherwise valuable main argument of the book – the argument that counselling involves certain human values and involvements on the part of the counsellors, which can become the basis of a general sense of human solidarity. It is good to point to these human values, against the pressures which would make counselling a dispassionate science, but the significance which this gives to the role of the counsellor can ironically backfire into the very kinds of

paternalism which destroy human solidarity and fellowship.

Professor Halmos uses terms like 'love' and 'faith' to describe the attitudes which real counselling involves, and argues for the *dialectical* nature of the counsellor-patient relationship, one involving a whole personal understanding and sympathy. It is surprising that his only developed comment on the work of the psychiatrist who has argued this case more than anyone – R. D. Laing – is grudging and ungenerous. To mention Laing's work is to suggest another criticism of Halmos, the fact that his tone and general approach suggests an originality of argument which isn't really there. Laing, amongst others, has argued for a dialectical rationality in psychiatry, and although in one sense the case cannot be stated too often, Halmos is in danger at times of stating the obvious in an inflated way: a chapter-heading like 'The Coming of the Counsellors', with its suggestion of C. S. Lewis-type science fiction, is an example. But the general argument is still vital, and the fact that a Professor of Sociology can look at his subject in the kind of deep and wide perspective shown here probably outweighs the fact that a Professor of Sociology can see politics as concerned merely with the 'abstract logistics' of society.

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SACRED AND SECULAR, by A. M. Ramsey. *Longmans, 15s.*

While it is a pleasure to read an archbishop whose words are not the immediate object of ridicule, I find these Holland Lectures surprisingly lacking in impact. This is not because the arguments and views are blurred. Indeed we are clearly reminded of the essential Christian paradox that man's relationship to God is both beyond the world and within it, both sacred *and* secular, and that neither aspect can be reduced to the other. The sacred or other worldly aspect is realised in contemplative prayer. Traditional mysticism shows it to be a 'conscious relationship to God' which is so within the self that it is beyond words and images, beyond the world, history and nature. From such otherworldly experience flows a practical caring for fellow men; a caring distinctively Christian by including a regard for man's otherworldly destiny. The paradox is

lived out through the interplay of contemplation and action. But more than this, the Christian must also learn from the secular world itself about the presence of God within it.

One may wonder how far the translation of supernatural-natural into contemplative-active polarities does justice to any of these concepts. However, while this modernisation may perhaps re-assure church-goers and encourage the faint-hearted, does it really show the value of belief in the explicitly supernatural with its imagery, ethic and liturgy? Surely the darkness of mystical prayer, resulting from the perennial failure of words and images to comprehend God, always presupposes full emotional and intellectual engagement with Christian symbols as a preliminary, if inadequate, support? But this is not the darkness in many individuals today which arises rather from the initial failure

of this imagery (and liturgy) to engage him as a *man*. Our darkness comes from failing to find the ladder and not from having to leap off the top. Again to argue that Bonhoeffer himself did not practise Religionless Christianity and that Christ founded a religion, is to leave untouched those who are attempting to lead such a life. If there is a weakness in this contribution to a contemporary debate it is that it fails to analyse

the situation, psychological, social or spiritual, of those to whom it is addressed and to show how these arguments and re-statements overcome their particular errors or difficulties. Plainer speaking, with the same humour and charity, would give this pastoral teaching the welcome impact which his political utterances appear to have.

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COLLABORATION WITH TYRANNY IN RABBINIC LAW, by David Daube. (Riddell Memorial Lectures, Newcastle University). *Oxford University Press*, pp. 104, 15s.

What are the inhabitants of a beleaguered city to do when required to hand one of their number over to be killed or all perish? This question much exercised the ancient Rabbis, to whom the issue was of much more direct concern than it is to us today. But, though we may never have to face such a dilemma ourselves, we may learn much from this little book by the Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford, which treats of the way in which Rabbinic opinions on this and closely related questions developed. Dr Daube examines in detail the half-dozen or so relevant texts, several of which are not of themselves very clear in their meaning or origin, and offers a plausible historical reconstruction of the pattern of development. His book is of obvious significance for Rabbinic scholarship, for in a number of instances he is able to argue convincingly against undeservedly established positions; but the general reader too will be interested in the way sociological changes influenced Jewish legal formulations, and in the deft skill with which Jewish exegetes were able to reinterpret traditional moral positions when altered circumstances had made them intolerably harsh. (Rabbinic subtlety was as often, if not oftener, employed on the side of leniency as of strictness.)

The original view of the Rabbis seems to have been that in no circumstances should the one be sacrificed for the sake of the many; if brigands (for the original formulation had brigands rather than a lawfully constituted authority in mind) demand a scapegoat, the whole community must be prepared to perish rather than that a soul be lost from Israel.

When, however, in the second century A.D., it was no longer a case of thugs but of the 'lawful' Roman government endangering the very existence of Jewry by a systematic policy of persecution, the opinion gained ground and prevailed that a man could be given up if he were asked for *by name*, because it was to be presumed that in that case it was more probable than not that the government had some reason to wish to proceed against him. When, however, the age of acute persecution had passed, there was a return to the original abhorrence at the idea of sacrificing a victim, but since no established Jewish law can be rescinded, it was necessary instead to refine the law as much as possible; and so Resh Laqish in the third century taught that a man should indeed be handed over if named, but only if he had committed a crime worthy of death.

The particular situations treated of here may no longer be very real, but issues of a similar sort, especially those involving the morality of sacrificing an individual for the sake of another individual (as in abortion, a subject on which, incidentally, the Rabbis legislated rather on the lines of the recent Anglican report – vid. p. 58) are perennial, and it arguable that the Catholic moralist may have something to learn from the comparatively pragmatic and relativist approach of the Rabbis to many moral issues. The thought, at any rate, that our canonists have often been more inflexible and harsh than their Jewish counterparts (despite our preconceived ideas of Jewish 'legalism') must surely give us pause.

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