

this size and what we now need is some far bigger work both on the physical and on the moral scale. In this case the two are not unconnected because so much human conflict and anguish was concentrated into the twelve years of Nazi rule that a huge canvas is necessary in order to do justice to any of it. For instance, Professor Conway devotes some six lines to the Protestant Pastor, Paul Schneider (p. 209) which are perfectly correct but convey no impression of the man's tremendous heroism—how could one in six lines? And the same is true of virtually every incident in the book. For example, in the weeks before Munich the Confessing Church leaders, with Hans Asmussen to the fore, drew up an extraordinarily courageous service of intercession in case of war which was really a great act of self-accusation on the part of the German people: how such a service might produce a conflict of loyalties is illustrated in the person of Otto Dibelius, whose son was in the army and who did not feel he could ask his son to go into action with such a tempered blessing, however much he might sympathize with Asmussen's intentions. I have no doubt that Professor Conway knows

all this but the restricted space he allows himself does not give him chance to show it.

As far as the Catholics go, Professor Conway is much more just than such writers as Lewy and Amery, but in their case also it is very restricted justice that he is able to offer. In many ways the critical period for the Catholic hierarchy was in the first half of 1933; and the critical point for the historian to elucidate is how it came about that Cardinal Bertram took the attitude he did, why Bishop von Preysing took such a very different attitude, and then to explain how Bertram's policy came to prevail. Of all this there is no hint in Professor Conway's pages. And at every other critical point in the story I find myself wanting to expand what Professor Conway has to say, because if one is going to say anything at all decisive it must be at much greater length than this. Let the historians of Christianity in Nazi Germany learn from a medievalist who really knows what writing history is all about: let them study David Knowles's *The Episcopal Colleagues of Thomas Becket*.

DONALD NICHOLL

THE FLYING SAUCER VISION, by John Michell. *Sidgwick & Jackson, 1967. 25s.*

'There are more things in heaven and earth . . .' and especially at a time when 'archetypal forces and fantasies are released anew to inspire and delude' (*New Blackfriars*, August 1968, Comment). One of the most important of current archetypal fantasies (if such they are, which is perhaps doubtful) is flying saucers, about which, as Jung pointed out, there has grown up quite a considerable folklore, which in many points closely resembles the beliefs and stories of primitive myth. This is where John Michell comes in. He demonstrates many connexions between dragons and flying saucers, ancient and modern visitors from space, or earthmen captured into space. About these parallels there can be no doubt. But what is their significance?

John Michell maintains that the old myths are to be taken quite seriously as an account of the origin of our civilization: millennia ago, the 'gods' did actually descend to earth from space, in flying discs, and for a whole they lived with men, initiating them into some of their own wisdom and learning. But the basic culture of men was morally unable to keep up with the technology of the 'gods', who therefore found themselves bound to leave the earth.

After their departure, the culture they founded gradually decayed, and is now coming to its end. And the 'gods' are going to return, to initiate the next stage in our growth; the flying saucers are to prepare us. When they come, all our conceptions will be shattered.

This sounds, and of course is, fantastic, which is not necessarily to say that it is false. Be that as it may, this is the sort of way in which many, many people, especially among the young, are thinking. The belief 'that our salvation is from 'on high' seems to be very widespread, and is preached even by evolutionists, as well as hippies (call them what you will), astrologers (remember that astrology is probably more widely practised today than ever before, albeit in a somewhat degenerate form), and esoteric societies nice and nasty (scientology, in at least one of its forms, included), and of course, Jung, and C. S. Lewis in his space trilogy (the obvious parallels between him and John Michell are all the more significant for the fact that Michell has not read Lewis). Likewise, there is a widespread 'eschatological' expectation, especially though far from exclusively among young people. A cartoon on the back of one number of *Oz* shows Christ stepping out

of a flying saucer, saying (in Hebrew): 'Hey, fellas, I'm back.' One of the editors of *Oz* said he thought it a fair caricature of what most young people believe, at least those of the 'psychedelic generation'. Even the view that there was a prehistoric descent of the 'gods' is maintained by several scholars, mainly in the U.S.S.R. It is certainly the case that archaeologists have begun to recognize a fantastically advanced culture in prehistoric times, with some suggestions of a highly developed technology. Professor Thom has indicated the immense mathematical (pure and applied) and astronomical competence of the builders of the British megalithic sites; not only was there a standard and precise measurement throughout these isles, but there was also knowledge of astronomical discoveries made in the twentieth century (just as popular tradition knew of the two satellites of Mars long before astronomers discovered them with modern equipment).

It is tempting simply to shrug our scientific and commonsensical shoulders. And that is just what we must not do (that is why I think it is important). It is no longer possible for 'scientific commonsense' to legislate about the bounds of reality. Science has played traitor, for one thing, as when the electron was found to go through two different holes in a sheet of paper at the same time. There *are* more things at least on earth than our commonsense philosophy cares to admit of. Even to keep up with the scientists, we must relearn the use of myths and symbols, quite apart from the further reasons adduced by McLuhan, Lawrence, Jung, C. S. Lewis, Tolkien, Gerald Vann. The poet and the priest must become one (Rahner).

At the very least, we must acknowledge here a challenge to our presentation of the gospel. The impression we seem keen to give, and on the whole succeed in giving, is that our gospel is secular and demythologized. And we are just

too late for that. What John Mitchell is calling for, in this book and elsewhere, is desecularization and remythologization. I am afraid that people will one day look back at our Church, with its political and mythless and unmythical gospel, its deritualized sacraments, and say that once more she has jumped on a bandwagon already passing and irrelevant. (I know there are people who say that Christianity should preach secularization, whether or not we are living in a secular society. I suggest such people should read their Bibles a little less selectively.)

This is not simply a question of apologetics. Culturally, as McLuhan says, there is the question of preserving the West from too simple a reversion to tribal, mythological attitudes. The archetypes are, so to speak, arising in all their force and fantasy; unless we can point to a true use of myth and symbol, an authentic mysticism, we are going to be deluged by sheer superstition. And this is beginning to happen already. A people unprepared for myth and mystery tries to cope by means of hopelessly inadequate tools. And so myth becomes a substitute for thought, instead of a mode of thought, fantasy takes the place of action. 'I don't believe in Vietnam', said one boy to me. Innerspace and outerspace are one, according to the Oriental sages, but, buddy, they didn't mean *that!* To preach the faith, even to preach sanity, to this generation, we must show ourselves open to the whole mythological, symbolical, ritual, mystical dimension of life, and of our own religion.

It is surely no accident that two of the idols of the psychedelics are C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, both of them Christian mythologists. It is probably true, too, that C. S. Lewis did his best theology in his fantasies.

The sermon is over. Read John Michell, it is a nice book. And then, look out!

SIMON TUGWELL, O.P.

VIOLENCE, by John Singleton, 11-16 Series: Year 5, Teacher's Book. *Darton, Longman and Todd, 1968.* **SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION OUTLINES**, *Sheed and Ward, 1968: Deuteronomy*, by Joseph Blenkinsopp. *Acts of the Apostles*, by Nicholas Lash. *I Corinthians*, by Laurence Bright O.P. *I Peter and I John*, by Bernard Robinson.

John Singleton's *Violence* is a collection of photographs and extracts from books, periodicals and other sources with a commentary and questions for discussion together with notes for the teacher. Both the photographs and texts chosen are forceful, but this book should be taken as an excellent example of what can be done by an enterprising teacher and his class

rather than as a textbook for use year after year in classroom discussion.

The Scripture Discussion Outlines are a very welcome contribution to Sixth Form and Higher Education work on Scripture. Plans have been made to cover all the major books of the Bible in this series and it is to be hoped that all the future volumes preserve the