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THE LOST DIMENSION IN THE UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM

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I SHOULD LIKE to take as my point of departure a statement which George Buttrick makes in his article, "Toward a Philosophy of the Church-Related University": "Is it not strange that secular universities, in a vague sense of something missing, are now instituting departments of religion, at the very moment when some church-related universities are tempted to disown their faith?"[1]

Moral Breakdown in Western Civilization

This "sense of something missing" is due in part to the moral breakdown in Western civilization since the First World War. Whereas it was once assumed without question that education was intrinsically good, this generation has been shocked into the realization that education is not necessarily a good thing. A dramatic illustration of this is seen in the fact that the nation of Europe which had reached the highest point in intellectual development surrendered its freedom, in the 1930's, to an irrational ideology, namely Naziism. Paradoxically, the most highly educated nations of the world today are at the same time the greatest single threats to the peace of the world, and indeed to the very preservation of intellectual culture as we know it. The hypothetical visitor from Mars might well conclude, on first observation, that education is a bad thing and that the most advanced areas of the globe are the remaining pockets of primitive culture!

Back in the 1940's H. G. Wells was crying, "Humanity is engaged in a great race between education and catastrophe!" He was right, but since then it has become even more apparent that it all depends on what you mean by "education." The late Albert Camus,

[1] *Christian Scholar*, Summer, 1962.

in his last essay, paraphrased Wells in a significant statement in which he, an unbeliever, addressed himself to Christians: "What the world expects of Christians is that they should speak out, loud and clear. . . for between the forces of terror and the forces of dialogue a great unequal battle has begun."

There was a time when this matter of the religious dimension in higher education could be debated as a purely academic question. That time is past for it has become a life-and-death issue. In our time we have witnessed violence and cruelty on a scale unparalleled in modern history. The situation was foreseen by an earlier writer, Henry Adams,[2] when he proclaimed 1900 as the end of the era of the "virgin" and the beginning of the era of the "dynamo." To Adams, the concept of the "virgin" symbolized all that has been distinctively human in life—the warm and simple virtues of an age now vanished; the concept of the "dynamo" represented the annihilation of all human values by the eventual triumph of impersonal forces over personal life. One may look back still further to Herbert Spencer who observed, at the turn of the nineteenth century, that "to educate reason without changing desire is to place high-powered guns in the hands of savages." Knowledge without wisdom is dangerous; ability without responsibility is power without control. But we have been slow to learn the lessons of history.

These are indeed challenging times to be alive; they are also frightening times to be engaged in teaching, for what guarantee have we that our students will use creatively and constructively the information we pass on to them? How can we be sure they will not use their knowledge against us, and even against themselves? This points us to the urgency of rediscovering the "lost dimension." It was Henry Adams who said, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

The Secularization of Higher Education

In his influential book, *The Crisis of the University* (which perhaps has done more than any other single thing to renew the dialogue between religion and other intellectual disciplines), Sir Walter Moberly said: "Mores, ways of life, the recognition of binding obligations, are bound up with some accepted view of the nature of

[2] Although written in 1905, *The Education of Henry Adams*, his autobiography, was not published until 1918.

man and of the world, though this may take the form less of a doctrine embraced by the mind than of a picture dominating the imagination. But it is just this common picture or framework that has now so largely disappeared."[3] More than a moral collapse, it is a spiritual and cultural crisis.

There are several reasons for this "crisis" in higher education. It is partly the result of a strong reaction on the part of liberal universities to Protestant denominationalism. In the early part of the nineteenth century some defensive Protestant groups turned education into indoctrination. Understandably, liberal universities quite rightly insisted that there was no place in liberal education for indoctrination.

Another factor responsible for the crisis in higher education is the increase in specialization, so well known in the Philippines that it is not necessary to labor the point here. It is reported that at the height of the emphasis on specialization in Germany one doctoral dissertation was written on the subject: "The Use of the Comma in Medieval Icelandic Literature." With equal humor, however, one can point to the extreme in general education, as in the case of the final examination question for a survey course: "Describe the universe, and give three examples."

The strongest force is the third factor contributing to the crisis, namely, secularism. This is in part a product of the naturalistic philosophy which some have mistakenly thought to be required by modern science. It is even more a product of the easy optimism about the inevitability of human progress, through education, which dominated Western minds before the world wars. Ordinarily this secularism has expressed itself in indifference to religion rather than in open opposition to it. It can be seen in the view, still current, that freedom of religion means freedom from religion. It has insisted that universities must maintain strict neutrality on ultimate questions. Until recently, this secularism has been the dominant force in liberal education in this century.

A New Recognition of Religious Values

During the last two decades the pendulum has swung back toward a new recognition of the place of religious values in univer-

[3] Walter Moberly, *The Crisis of the University*, p. 16. London: SCM Press, Ltd. 1959.

sity instruction, along with a recognition of the need for integration of the student's knowledge. This change in the intellectual climate of many modern universities can be traced to a number of causes.

One of the reasons is the already mentioned moral breakdown in Western civilization.

Another is the decline of sectarianism (defined as a divisive spirit) and the growth of the ecumenical movement.

A third reason is that courses in religion are now taught by teachers whose scholarship is equal to that of their colleagues in other departments. Progress in Biblical and theological studies has removed the suspicion that the teaching of religion is doctrinaire.

A fourth cause of the change is seen in the fact that secularism has begun to lose its former appeal. A generation which has witnessed two world wars and is now haunted by the threat of a third world war—this time "a war to end all wars," for sure—has not been able to maintain the optimism of an earlier day about education leading to inevitable progress and about man's capacity to fulfill his aspirations within the limits of this earthly life. Earlier views have been shattered into illusions before our eyes. Along with this there has been a growing awareness, on the part of scientists, of the limitations of science.

Finally, this recent turning of the tide is due in part to a strong reaction against the earlier assumption that open-mindedness necessarily demands neutrality on ultimate issues. Studies and surveys—like the well known Jacobs report—have shown that the attitude of neutrality has produced graduates without any clear purpose or sense of direction, with no higher goal in life than pleasure or material success.

Even Christian universities had succumbed to the earlier assumption that neutrality was necessary to liberal education. It is reported that a German graduate student in the social sciences came to a Christian university in America in order to find answers to his problems. Interested in the political and economic life of his country, he had come seeking a consistent answer to give to his German friends who were finding the Communist answer to Europe's problems convincing. In disappointment he said, "I went to the social sciences and found our moral issues reduced to social conventions. This did not help me. Economics discussed human values, but levelled them down to economic needs and described them in relation to established types of business organization. I went to psychology, to

have my questions by-passed because of basic mechanistic assumptions. Such points of view are really more compatible with Communism than with Christianity. I have not found the Christian answers. In this sense the University is not a Christian university."

A few years ago an Asian University Teachers' Consultation was held at Bandung, Indonesia, at which the Philippines was represented. The primary stimulus for the consultation was Moberly's book, *The Crisis in the University.* Reporting on the Consultation, Dr. Paul Braisted, president of the Hazen Foundation and a recent visitor to the Silliman campus, pointed out that the Asian teachers were not at all ready to accept the assumptions of the Moberly volume as to what the "crisis" of the university was. The difference was traced to the different stages of development of Asian and Western societies in relation to liberal and rational values. "The West is at the end of the Renaissance and the Reformation," it was observed, "while Asia is at the beginning and rationalism and secularism stand in many countries of Asia for the liberation of the human from the irrational impersonality of an ancient static collectivism; while, therefore, Asians are thankful for the caution against the pagan spirit of liberal and scientific rationalism, they see in them positive values to be affirmed in the name of the truly personal and human in this present stage of Asian social history."[4]

Braisted comments that this should serve as a word of caution to Western Christian educators who in their zeal to reclaim a fair place for religion in higher education may be tempted to undervalue rationality. On the other hand, Asian universities may be warned against the danger of simply repeating the experience, along with the mistakes, of many universities and colleges in the West. The Western development in higher education might prove illuminating to educators in other lands since the change is in the main a movement away from the secular outlook of a decade or so ago toward a recognition of the necessity, for all who are engaged in the intellectual enterprise, to study and teach religion fairly and objectively. Perhaps the Joint Statement of the 1961 Conference of Asian University Presidents, related to the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, represents the more mature conclusion of Asian teachers: "A Christian university must never be less Christian for being a university, but even more it must never be less a university

[4] *Christian Scholar,* p. 120 June, 1954.

for being Christian."

The Nature of the Religious Dimension

We are accustomed to thinking in levels from the lowest to the highest, from the inorganic realm to the supernatural world. Actually this is a vestige of an outmoded world-view. It has proved to be an unsatisfactory way of speaking about our world and God, because in reality there are no levels; there are only dimensions. According to the Theory of Relativity, we live in a multi-dimensional space world. These dimensions interpenetrate one another at every point, yet they do not conflict with each other at any point. This is the great advantage in using the metaphor of "dimension." Supposed conflicts between science and religion are caused not by the progress of modern knowledge, as commonly supposed, but by a confusion of dimensions. At least one physicist has defined God as "the dimension of dimensions," meaning that God is not merely one dimension among many but the "suprapolar space" which includes and transcends all other dimensions.

It may be helpful to think of religion as life's dimension of depth. This would correspond to the third dimension of our physical experience, like the "depth of field" in photography. It would correspond to the phenomenon of the "deep unconscious" in Depth Psychology. In philosophy it would correspond to the answer we find to the most ultimate question a man can ask, namely, "What is the meaning of my existence?" Because many twentieth-century men have lost the courage to ask the ultimate question seriously, they have not found an answer and thus do not live in the dimension of depth. Paul Tillich has defined religion as "living in the dimension of depth."

The religious dimension in life is lost to many people because we live in a period of history in which nature is subjected scientifically and technically to the control of man. The God-dimension, or dimension of depth, is being replaced by the horizontal dimensions of length and breadth, symbolized by such expressions as "bigger and bigger," "better and better," "more and more." Modern man needs desperately to recover the experience of the height-depth dimension of life and to ask again with ultimate seriousness the question implied in human existence, "What is the meaning of life?" Viewed in this broad sense, religion is not just a separate experience but an

"overtone" that is present in every experience we have. It is not merely a way of looking at certain things; it is a certain way of looking at all things.

I recall a passage in Sir Arthur Eddington's great book, *The Nature of the Physical Universe,* in which he compares a rainbow as viewed by a physicist with the same rainbow as viewed by an artist. While the scientist describes it in terms something like .00000086 wave lengths, the artist describes it in terms of delicate shades and transitions of color from one band of the spectrum to the next. One could add a third perspective from the viewpoint of a theologian whose description might run something like that of the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork. How majestic is thy name in all the earth!"

The three perspectives involve three different patterns of meaning, and the three patterns of meaning correspond to different dimensions of reality. Which view of the rainbow is correct? Obviously, all three. The scientist, the artist, and the theologian view all of life from three different perspectives, and no one of them dares tell the other two that they have not seen the rainbow. It is not impossible, of course, that the same person might be able to participate to some degree in all three, or in two, dimensions of reality, even though he be a specialist in only one. The important thing is that each be willing to admit that, from his angle of vision, he has seen only one facet of the many-faceted rainbow. It is a matter of mature intelligence to acknowledge that life is made up of different orders of being, distinguishable dimensions of reality, and therefore also of distinct patterns of meaning. Alfred North Whitehead has made the same point in a telling way, substituting the sunset for the rainbow: "When you understand all about the sun and all about the atmosphere and all about the rotation of the earth, you may still miss the radiance of the sunset."

Alternative Religious Perspectives

There is a strong argument for a religious perspective that can restore wholeness to the educational process, that can include all the dimensions of meaning represented by the specialized disciplines as well as religion's own concern with ultimate questions. In the recent turning of the tide in higher education there is a felt need for some such unifying perspective. It is now rather widely held that any

philosophy of education which fails to include religious claims would be ignoring an important dimension of the human spirit. Free inquiry must be exercised with a sense of responsibility to all dimensions of human experience. To teach with a religious perspective is to teach with an awareness of the dimension of depth in human experience.

There are three attitudes a Christian may take toward his teaching and his intellectual discipline. One attitude is "Christian anti-intellectualism," common among varieties of separatist Christians. While this attitude is right in its concern for a definite Christian commitment, it is wrong in the way it disparages the significance of free and critical inquiry. It is also characteristic of authoritarian-type institutions where everyone must conform to a "party line" theology.

It is not at all suprising to find another attitude rising in opposition to "Christian anti-intellectualism." This is "anti-Christian intellectualism." The first is the perspective of the fanatical sectarian, the second of the fanatical secularist. The latter uses the slogan "free inquiry" as synonymous with an outlook which is often as dogmatic and obscurantist as the "Christian anti-intellectualism" which it replaces. There is a possible fundamentalist mentality to the extreme left as well as to the extreme right. Nathan Pusey, Harvard's president, coined the phrase "secular fundamentalist" to apply to those who manifest a "cultic self-sufficiency" which imagines it has a monopoly on truth and is exempt from criticism and correction. By denying a fair hearing to Christianity, such an attitude refuses both the responsibility and the risk of open dialogue. It is an illiberal perspective in the guise of liberalism. Incredible though it may seem, many convinced Christians adopt this kind of an attitude toward education.

The "cult of objectivity" has been called into serious question in the past two decades by those who recognize the psychological fact that everyone comes to problems and issues with certain premises or "faith-judgments"—even when they are not expressed—which condition his conclusions. As Moberly puts it, every teacher approaches his teaching with some accepted view of the nature of man and of the world, which may not be so much a doctrine consciously embraced as a picture dominating the imagination. This attack on the "cult of objectivity" must never become for the Christian, however, an excuse to propagandize in the classroom. This would

be a return to "Christian anti-intellectualism." In either case, the geniune search for truth has been abandoned. It is tragic that many have felt that they had to choose between a Christian anti-intellectualism and an anti-Christian intellectualism.

There is a third alternative which may be called "Christian intellectualism." This is a perspective that includes a genuine encounter with other views, a happy combination of conviction and openness. Christian commitment must never become a substitute for professional competence, nor should a teacher simply look upon his teaching as a means of evangelizing students. On the other side of the coin, however, there is no need for the intellectual to look upon another teacher's concern with ultimate questions as a sign of intellectual surrender. Education cannot afford to become a propagandizing process nor can it afford to assume indifference to values.

"Christian intellectualism" avoids the intellectual arrogance which assumes that one's own version of the truth is the whole truth. Any honest educational process will let students see the alternatives to Christian truth, as well as alternative versions of Christian truth, and make their own decisions about them. It is when we are insecure in our own faith that we tend to hide alternative possibilities from our students, resorting to catechetical instruction instead of critical inquiry. When Robert Hutchins was chancellor of the University of Chicago, a wealthy contributor complained to him of the fact that they were teaching Marxist Communism in the Political Science Department. "True," replied Hutchins, "and we also teach cancer in the Medical School!" The secure and mature intellectual does not seek to hide alternative views. By the same token, however, neither does he try to hide his own faith-judgments but freely acknowledges them, asking only that those of other persuasion will do the same. This is the path of intellectual honesty, and the attitude of the Christian intellectual.

Christianity and Culture

The university has been called a "microcosm of culture." It is also a "mirror of culture." More important, perhaps, it consciously or unconsciously plays a leadership role in the shaping of culture.

A highly significant analysis of the tensions which have characterized the Christian church in its various segments throughout history is offered by Richard Niebuhr in his book *Christ and Culture*.

He distinguishes three major positions or attitudes which have been taken by Christians toward culture: (1) "Christ against culture," (2) "Christ of culture," and (3) "Christ above culture," the third view being subdivided into three classes: a) the synthesists, b) the dualists, and c) the conversionists.

The "Christ against culture," or anti-culturist, attitude is represented early in Tertullian's famous question, "What does Jerusalem have to do with Athens?" This attitude is characteristic of separatist Christianity, most dramatically seen in our time in the Jehovah's Witnesses movement.

The second view, "Christ of culture," or pro-culturist, position is a path of compromise in order to make Christianity acceptable to its "cultural depisers." It recognizes a fundamental agreement rather than a necessary opposition between Christianity and intellectual culture. This view is represented in every attempt that is made to identify Christianity with any culturally-conditioned system of thought, whether economic and social or political and philosophical.

Under the "Christ above culture" position the "synthesist" looks upon Christianity as fulfilling and restoring human values; the "dualist" contends that man is subject to two moralities—the order of grace and the order of nature—and must live in a state of constant tension between these two areas of responsibility; the "conversionist" believes that, in Christ, God has entered into human culture in order to transform man and through man the culture. This last view is probably closest to the religious heritage of most of us at Silliman. It looks to the creative and redemptive power of God at work in the world and to the history of dramatic interaction between God and man. It is a doctrine of reconciliation and transformation, and is represented, for example, in the thought of Calvin and Wesley. The "Christ against culture" position is characteristic of the fundamentalist; the "Christ of culture" position is characteristic of the theological rationalist; the "synthesist" doctrine is the consistent position of the Roman Catholic Church; the "dualist" view is usually associated with Lutherans; the "conversionist," or Christ-transforming-culture, position is represented by the various branches of the Reformed or Calvinistic tradition.

An important implication of the Christ-transforming-culture view is that the tension between religion and culture, between the sacred and the secular, is not due to any separation between areas of culture, but instead between the creative and the destructive use to

which the artifacts of culture are put. Even if it sometimes means being anti-church, the Christian must stand always on the side of the creative as opposed to the destructive forces in human culture. George Williams of Harvard, in his book *The Theological Idea of a University,* has answerd Tertullian's question by saying that "unless we are conscious of a dual spiritual citizenship, belonging both to Athens and to Jerusalem, then Athens herself may eventually sink into barbarism, forget her universal mission, and...cease to be the domicile of objective reason."[5] Does Jerusalem have anything to do with Athens? Much, every way! Happily, one of the powerful new emphases in current theology, both Protestant and Catholic, is upon the dialogue between faith and culture. One recalls a pointed statement of William Temple: "It is a great mistake to suppose that God is only, or even chiefly, concerned with religion!"

The Christ-transforming-culture attitude enables us to see that God is concerned with human culture. It provides us with an affirmative and hopeful attitude toward human achievement. Man working in a created world lives under the rule of God, and yet it is recognized that sin has influenced all of man's achievements. History is seen not merely as a series of events under the control of an alien power from which man must be saved, but as a dramatic interaction between God and man. Christ is at work in the world even beyond the bounds of the church, converting and transforming culture by his judgment and mercy. For these reasons the Christ-transforming-culture position is highly relevant to the educational enterprise in our time.

Can Education Be Both Liberal And Christian?

A Genuinely Liberal University

A liberal university has been defined as "a community of students and teachers engaged in the rational pursuit of truth." When we begin to talk about the need for dealing with religious issues and implications in every subject of the curriculum wherever they are relevant, some might think that we are trying to change the image of the modern liberal university into a medieval university which would impose religious uniformity upon its faculty and students. In this connection Moberly suggests that the monolithic type

[5] George Williams, *The Theological Idea of a University,* p. 93f. New York: National Council of Churches, 1958.

of Christian university, characteristic of the Middle Ages, might even prove to be dangerous to the Christian cause itself. While Christians may believe, he says, that "the whole truth is in Christ," we have to recognize that there are no Christians who possess the whole truth, either individually or collectively.

> Domination by theologians is no less objectionable than domination by any other group. Any implied claim to infallibility is unchristian, since it clashes with Christian insight into human creatureliness and human corruption. . . . But it is still more essential to recognize that God may speak, and often does speak, through what we should have thought very improbable voices, through men who do not consciously know Him and who are disastrously wrong in their main contentions. As of old the heathen peoples might be instruments of God's judgments on Israel, so Marx or Nietzsche or Freud may have a word for our generation, to refuse to hear which would be to be deaf to the voice of God.[6]

The committee of experts representing the major disciplines of the university curriculum, which conducted the Hazen Foundation survey, in 1952, on "Religious Perspectives in College Teaching," reached the important conclusion that "Christian professors should do what their secular colleagues who believe in scientific humanism have been doing all along, i.e., teach freely and openly from their perspective." Is this what Albert Camus was asking Christians to do—to "speak out, loud and clear"? In this way, says the Hazen Survey, Christian professors would make clear to their students the presuppositions with which they approach their subjects.

> If Christians were as open in expressing their convictions as their humanistic colleagues now are, there would be a more lively ferment of ideas. Students would be confronted with various alternative positions on ultimate issues and would be challenged to decide among them. They would no longer be misled into thinking that the position one takes on ultimate issues is unimportant; indeed, they would see that it is the most important thing in life. Under these conditions, if they decided against Christian theism and in favor of scientific humanism, it would be only after they had faced the issue between the two positions. At present, the decision often goes by default against Christian theism because the issue is simply ignored.[7]

This is not an argument for a "Christian university" of the monolithic type, in which alternative views do not receive a fair hearing. It is rather an argument in favor of a genuinely liberal

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[6] *Ibid*, Moberly, p. 104f.

[7] H. N. Fairchild, ed., *Religious Perspectives in College Teaching*, pp. 18-20. New York: Ronald Press Co., 1952.

university which does not evade ultimate issues in the name of a spurious neutrality but faces them in frank and open dialogue. Professors need to become more concerned about the presuppositions from which they think and teach, refusing to accept uncritically the perspective of the textbook which may be at variance with the teacher's own views. At the same time, however, ways should be found by which alternative views may be presented more adequately, as for example through the outside stimulation of an endowed lectureship.

Genuinely liberal education may be defined as education which liberates the whole man. In the words of Nathan Pusey in his inaugural address at Harvard, "Liberal arts education should address itself to the whole person—not any less to minds, but also to hearts and wills. When the heart and mind are brought together in a supporting relationship, then the whole person is set free not just from a lack of knowledge, but also from a lack of meaning, a lack of direction, and from the failure of concern for others." I believe this is what Woodrow Wilson meant by "a surplus of mind" which he felt a responsible university should produce in the lives of its students. A person is educated only when the truth sets him free, and this freedom involves responsible thought and action. The university graduate should be more unified and more compassionate as well as better informed.

The Wholeness of Truth

The Christian educator must recognize that truth is two-dimensional. One is discursive truth, by which is meant the truth that is known or knowable about the world around and within us by means of our comprehension of the patterns and structures and values in the world and in our experience. This is what Plato and Aristotle meant by "truth," what the Renaissance and the Enlightenment meant by truth, and what most modern intellectuals mean by *veritas*—a word which often appears, as it does at Silliman, in the university's seal.

The other, and often forgotten, dimension of truth is seen in the New Testament word *aletheia.* Though it occurs 100 times in the New Testament, it never means "discursive truth," but always "ultimate truth." It may be translated literally "unveiled mystery," with special reference to the mystery of the ultimate meaning of human life as disclosed in and through the Event of Jesus Christ.

Thus, truth has two distinct dimensions and they are necessary to each other. The one cannot be converted into the other, nor can either be simply added to the other. The Christian intellectual, who has a dual citizenship in Jerusalem and Athens, has also a dual responsibility to truth. The two dimensions of truth require two distinct patterns of meaning and reflect two different orders of being. It may be said that "discursive truth" is primarily the truth about creation, while "ultimate truth" is primarily the truth about the Creator. The two must never be posed as alternatives or rivals to each other. They must be co-related in the life of a university which has a Christian orientation. Anselm's famous definition of truth, as "faith in search of understanding," brings the two dimensions together into one perspective. The best education has an acknowledged religious perspective at its center. A valid faith actually prompts men to an inquiry which is both free and disciplined. In his great book *Science and the Modern World,* Alfred North Whitehead has argued convincingly that it was really the Christian belief in Divine Providence—the Creator purposively at work in His creation—that gave the initial impetus to what we know as modern experimental science. Perhaps it is just here, primarily, that the church-related university can recover a clear and valid image of itself which distinguishes it from other academic communities and at the same time commits it to equal standards of academic excellence.

Three Common Objections To A Religious Perspective

The Hazen Survey uncovered three primary objections to religious perspectives in college teaching: the fear of dogmatism, the illusion of neutrality, and the lack of specialized knowledge of theology.

The Fear of Dogmatism

While this objection is understandable, in view of authoritarian claims on the part of some institutions, it rests on a logical fallacy. Because some religious people hold their beliefs in a dogmatic way, this does not mean that all, or even most, religious people hold their beliefs in this way. If it be argued that religion is a divisive element and therefore should have no central place in a university curriculum, then surely the same argument would dispose of political

and economic theories. It should be observed, however, that every university—be it secular or religious in orientation—has somewhere a nest of "dogmatism," some belief or tradition that is too sacrosanct to be questioned in classroom or faculty meeting. Reference has already been made in this paper to the "cult of objectivity" and to the psychological fact that everyone comes to problems and issues with some kind of pre-conditioned assumptions.

The Illusion of Neutrality

The Hazen Survey report concludes that even if neutrality were desirable, it would be impossible.

> If a professor does not base his interpretation of his field upon presuppositions derived from Christian theism, he will base it upon presuppositions derived from some other perspective. . . . Thus, the real issue is not whether a professor shall teach from a religious perspective or from no perspective at all, but whether he shall teach from a religious perspective or from a humanistic perspective. Why is it impossible to teach without presuppositions? It is because facts are meaningless unless they are interpreted, and any interpretation is based upon presuppositions. The human reason cannot think about phenomena of any kind without organizing and synthesizing them by means of principles of interpretation. . . . In effect, those who urge us to 'dispense with presuppositions and simply teach the facts' are inviting us to stop thinking altogether.[8]

It must be added here that each professor in a university is obligated to learn to recognize not only his own bias but also that of the textbook. More important, perhaps, he must openly acknowledge his and the textbook's assumptions and subject them to criticism. Uncriticized presuppositions can do as much harm as the lack of recognized presuppositions. Marxist theory taught at the University of Chicago would be dangerous only if its assumptions were disguised as democracy or allowed to go uncriticized. Here again Moberly is helpful when he says, "What is essential to honest thinking is not that all presuppositions be discarded, but that they should be uncovered, clearly expressed and thoroughly scrutinized. . . . The most dangerous preconceptions are those which are unrecognized and uncriticized. The most pernicious kind of bias consists in falsely supposing yourself to have none. . . . Once our presuppositions are brought into the open, they are relatively harmless."[9]

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[8] *Ibid.*, Fairchild, p. 22.

[9] *Ibid.*, Moberly, pp. 64, 67.

Lack of Specialized Knowledge in Theology

We need to be reminded that religion does not contribute new facts to a subject so much as a new dimension to the interpretation of the facts. It is therefore not necessary that every professor become an "expert" in religious history or ideas. He is not expected to become a theologian in the professional sense. Yet, if a Christian is to be a responsible professor in a responsible university, whatever his speciality may be, he must take some time to make his religious convictions clear to himself. Otherwise he will not be able to make them clear to his students nor will he be able to see their relevance to the subject he is teaching. He will fail his students at the very point where the ultimate meaning of their existence is at stake.

It almost goes without saying that, while some kind of commitment is inevitable (as Martin Luther taught, a man's "God" is whatever he clings to as most important in life), Christianity is not the only option. In many places, as at Silliman, it is the only *live* option to non-religious philosophies. More often than not, cultural considerations decide a university's particular religious commitment. In a predominantly Christian nation and in a university with a Christian orientation, Christianity would obviously be the only live option.

But no particular version of Christianity should be identified with the whole of Christian truth. It is an historical fact that Christianity has been distorted when the whole Christian truth has been claimed by any institution or individual. This violates what Paul Tillich has called "the Protestant Principle," according to which nothing finite can properly make infinite claims for itself. This is where the idea of a monolithic-type Christian university with a party-line theology would actually harm the cause of Christianity. It is also true that the vitality of Christianity depends upon a genuine encounter with other interpretations of Christianity, as well as with outlooks upon life which are not specifically Christian. The Christian intellectual should reflect a many-sided approach to knowledge, which alone is adequate to the diversity of truth. He welcomes truth from whatever source it may come.

Teaching From A Religious Perspective

Teaching from a conscious and acknowledged religious perspective involves giving due weight to "religious facts" whenever such

facts are a natural part of the subject-matter in a non-religious discipline of learning. An example of this would be the relevance of the development of Christianity to the history of Europe.

A conscious and acknowledged religious perspective should also lead the teacher to recognize the limitations of the method peculiar to his own field, and the error of imposing his own method upon the subject-matter of other disciplines. As leading philosophers now acknowledge, the recognition of different patterns of meaning necessitates a "language" appropriate to each discipline, the criteria of verification for which must be drawn from that discipline and not from some other.

As already stressed, the presence of a conscious religious perspective provides not so much new facts as a dimension of depth in the interpretation of the facts. This is because religion by its nature embraces all of life, and is therefore not so much a way of looking at certain things as it is a certain way of looking at all things.

The personal attitudes of the teacher are also influenced by a religious perspective. A genuine search for truth will be reflected in a sympathetic receptivity in the classroom to all insights, and by a reflective and critical attitude toward one's own religious commitment. The Hazen report concludes that a religious perspective may be expressed more effectively through the personal qualities and attitudes of the teacher than through anything he says in the classroom. "Unless the teacher shows by his daily conduct that he has access to a source of strength and serenity, students are not likely to treat his religious pronouncements with much respect. But if, in addition to professional competence, he displays good humor and kindliness, respect for the undergraduate as an individual and concern for his development. . . he can now and then say something that will arouse in this or that young woman or young man a religious interest that has been dormant."[10]

Relevance of Christian Ideas to the Educational Process

A brief look at the broad doctrines of creation and redemption may serve here to illustrate the relevance of the Christian understanding of man and the world for interpreting the facts in any of the various intellectual disciplines.

The Christian doctrine of creation means that the universe is

[10] *Ibid.*, Fairchild, p. 36f.

intelligible. Its reality and order are reflections of God's creative power and intelligence. Nature is neither self-generated nor self-explanatory. It is the function of the Christian intellectual to explore this world, in its every part and dimension, as the arena where God is working out His purpose. The parenthesis of our finite existence is surrounded by the infinite mystery of the reality of God, in whom all men live and move and exist. We are constantly reminded that we belong in this world but that it is a world we never made. Existence is God's creation and we have been commissioned to participate in its fulfillment. All our efforts to explore, describe, and appraise the world around us gain significance from the central conviction that God is the Creator, man the creature. Without preaching in the physics lecture or giving an altar call in the chemistry laboratory, we may nonetheless bear witness to the truth that "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows forth his handiwork" as we exercise our powers of perception in exploring the world He made. A vivid sense of the intelligibility of the universe brings to the whole range of our learning a meaningful frame of reference. It tends to make of all our inquiry and interpretation a basically religious enterprise.

Christian understanding also recognizes in man the need of redemption in order that our lives may reach their fullest maturation and their highest good. Some of the "worlds" the Christian scholar explores disclose disorders which are not part of God's purpose in creation. Man himself is estranged from the true Source of his life and from his fellows, and needs to participate in the restored humanity as personified in Jesus Christ, God's saving deed. The Christian has therefore a sense of sin and a sense of tragedy, and analyzes and evaluates life and society according to this awareness of distortion in existence.

These twin-affirmations of faith are but suggestive of ways in which the adjective "Christian" can significantly modify the noun "university." To make such truths as these relevant to our respective disciplines in classroom teaching and scholarly writing is an important part of our vocation—our divine calling—as Christian professors. To this end we were born! We can, with Hamlet, curse the day we were born: "The time is out of joint! O cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right!" Or, with Jesus, we can accept the challenge: "To this end I was born, and for this purpose I came into the world: to bear witness to the truth!"