

(son of the Master) was his son and heir. So Jesus did not give up his life to save the whole world but he *did* risk his life by surrendering on condition that his son was set free. Then he and his supporters carried out an audacious plan to cheat the cross of its second royal victim!

Having been prepared to go down into the pit with my son, I feel I can identify with this interpretation of Jesus.

Or does that just prove I'm bloody mad?

Letters to the editor

Dear Vivian,

You ask [May Self and Society] how we can get the kind of publicity we want.

The answer is simply persistence, thinking of new ways of reaching people and putting them into practice. Success won't come every time but often enough, bit by bit. I think this was borne out by the response to the 'Role Conflict and Authority' workshops when enough circulars are sent out and press contacts are made, including going through the social services and education yearbooks to reach those in charge of groups of people who are interested. They themselves will usually circularise their staff, if they are asked to do so. It's a lot of work and not easily done in one's spare time alone. It needs one person to take on a particular project and see it through. I would appeal to any AHP member to take on one such project in their particular field of work, finding ways and means to get the message across, putting on a particular event suitable for their own profession.

For instance, I saw this marriage guidance counselling programme on television and pretty awful it was. All the more surprising because I know some marriage guidance counsellors who certainly know a lot better. But here was a client pretty heavily defended, unable to say

very much about himself but plenty about other people, and the counsellor who presumably was a 'trained' person being equally judgmental and dismissive, and obviously unable to cope except to say, all right, let's end it. How could she? [Here I go being judgmental myself.] As a result, what I want to do now is put on a weekend workshop for counsellors to show them what gestalt can do, role plays, psychodrama, creative listening exercises, doing something rather than talking about it. Surely they need to know, and surely many of them already do? So why, I ask myself, why pick someone who doesn't to represent them on television? So what went wrong?

There is a lot of work to be done and so few of us to do it. I am tempted to give up my full time post and devote myself to the AHP alone. May be in a year or two I can afford it. I don't want to get involved in anything to which I cannot give my full attention and hence my non-involvement in the conference. I can only do so much, by way of apology. Any further suggestions from the S & S readership will be very welcome.

yours sincerely,

Hans Lobstein
London W13

Dear Vivian,

May I amend an impression which readers of the April 1977 issue of *Self and Society* may have been given when you listed the Centre for Transpersonal Psychology as one of the places where you can 'do' psychosynthesis.

This is not strictly accurate. We use a number of psychosynthesis techniques, exercises and models and our work is certainly rooted in part in the psychosynthesis stream. But we are just as much rooted in the Jungian tradition. Likewise our thinking and practice has links with Maslow, Frankl, Proffitt et al; we employ Gestalt techniques; and we are trying among other things to link eastern psychology, be it yoga, Zen, Tao etc to western tradition and practice.

In 1973 I came to a friendly understanding with the Psychosynthesis Institute in California to develop our work under the broad umbrella of transpersonal psychology, using psychosynthesis procedures and techniques where appropriate. Roberto Assagioli knew of and approved this arrangement. I feel it only fair to my friends and colleagues in psychosynthesis that this agreement should be a matter of public record.

Yours sincerely

Ian Gordon-Brown
London SW10

Dear Vivian,

REALITY - INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

I don't like articles which consist almost entirely of references to other authors. They leave me with a sense of deprivation; of lack of contact with the writer.

Nevertheless Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi's 'Humanistic Psychology: Progressive or Reactionary?', in the April issue of *Self and Society*, fired my interest because it reminded me of a book I had just finished reading: 'Psychoanalysis and Humanism' by Juliet Mitchell.

As I understand her, one of the major points to which Juliet Mitchell wishes to draw attention is that modern medical therapies based on social realism are in a sense pre-Freudian, in that they tend to disregard desire, phantasy and the unconscious. Freud's important discovery that some of the traumatic events of incest and seduction related by his patients never in fact took place, but were phantasies created by themselves, is virtually ignored.

I suggest that this is a factor which is very relevant in assessing the value of Humanistic Psychology as a movement for progress.

During the past two years I have been going through a very unpleasant time, during which I

have certainly felt myself to be oppressed by external forces. However I have recently experienced a very painful insight which has led me to realize the extent to which I contributed to my own oppression. At one time I was offered effective help in changing my situation but I refused it; and I refused it because I had a desperate need to cling to the belief that people who caused me emotional pain really cared about me and wished to do their best for me.

Now if my external circumstances had been changed this would have made my life pleasanter, but sooner or later I would again have found myself in a painful situation and would no doubt have reacted in the same way. I can only become free by changing my own internal reality so that I no longer cling to my false evaluation of people's motives.

It seems to me that the conflict of views between radical politics and humanistic psychology is due to a failure to come to terms with the importance of internal reality. Radical politics has a peculiar habit of talking about the individual being oppressed by society as though society and the individual were two separate entities. This, to me, odd way of looking at life comes across very strongly in the wording of Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi's article. As individuals collectively we are society, and surely if we can help people to change what is going on inside them then slowly society will change too.

I accept entirely that some conflicts are caused by real opposition of interests: but why, because a group of people have interests which clash with my own, am I expected to judge them and negate them? This is surely only necessary while I wish to evade responsibility for my own contribution to the problem and to project my bad feelings onto them out there - the wicked capitalists, the whites, the blacks, or whatever; it's all their fault.

Once I stop appraising myself, then I am free to value my own humanity and other people's too. I can join with others to struggle for my rights on the basis of belief in the potential value of

all human beings.

But I will not become a radical politician. Humanistic psychology which values people as individual human beings can never walk hand in hand with radical politics which can only see raising some people up in terms of putting others down.

Yours sincerely,

Shirley Wade
London WC1

Film Review

Kings of the Road. Written and Directed by Wim Wenders

Wim Wenders' earlier films, *The Goalkeeper's Fear of the Penalty* and *Alice In The Cities* had considerable critical and art-house success in London, though his *Wrong Movement* was shown only in the 1975 LFF. The English title of his latest, *Kings of the Road*, is misleading: *Im Laufe der Zeit* should be translated as 'in the course of time'. It is bound to cause controversy being too slow for some, while fully evocative and convincing for others. But its length is essential: the course of time must be felt to be flowing, passing.

Time, in Wenders, is one's lifetime, and history is what happens in the world during its span. Wenders was born after the end of World War II and his films are refreshingly free of individual or collective guilt for Nazism. His characters face the personal problems and private guilts which crop up everywhere among people who feel that they could be constructing a better world instead of cutting corners in the corrupt one around them. If there is any specifically German dimension in this particular film, it concerns the division of Germany, and the Americanization of the western half. Most of it was shot near the Eastern borders, where the driving commercial energy of the West Germans seems to run out. Garages are out of petrol, the local paper is a one-man business and along the road, instead of glossy motels, there are seedy hamburger stalls and disused factories. It is the no-man's land of Germany's division, a border country where once there had been a rather quiet heartland. This is not mentioned in the film, but there is time to think of it during the long tracking shots taken from empty roads and across the Elbe where the same country is seen empty on the other side.

Instead of a story line, the film has interlocking themes which cluster around two men, Bruno and Robert, and which peak in a series of emotional crises. It would be inaccurate to treat *Kings of the Road* as a German version of *Easy Rider*, which was full of melodrama, murder and psychedelic razmattazz, though in fact the actor who