

men retained the proceeds from the sale of rice. In a study on smallholder planting in Ivory Coast, it was indicated, on the basis of past experience, that

“the marketable surplus of food and hence the income from it—which is usually retained by the women—is likely to decrease. The proceeds from the sale of the rubber are likely to be retained by the men. . . .”

Greater distance to plots used for subsistence farming means that not only women with families to feed were affected, but that their daughters, too, are needed to maintain food supplies. This suggests that female children would not receive the same opportunities for education, or other training, limited as they may be.

While it may be difficult to put a cash value on the loss of real income for female members of the family, there is no doubt that the true cost of cash crop production is greatly underestimated.

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THE PRODUCTION of cash crops has greatly raised the incomes and living standards of Africans. If this were not so they would not have cultivated these crops, or would have soon abandoned them and reverted to subsistence cultivation. This simple general point is confirmed by ample evidence, such as the large-scale expansion in the import or local production of mass consumer goods, the great increase in government revenues, and the spectacular decline in mortality.

The distribution of the material benefits within the family is a different issue, which was not discussed by either Professor Mazrui or myself. But as the mortality of women and children has fallen greatly in the wake of the cultivation of cash crops in Africa, and as many of the consumer goods are used by women, it is safe to say that they too have benefited greatly from the emergence of cash crops.

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Kaufmann's "Martin Buber"

WALTER KAUFMANN'S assessment of Martin Buber's triumphs and failures in *ENCOUNTER* (May 1979) is a *tour de force* executed in the grand manner, which sets Buber in the context of some of the most important philosophers, poets, and psychoanalysts of the 19th and 20th centuries. For all its erudition, there is very little solid coming-to-terms with Buber himself and its central theses are shockingly wide of the mark. The heart of Kaufmann's article is the assertion that Buber's claim as a philosopher stands and falls on *I and Thou*, and that *I and Thou* is "seriously flawed" in its style, in its authenticity, and, above all, in the Manichean dualism it postulates between the I-Thou and the I-It relations.

Kaufmann's critique of the style of *I and Thou* is curious, considering that he wrote a 40-page prologue for his translation of *I and Thou* in a pseudo-*I and Thou* style and format! More serious, it is totally misleading in the impression it gives that *I and Thou* was not revised by Buber at the time; for Buber went over it critically many times before publishing it. Kaufmann to the contrary notwithstanding, *I and Thou* is not a book of the "easy word" but of the "hard word." The road from the easy word to the hard one was for Buber a road from "speaking beautifully" to rejecting any expression not fully mastered by intention and devotion to the word.

"There is a Manichean strain in *I and Thou* that is unworthy of Buber", writes Kaufmann, "and he himself might have eliminated it if he had been more severe with the child of his inspiration."

It was precisely the attack on Manichean dualism that lies at the heart of *I and Thou* as of all Buber's mature writings. The whole of *I and Thou* is concerned with bringing ever-greater realms of the It into the world of the Thou so that the latter wins "a shining streaming constancy."

Buber did not mean (as Kaufmann assumes) that when I think about a person nothing of the Thou remains—only

that in so far as the beloved is talked *about*, I *must* put her or him into categories (such as height, colour of hair, and sex). These very details, so far from being an obstacle to the Thou, are taken up in their particularity and concreteness when I turn back to my friend or beloved as a person.

When I once pointed out to Kaufmann (after his lecture at the Buber Centennial in Israel) that Buber saw his life-work precisely as the attack on the Manicheanism prevalent in our time, Kaufmann responded, "I wanted to say that there must be something wrong with a man like that. . . ." This *non sequitur* hinted at a personal background without which we might well be totally baffled by such a gross misunderstanding of the heart of *I and Thou* by its official translator. In November 1958 Kaufmann sent Buber a long letter in which he expressed his disappointment in Buber's earlier letter in response to Kaufmann's *Critique of Religion and Philosophy*.

"How many persons are there in my generation whom a few words from you about what they are trying to do and doing could help so much as me? When I ask you questions 'on the knees of my heart' and you reply that you lack time to answer, how can I see it as anything else than a rejection?" (my translation from the German in *Buber Briefwechsel* III, 405).

As Buber's son Rafael himself told me, Kaufmann's whole ambivalent attitude toward Buber from then on stems from this disappointment.

By naming *I and Thou* as a cornerstone of Buber's philosophy and attacking it, Kaufmann wishes to dismiss the significance of Buber's philosophy of dialogue as a whole, reserving his praise for Buber's translation of the Bible and his telling of Hasidic tales. But a true assessment of the significance of Buber's philosophy is not possible unless *I and Thou* is taken together with all the

