

Locke. It is a great convenience to have them collected within the covers of a single book.

Williams's views on this topic have themselves developed. Their most subtle expression is to be found in his *Philosophical Review* article of 1970, 'The Self and the Future'. (The points he makes here have been further elaborated by Professor R. G. Swinburne this year, 1974, in an Aristotelian Society paper.) They involve consideration of hopes and fears which I may have for myself in the future. Thus, if I know that my present brain is to be transplanted into a new body and the resultant *ensemble* submitted to excruciating torture, the solution I favour to the personal identity problem will determine whether or not I fear for the future. It will hardly do to tell me in such a situation that the criteria of personal identity are a mere matter of convention. My fears will not be quietened by the arbitrary decision to adopt one set of criteria rather than another.

Williams has done us a great service by drawing our attention to this imaginary example. I am not sure that he succeeds in telling us why the example has such importance. The reason is, I believe, to be sought in a syntactical feature of sentences like 'Jenkins fears that he (Jenkins) is going to be tortured', which is sometimes hidden by the surface grammar of sentences like 'Jenkins fears torture' which express the same proposition without use of the reflexive pronoun. The reflexive pronoun is crucial to the understanding of such propositions. It is an uneliminable element in propositions ascribing beliefs,

fears, etc., which a person has about himself. The meaning of the reflexive pronoun is not given by whatever criteria are available for personal identity. I can thus attach meaning to the sentence 'I am afraid of being tortured tomorrow' independently of the criteria I adopt for determining which of various potential victims of torture will be *me*. Indeed my fear may amount to the fear that personal identity is determined by criteria involving brain identity, that *these* rather than some alternatives are the appropriate criteria for deciding whether the person to be tortured tomorrow will be *me*. But the meaningfulness of the expression I would give of my fear cannot be supposed determined by the fact that the fear is justified.

Of the papers in the volume not concerned with personal identity, perhaps the most interesting are 'Deciding to believe' and 'Morality and the emotions'. The first has obvious relevance to the theological treatment of faith: can one's assent to a proposition be determined by the will? The second contributes to the recent movement in Ethics away from an exclusive concern with the action-guiding function of moral judgements. Like Iris Murdoch, Williams is convinced of the importance for morality of the inner life, of what we feel as well as what we do.

Sometimes the reader feels that Williams, in these essays has not pushed the argument as far as it will go. Always, I think, the reader will find the ideas that are floated stimulating, engagingly expressed and important.

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**RITUAL IN MODERN SOCIETY.** A sociological analysis of ritualism in modern society. by Robert Bocoock. *George Allen and Unwin*, London, 1974. 209 pp. £4.00.

Ritual is commonly associated with the illogical mentality of primitives and church-goers, particularly Roman Catholics. Such a mentality hinders the enlightenment to be brought by Reason. The counter-culture has made ritual less of a 'boo-word' for some, as have developments in the discussion of symbolism. This book can be seen to fit into such revaluations and promises to make, indeed does make, some distinctions which can set students free from traditionalist approaches to ritual . . . including traditionalist approaches of the cultus variety.

A linked intellectual tradition associates ritual, again more or less unthinkingly now, with ideological control and social reaction. The author has broken with the import of this 'radical critique' too. He holds to the importance of ritual while arguing both that the gospel implies 'a solid form of socialism (i.e. not social democracy within capitalism)' (pp. 94-5) and that the rituals of the Church of England legitimate capitalism.

In principle, then, the book is well situated to

promote a positive emphasis on ritual. Unfortunately the author's conception of ritual is basically a mechanical reaction (not to say a 'ritualistic' reaction, in the bad sense) to the anti-ritualists. Looking through the photographs before reading the book, the caption to photograph 16 provoked the first feeling of disappointment. It continues the association of ritual with the strange and, at the next remove, the primitive. In the foreground two girls are dancing with each other. The caption begins *A dance—a place for meeting possible marital partners*. The strange clothing of the bystanders and other participants adds force to the feeling that perhaps this really is a primitive culture where men are thought to be unnecessary for reproduction. The rest of the caption, *This picture shows a revival of rock 'n' roll at Wembley in 1972*, gives the clue that the two girls are probably following a working-class pattern of physical enjoyment and not contemplating marriage. A more serious point comes with the definition of ritual. 'Ritual is the symbolic use of bodily movement in a

social situation to express and articulate meaning' (p. 37). The sense of the term 'symbolic' has been taken from S. Langer. The Langer quotation which the author uses to illustrate his intended meaning also defines 'gesture' as the action with symbolic or denoted significance. The author's definition can be reduced therefore to something like the following: 'ritual is bodily movement which denotes a feeling', granted that 'denoted' is used with S. Langer to refer to expressive acts performed without inner momentary compulsion. If this reduction is accepted the original definition is shown to be too rotund. And such a lack of parsimony in the definition shows how far sociology in particular has to go in order to establish the intellectual preconditions for a theory of ritual which breaks with existing prejudices and also makes a real move forward. Further, the author's definition is abstract in its solution to the nature of ritual. His definition comes to resolve the body-mind split. For the rational utilitarian mind acts without emotion whereas in contrast the expression of emotion can be over-spontaneous. Ritual is the product of neither the rational mind nor the spontaneous body if these two are taken in separation. Rather, it is the disciplined emotional expression of the whole person (cf. pp. 37-43). Useful as this attempt at a definition may be in the context of the current basic attitudes to ritual, the author is still accepting the body-mind dichotomy to set the problem and then proposing a neat conceptual solution. The breakthrough must come from a more concretely felt empirical problem—perhaps that of the body in relation to the structuring of human time.

The greater part of the book is in fact taken up with accounts and references to instances of ritual. The author sees 'concrete rituals' as composed of at least one of four 'analytical types'

of ritual action. These four are religious, civic life-cycle and aesthetic (cf. p. 48). This typology rests on 'the nature of the experience in the different types of ritual' (p. 53), here illustrated principally through High Anglican rituals. There is a photographic emphasis on dance in the chapter on aesthetic ritual, and a final chapter on ritual, social change and the counter-culture. But so many themes are indexed that the concrete analysis of individual instances must necessarily be perfunctory. Primarily the book serves as a general introduction to an expanded conceptualisation of ritual.

The author sees religious ritual action as concerned with worship and denoting the numinous. So he seems to imply that recent liturgical changes have entailed a move from religious ritual to civic ritual in which the group is the focus of concern (cf. p. 74). This may not be so. What about the age-old solidary functions of church-going for Irish and Polish nationals, for example? The major question which such an analysis and the general typology brings to mind is of a different order, however, and it concerns the underlying model of man in which denotative bodily movement is of four kinds and the religious is equivalent to the numinous. This is not so much a criticism of the author as of the sociological tradition in general, which has been insufficiently reflexive in its own assumptions in defining ritual. It is to the author's credit that he is at least sufficiently free himself to provoke questions which have more relevance to those seriously concerned about the re-creation of liturgy than the old cry that ritual is both irrational and outdated. Perhaps his next book might be more helpful in answering such questions. In preparation read this one.

PETER CORBISHLEY

**CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE AND THE UNITY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**, by Peter Hinchliff. *Geoffrey Chapman*, London, 1974. 154 pp. £3.75.

'The story of Cyprian's life is the story of how the cold disciplinarian became the hero of Christian Carthage'. So ends the first chapter, after a racy journalistic recreation of the night after Cyprian's execution in 258. But do not be discouraged. Peter Hinchliff's book is, in fact, a most interesting and fruitful account of Cyprian's ten years as bishop, and the evolution of his theological opinions in the course of his attempts to cope with successive crises in the church, brought on by persecution from without and dissension within.

Cyprian's writings are in the main concerned with questions of discipline: What should one do with the presbyter who kicks his wife in the

stomach to make her miscarry and leaves his father to starve to death in the street? Under what condition should people who lapsed during the persecution be readmitted to the church? Are heretical baptisms valid? These may not seem to be passionately interesting issues but they all relate to the fundamental question as to the identity of the church. What sort of community does she claim to be? Hinchliff's exposition of the evolution of Cyprian's thought on this question helps one to understand how it was that the suspect sect of the late Second Century could become, only a few years after the death of Cyprian, the church of Constantine.

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