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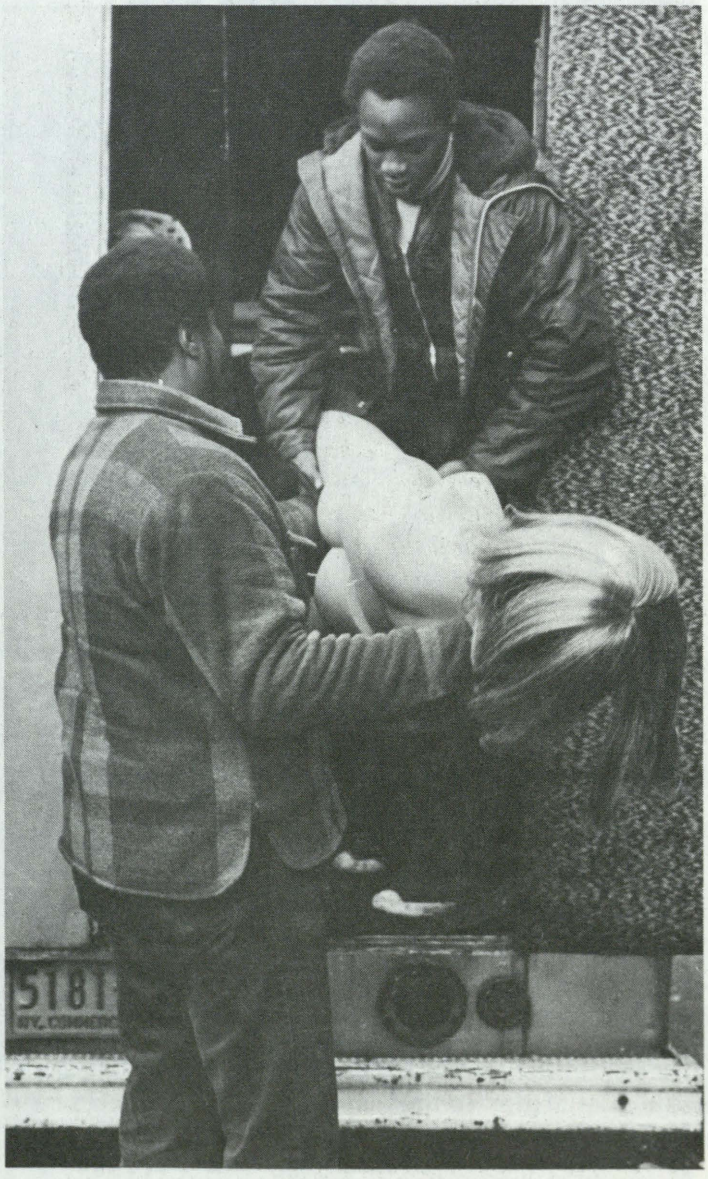

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The Generation of Troubles

Of all the oversimplifications of history, I am partial to "Demography is Destiny." Like all useful oversimplifications, that dictum holds a truth worthy of reflection before one tosses it into the dustbin properly prepared for "Total Explanations of Everything."

The demographics of the Post World War II baby boom, for example, continue to help shape our national history. In many ways, those booming babies, now in their mid-30s, may be the most put-upon and, necessarily, the most creative generation in this century. They sustained their childhood in rootless suburban boomtowns with bomb shelters in the 1950s. They sustained their adolescence in racially conflicted schools and as the expendables at war in Vietnam—or protesting that war to the point of madness on crowded and anomic campuses of the 1960s. And they recently sustained their young adulthood finding jobs, combating sexism, and buying costly homes in the recession-inflation of the 1970s.

This put-upon generation's booming size continues to put unusual pressures upon each of its "stages along life's way," and it remains a generation required to be extraordinarily creative in solving the problems which its demographic bulge in the population in part puts upon it.

Presently, one of the minor pressures the baby boomers of the 1940s put upon us in the 1980s is the problem of tenure for the young academic. Put simply, there are many more capable young academics now ready for tenure than universities can tenure, given the demographic fact that fewer students will be in college in the 1980s for them to teach. I do not doubt that academics in the generation of troubles will create new vocations for themselves outside the universities, but neither do I doubt that the universities will be weaker for it in generations to come.

Moving us into a discussion of the problem of tenure is our March alumni columnist, Rick Barton. Awarded a Danforth Fellowship upon his graduation from the University in 1970, he proceded to coach basketball and teach history at Lutheran High School South in St. Louis for two years and two basketball championships. In 1973 he took his M.A. in history at UCLA and in 1979 took his M.F.A. in creative writing at the University of Iowa.

Presently Professor Barton teaches English at the University of New Orleans where he is also the producer of WWNO's weekly "On Film" radio program and film critic for Gambit. *His first novel,* The El Cholo Feeling Passes, *is nearing completion.*

The Cresset *welcomes alumnus Barton to* In Luce Tua.

The Editor

IN LUCE TUA

The Tenure Trap

Rick Barton

Let me make clear from the outset that I fully realize that my thesis here is radical. It is radical because it proposes the abolition of one of academia's most venerated institutions—tenure. I also realize that this essay is unlikely to be warmly greeted, either by those who already enjoy the benefits of tenure, or by those who only anxiously await the day when they can have them.

For those no longer treading the halls of academe (all academics are thoroughly acquainted with the system—it is the grail for those without it, the staff for those possessing it), academic tenure is a privilege granted a professor after a probationary period which can last as long as six years. In accordance with the system, professors cannot be retained at the same institution for the seventh year without granting them tenure. Tenure denial, then, is necessarily accompanied by dismissal. Specific tenure requirements vary from school to school, department to department, though they are universally vague and flexible. Essentially they demand that a professor be a proficient teacher and a scholar contributing to the work in his field. Technically, tenure is bestowed by a university's administration, but practically it is awarded by the previously tenured members of a candidate's own department. In former Yale President Kingman Brewster's words, "tenure is for all normal purposes a guarantee of appointment until retirement age." Obviously this is a powerful security, one unknown in other walks of professional life, but one, it is argued, needed to attract the best minds into university teaching, a vocation incapable of competing with the financial incentives offered by careers in medicine, law, or business.

Arguments against tenure have traditionally rested on examples of its abuse: the professor who got his tenure and then ceased all but minimal performance. Prof. Goofoff meets his classes, but is irregular about keeping his office hours. He grades his papers, but seldom bothers to put extensive comments on them. His lectures are old. He seems out of touch with the current scholarship in his field. And Prof. Goofoff has not produced any scholarship of his own since the publication that convinced his peers to tenure him. Prof. Goofoff has become an embarrassment to his department. He holds down a position that could be much more ably filled by young, hard-working Prof. Earnest. But Prof. Goodoff is not guilty of moral turpitude or gross misconduct and hence he cannot be discharged. Tenure protects him, and because of tenure his department is stuck with him.

An argument for revolving door contracts is the need for fresh blood in the universities and, in effect, calls for the sacrifice of young academics to keep the universities vital.

Such abuses certainly exist and are inevitably aggravating to productive senior faculty and juniors alike. But I suspect that such abuses are far less common than many junior faculty believe and many senior faculty fear. And it is not for this reason that tenure should be abolished. Rather it should be dismantled because of the current result the system is having on the process of education.

I undertook the writing of this essay with trepidation for two reasons. First, I was not comfortable setting out to attack an institution regarded as the cornerstone (some would say the whole foundation) of academic freedom, that liberty which permits college professors to speak their minds without fear of reprisal. Second, I was not anxious to expose myself to the charge of sour grapes, for tenure is something (to borrow a cherished phrase from Henry Reed) I "have not got."

So before launching my attack I want to establish some "credential." I grew up in an academic home. My father was a tenured professor. And I was taught early and often at his knee that tenure stood hand-in-hand with FDR and cleanliness as next to godliness. Throughout my life I never questioned that principle. I went to graduate school (in two disciplines yet) and while I was preparing myself (in each) I came to understand the standards that universities set for their permanent faculties and the requirements they want met before they bestow the mantle of tenure. The standards are high, the requirements stiff. But so they should be because tenure is such a substantial commitment that it needs safeguards against those who don't deserve it. I found employment in university teaching and began my period of hopeful waiting for tenure (a period that continues to this moment). I regarded tenure a difficult goal to achieve, but one unquestionably worthwhile. Whatever drawbacks the system might entail, its benefits, to those who had it, to those who sought it, to the university as a whole, could not be doubted.

I certainly never doubted them.

Then last summer I picked up an issue of the Modern Language Association's *South Central Bulletin* and happened upon an article by R. C. Reynolds titled "No Roads Lead to Tenure: Some Thoughts on Revolving Door Contracts." Prof. Reynold's purpose in the article was to defend the system of terminal academic appointments, i.e., appointments which are made expressly ineligible for tenure consideration. The problem is not with the qualifications or anticipated accomplishments of the new professor. But in a time of declining enrollments faculties have grown loath to tenure for fear of rendering their departments tenure tight. Thus terminal appointments save faculties the burden of having to make tenure decisions, save them if you will, from the temptation to offer someone tenure when as a matter of policy they should not. Prof. Reynolds did not attempt in his article to defend tenure, for, like me, he never thought the institution subject to question. In the end his thesis boils down to: given tenure, revolving appointments are unavoidable and should be embraced by our nation's legions of fresh academics, not as a curse, but as a blessing. If tenure, then revolving door contracts, the former is good, so the latter cannot be bad. Prof. Reynolds' logic was sound. But as I read I realized his argument worked only if his first principle went unchallenged. If tenure is not an unchallengeable good, then his argument falls apart.

This I have concluded, reluctantly, is the case.

The Arrival of Professor Transient

The revolving door contract is of central concern here. Since it is becoming the fate of so many young academics, it is necessary that we look at the practice in greater detail. Essentially the revolving door is the policy of hiring college instructors for a set period of time, one, two, sometimes as long as five years. When Prof. Nomad's contract expires, he is "revolved out" to find another position at another college (but perhaps to retreat from university life into another profession), and is replaced by Prof. Transient who is usually less qualified than the man or woman he succeeds, less qualified because he lacks experience in the very job Prof. Nomad is being forced to vacate. And because Prof. Transient is normally younger than Prof. Nomad, the former usually has amassed fewer of the scholarly credentials that academics revere as well. Because of the terminal nature of his contract, it is crucial to emphasize, there is no level of performance through which Prof. Nomad can save his job. In the academic world it has become commonplace for department chairpersons to write glowing letters of recommendation for instructors they have terminated. My friends in the business world find this practice so bizarre that they accuse me of making it up. What businessman would dismiss an employee for the opportunity to replace him with someone almost certain (at least at the outset) to be less capable?

Seen within its historical context, of course, the system of terminal appointments makes a bit more sense. In the fifties and sixties, when college enrollments were expanding and universities new and old were desperate for instructors, the policy was instituted to protect permanent faculties from becoming crippled by tenured members who perhaps lacked the highest degree in their fields, or had established no record of scholarship, or failed much to distinguish themselves in the classroom. But at that time, instructors hired on the revolving door were seldom disgruntled. They were M.A.'s

But, if the tenure system works, the vital are tenured, and universities should not need such blood transfusions of ideas and energy, not if the universities possess libraries.

trying to raise the money to continue their graduate work. Or they were advanced graduate students needing only to complete the doctoral dissertation to attain a Ph.D. In this period, the revolving door suited the instructor's purposes as well as it did the university's.

But over the last decade things have changed dramatically. Graduate departments expanded like all other parts of the university in the sixties. By the last years of that decade Ph.D.'s were being turned out in record numbers. Those numbers barely dwindled during the seventies, a time when undergraduate enrollments declined sharply. The result was far more Ph.D.'s than "tenure track" (appointments leading to tenure consideration) spots for them to fill. Desperate for employment these new professorial candidates began to apply for the old revolving positions where they were snapped up by departments understandably eager to upgrade their instructional quality. Hence it is arguable that this tidal wave of new Ph.D.'s had rendered the old revolving system obsolete for they no longer met the profile of instructors for which the system had been designed.

The Departure of Professor Nomad

But Prof. Reynolds and others who support the revolving door offer several reasons for its continuation. First, and perhaps most importantly, they argue that the university benefits because a higher percentage of its courses are taught by instructors who have completed their training, rather than instructors somewhere in the middle of their graduate preparation. This should result in higher quality instruction, particularly at the freshman level, where those in the revolving door carry the biggest burden. Second, the system provides teaching experience for the new Ph.D. And that experience may well help him land a second job at a place eventually willing to consider him for tenure. A third argument is that the system promotes scholarly endeavor. In a system where first jobs may lead to tenure, departments have long been lenient about enforcing the old "publish or perish" dictum. A variety of other factors get considered when a man or woman has shared office space and conversation around the coffee machine with those who must judge whether to grant tenure or send a colleague packing. Is he amiable? Good at committee work? An invaluable shortstop on the departmental softball team? Most importantly, is he an innovative, dedicated, successful instructor? But in the revolving door no such temptation to tenure the unpublished or little published exists. And if the instructor hired on a terminal contract wants to revolve out of his present job and into one where tenure is a possibility, then he better dedicate himself to his scholarly pursuits. Otherwise he will continue to "revolve" until he gives up the academic life altogether.

And a last point made in favor of the system is the fresh blood theory. Because declining enrollments have dammed expansion, if there were no revolving door, departments would soon become fully staffed with tenured members. Turnover would occur only with a death or retirement. Hence years might pass without new faculty members to provide youthful energy and familiarity with the latest scholarly theories. The corollary to this last position is its benefit to the new Ph.D.: if it weren't for revolving positions, there would be precious few positions for them at all.

Let me respond to each of these points in turn. The first argument, that the revolving door avails undergraduates, particularly freshmen, of more highly qualified instructors, is, in the final analysis, stupid. Certainly today's instructors are more qualified (on paper at least) than yesterday's. Today's have Ph.D.'s; yesterday's didn't. But the comparison must be made, not between today and yesterday, but between today and tomorrow. Both today's and tomorrow's instructors will have their final degrees. And tomorrow's instructors will lack the experience of the men and women they replace. If quality is the issue, then the best of today's instructors should be tenured, not revolved out.

The second point, that the revolving system grants new professors needed experience, is similarly empty. Experience for what? The next terminal appointment also offering experience as one of its prime benefits? Or the job as a technical writer or bookstore manager that he will take when he despairs of moving his family every few years? On the contrary, I fear that the experience one may gain from revolving appointments may be precisely the wrong kind. Since nothing an instructor might do will enable him to retain his position, isn't he encouraged to give only the most perfunctory attention to his teaching duties and other departmental responsibilities in order to spend maximum time on his research and writing?

Which brings us, of course, directly to point three—that the system promotes scholarly activity. Certainly this seems to be true. It is arguable that the teaching loads of most terminal appointees are so great that there is hardly time left over for research. But it is undeniable that the system makes painfully clear that the only road to success is paved with the squint of scholarship. However I wonder how much this point is at odds with the benefits of the system expressed in points two and particularly one. Of course it has long been a proverb of academia that good teaching and scholarship go hand in hand, that they are complementary endeavors each beneficial, immediately and over the long term, to the other. Undoubtedly this is sometimes the case. But I

suspect that just as often the opposite is true, that the dedicated scholar is the inferior teacher because his real interests, his most important time and productive energy, lie and are spent elsewhere. And conversely, the best teacher is the one who spends the extra hours not on a scholarly project, but in the office tutorial, in giving papers special, intense attention, in honing a lecture as if *it* were for publication. But lest I give a misimpression, it is hardly my purpose here to set teaching and scholarship in opposition, I have known many who were superior at both. More importantly, I think the university is large enough to encompass those with special talents at either. However, I think we must exercise care not to reward scholarship *over* teaching. And isn't that, in part, a necessary result of a program of revolving terminal appointments?

The fourth point, the fresh blood theory, I find particularly aptly named. Doesn't this argument finally come down to: let's sacrifice some young academics in order to keep ourselves vital? And isn't that just a little disturbing? Aren't transfusions needed for the sick, not the healthy? If the tenure system works, then those who are self-motivated, who are intellectually alive, are the ones who receive the lifetime security that tenure offers. They shouldn't need the infusion of ideas and energy from the outside, not if their institutions possess libraries.

On Spinning in the Revolving Door

As a last defense, proponents of the revolving door point out that the system makes no false promises and raises no false hopes. Prof. Nomad was told when he was first hired that he would be let go at the end of his set contract. So if Prof. Nomad has hard feelings, they are unjustified. And indeed, when Prof. Nomad secured this job, he was ecstatic. The alternative was unemployment or leaving the profession he only just completed training himself for. But as time passed, Prof. Nomad began to see his situation as more of a trap than an opportunity. He necessarily had the largest number of students. He had so many that he could not give them the individualized attention he knew they needed in order best to benefit from his instruction. He was run ragged with preparations and grading. On top of these frustrations he was faced with a most unpleasant dilemma. He was being paid to teach and wanted to do so to the very best of his ability. But to redouble his efforts with his students was surely to rob what little time he had available for research and writing. Not to redouble them, however, was to settle for being a mediocre instructor. If he sacrificed the scholarship, he would not increase his attractiveness when revolving out time came around. And his present university was prepared to reward his teaching effort only with a back pat and an enthusiastic letter for his placement file, never with retention, a promotion, or a raise. The only course which made sense in self-interested terms was to devote minimum time, effort, and concern to his students and as much of those as possible to publication. Unfortunately, this was a course that Prof. Nomad's conscience did not let him easily choose. If he went into academia out of a love of teaching, what sense did it make deberately to become a poor teacher?

The revolving door turned Prof. Nomad's life into nightmare. He was forced to move every few years. He remained always a stranger in his community. His children were always starting over at new schools with new friends. His spouse was forever having to find new jobs. In this light isn't it understandable if Prof. Nomad has surrendered to bitterness. Or isn't it even more understandable if he has decided to forego the bitterness by withdrawing from the university. This last is the great danger I fear that academia has created for itself. The best of our Prof. Nomads may already have resigned or be near deciding to do so rather than choose a course which sets conscience and ideal at odds with family security and rootedness. The loss of these Professor Nomads may well be a loss that we do not yet understand and perhaps will not for another ten years when they should have been reaching their maturity as departmental leaders, innovators, administrators, but instead will be a decade or more gone from the university.

And so, in the end, I conclude that Prof. Reynolds has gotten the formulation precisely backwards. It should be: if the revolving door is unquestionably bad, how can tenure be good?

Kingman Brewster, of course, deems it good. And he makes the case that tenure is necessary not only as a balance for low salaries, but even more importantly as the basis for academic freedom. Without this *guarantee* of employment, Brewster argues, university professors would be tempted to pull their intellectual punches so as not to antagonize influential alumni or powerful politicians outside the university, or administrators or departmental peers inside the university who might rule on promotions or even retention. "Jockeying for favor" Brewster writes, "by trimming the argument because some colleague or some group will have the power of academic life or death in some later process of review would falsify and subvert the whole exercise."

This seems undeniably true. But Brewster seems to forget that the tenure system comes equipped with a lengthy probationary period. During that period doesn't the system encourage, rather than discourage, the argument trimming that Brewster is worried about? It is, after all, one's senior colleagues who either award

But for those now choosing a career, tenure is a powerful reason to avoid university teaching.

or deny tenure. Furthermore, I wonder how valid his argument is even after tenure has been achieved. Is there some analogue in our political system that protects, for instance, our First Amendment rights? Or is it rather true that those freedoms have endured because as a national community we have retained a commitment to them? And isn't it true that they will continue to endure just, and only, as long as our populace determines to honor and secure them. If this is the case, and if the analogy can be applied to the university, then it is not tenure which protects academic freedom, but rather the commitment of the university community to an atmosphere of open intellectual debate and dissent. Academic freedom, then, will last, tenure system or no, as long as it retains that commitment.

If, in the final analysis, tenure really doesn't safeguard academic freedom, what does it do? It certainly no longer functions as an incentive for bright undergraduates to choose a career in college teaching. Its difficulty of achievement actually functions to discourage them. What it does do, primarily, is give rise to the revolving door contract. And as we have seen, that is a system whose long range impact is detrimental to the university.

Abolishing tenure, I recognize, would be no easy process. How could we take it away from those who already have it? Probably we neither could nor should. But if we could terminate the system for all those who lack tenure, ironically, we would do them a favor rather than a disservice. Then they would not have to be dismissed before a seventh year elapsed because the alternative was a guaranteed lifetime appointment. Then they could devote themselves to teaching and be rewarded for it, no longer with tenure, but as in the past with continued employment.

Universities like to think of themselves in the worthy role of greenhouse for our society's human values. But during the seventies tenure came to make that role more difficult to play because it nurtured a system which sacrificed a human concern for its instructors. We are in danger of losing sight of the fact that a university can only be as good as the men and women who teach under its auspices. By failing to exercise concern for them, we fail best to serve the very institution in whose name we are disregarding them. The ultimate irony is that the present tenure system was originally conceived as a policy to protect professorial interests. For those already across the tenure gulf, perhaps it still does. But for those at the point of choosing a career, it has become a powerful reason to look away from university teaching. And for those many spinning indefinitely in the revolving door, tenure no longer offers an anticipated security but rather an intractable insecurity.

The Treasures of the Met

John Solensten

It has been said that
acquisition is perhaps
the most compelling instinct
of the curator.
At the Met, for example,
the long vitrine, igneous
with jewelry and vessels
of East Greek gold,
is full of attainment
to modest perfection.
It is all only perfect enough
to contemplate
without quite going mad.

In the shadow of the hand
(Brief as all lovely moments are),
the vitrine sails the gray moon sea
and then it turns
on many-masted shore
where armies burn
the gates of Colophon
and grim Aeneas
bears his relics out of Ilium.

And then the vision
holds and separates.
Here the sun disk,
    cold pectoral with Assyrian wings,
stiffly pulseless
holds its onyx eye
on golden emperies of golden men.

The hand itself grows cold.
The skin is feather bronzed
    and chill.
We ask nothing then.
The heart has reasons why
such splendid silent things
    can please and frighten us.

We take the *phailé,*
the smooth and cunning drinking bowl.
It is comfortable
with tactful attributes of hand,
    the shaper.
It knows and measures us.

We spread the wine upon the floor,
Then sweep the air itself—
round theos, full of gods.
The handle is a youth
whose song is form singing.
He is hyacinthrine, pure and fair.
He is singing voiceless
on the level of the wine—
is singing.
    We hold. Acquisition is perhaps
    the most impelling instinct
    of the curator.

Ironically, liberal arts colleges change their character and become more like universities through emphasis on research and curricular offerings meaningful chiefly to researchers.

Christian Higher Education at the Crossroads

Part III: The Idea of the Institution of Higher Education

Robert V. Schnabel

The history of higher education is one of change: changing philosophies, changing institutional missions, and changing academic programs in response to changing publics to be served. With the expansion after World War II of post-high school educational access in the United States and a markedly broadened public to be served through traditional programs and of continuing education for "non-traditional" students, ideas about the nature and scope of "higher education" have been altered, even blurred. The new term, "post-secondary education," as a surrogate for "higher education" reflects something of this social change and conceptual modification. The struggle continues to conceive what constitutes "the higher learning."

Yet, the more things change, the more they remain the same. The history of educational thought and practice is one of discussion, debate, and disagreement. The way Aristotle put the issues some 2500 years ago is valid today.

> Mankind are by no means agreed about the things to be taught, whether we look to virtue or the best life. Neither is it clear whether education is more concerned with intellectual or moral virtue. The existing practice is perplexing: no one knows on what principle we should proceed—should the useful in life, or should virtue, or should the higher knowledge be the aim of our training; all three opinions have been intertained. Again about the means there is no agreement; for different persons, starting with different ideas about the nature of virtue, naturally disagree about the practice of it. (Politics, Book VIII, Chapter 2)

The purpose of the present essay in this series of essays is to examine the "idea" of higher education and of the institutions engaged in this enterprise, or at the very least to discover what characteristics distinguish the "higher" learning from other forms of post-secondary education. The term "idea" is used in a broad philosophical sense, signifying the essence or nature and the purposes of "higher education" and of the institutions engaged in offering it.

Setting aside the recent use of the term "post-secondary" education, a neologism necessary to distinguish various explicitly technical and vocational programs from traditional baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate education, there are divergent ideas as to the nature, purposes, and character of "higher" education. These divergent ideas are exemplified in different institutional forms: (1) the collegiate pattern, centered in liberal studies and accenting the primacy of teaching and student personal development, and (2) the university pattern, with different universities giving varying attention in mission, organization, programs, and resource allocation to research and scholarship, teaching and advanced disciplinary specialization, professional education, and service through applied science and technology. These two dominant ideas are really "ideal types," for in the untidy realities of the academic marketplace, unitary liberal arts colleges emulate universities and embody certain of their characteristics, while research and comprehensive universities (with various undergraduate colleges, professional and graduate schools, research centers, and extension services divisions) seek to maintain certain values if liberal arts education in the collegiate pattern.

The idea of higher education in the pattern of the unitary liberal arts college stresses teaching, centered in liberal and general studies, and student development as primary institutional purposes. Central goals include (1) student intellectual development, (2) all-round student personal growth, and (3) preparation for individual, social, and vocational roles in the adult world.

The collegiate idea of education lays particular stress on student personal development. Attention is to be given not only to formal academic programs but also to educational experiences that expand students' life-spaces, perceptual fields, and conceptual networks, and to students' internal, often unconscious, feelings and concerns, their needs and expectations and aspirations, their attitudes and values—however difficult it is to uncover these hidden realities. To be free, students need knowledge of the range of options open to them, understanding of their own interests, abilities, and limitations, and the ability to mobilize the energy and effort needed to act. They need to come to know who they are and develop realistic self-perceptions if they are to avoid a sense of helplessness and immobility.

The collegiate idea rests on a theory of personal formation and development which acknowledges the importance of relationships with peers and peer-groups. It seeks to establish a climate of living and learning which contributes to personality development and maturation. Every facet of the college environment—curriculum, teachers, methods of instruction, student-

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teacher relationships, student-student interaction in living quarters and dining hall and co-curricular activities—is to be devised, so far as possible, to serve the purposes of personal development. The total environment is to be organized to make this kind of impact, each element in its particular manner and time. By bringing their disciplines and subject matters into meaningful contact with students, teachers contribute to students' personal growth. Students, through open and free sharing of themselves in the various forms of living and learning, initiate one another into processes of self-recognition and mature decision-making.

Although each member of the living-learning community is to play a part in student personal development, it is the teacher's work that is of paramount importance. The teacher's task is to help students use the arts and sciences as means of personal growth and as instruments of social usefulness. The effectiveness of faculty members is to be judged by the extent to which they help students grow intellectually, put knowledge to use in productive ways, and act maturely in their personal and social relationships. The teacher's aim should be to help students learn how to use their college education for the rest of their lives and to enjoy life more because of what their teachers have been able to teach them. It is when institutions do not consider this to be a primary responsibility of their faculty members that much of the effectiveness of faculty members is seriously impaired.

The university idea of higher education has been given two principal forms of institutional expression: (1) that of the complex, doctoral granting research university, whose mission includes the augmentation of knowledge (research and scholarship function), the transmission of knowledge (the teaching function), and the utilization of knowledge (the applied science and service function); (2) that of the comprehensive university—an institution which in many cases previously was a state teachers college or small independent university that has recently become a complex institution comprised of an undergraduate liberal arts college, professional schools, and graduate divisions. Whether complex research "multiversity" or more recently developed comprehensive university, each has been exposed to public discussion concerning its nature and purposes, the effectiveness of the attention it gives to undergraduate teaching and the transmission of knowledge and values needed by citizens, and the role that research, development, and graduate studies should play.

At both complex research universities and comprehensive universities role conflicts have emerged for faculty members (for example, teaching vs. research and publication), and faculty have encountered competing allegiances (commitment to one's academic career and professional advancement vs. loyalty to the institution). Concerns are expressed that instructional programs often are converted into recruitment centers for the discipline or department and that when research, scholarship, professional interests, and applied science become dominant values, attention to undergraduate instruction in the arts and sciences and to student personal development may be neglected. Ironically, unitary liberal arts colleges often change their character, becoming more like comprehensive universities through emphasis on faculty research and scholarship and on curricular offerings meaningful chiefly to researchers, scholars, and professionals.

These and other issues concerning university models of higher education have been addressed by scores of writers in the last one hundred years. Voices have been raised against the idea and practice of higher education which leads to the decline of traditional liberal arts and undergraduate instruction. Irving Babbitt and Norman Foerster, protesting against specialization, the dominance of research, and scientific methodolatry, called for attention to liberal culture and the revival of undergraduate education grounded in the traditions and standards of past civilizations and directed to the development of well-rounded persons. Robert Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer Adler called for an undergraduate curriculum centered in the "great books" of western civilization and the restoration of a model of undergraduate education directed to the cultivation of reason and the transmission of enduring truth.

Diverging Ideas of Higher Education

It is apparent that there is divergence and convergence in college and university thought and practice, stemming from different formulations of the idea of higher education. Collegiate and university models of higher education agree on the centrality of intellectual formation, but the collegiate pattern also stresses (as most university models do not) the primacy of teaching, student personal development, and the cultivation of means and motivation for lifelong learning.

In theory, unitary liberal arts colleges stress liberal and general studies for their intrinsic value. In actuality, however, in addition to standard disciplinary majors, most colleges have large components of undergraduate professional studies (e.g., elementary and secondary teacher education, social work, various business fields, health and allied health professions, journalism and other communications arts). Indeed colleges today do not often suggest that liberal studies be pursued for their own sake, that is, for the cultivation of intellectual and moral virtues, but for their contribution to vocational and professional education.

Several factors have led to the decline of liberal edu-

Colleges today do not often suggest that liberal studies be pursued for their cultivation of moral and intellectual virtues but for their contribution to professional education.

cation: (1) the expansion of knowledge and loss of an easily identified core of knowledge needed by all persons; (2) declining job opportunities for liberal arts graduates, student consumerism and concern for job-entry vocational and professional preparation, and the financial woes of liberal arts colleges have forced many colleges to redesign curricula to attract students; (3) the pressure of graduate and post-baccalaureate professional schools, combined with the specialization and disciplinary mentality of faculty trained at research-oriented graduate schools; (4) increasing diversity of the student population attending colleges, making it difficult, if not impossible, for the institution to have a unified mission.

Hence it is that studies in literature, history, geography, cultural anthropology, psychology, sociology, philosophy, and religion are defended on the basis of their putative instrumental value in coping with problems of communication, politics, public relations, international relations, social and community affairs, and advanced specialization or professional preparation. If a student would state he wished to enter a liberal arts program to cultivate his intellectual and moral virtue, and not for the purpose of preparing for a particular career or for admission to a professional or graduate school, he would probably be referred to the counseling center to discover what ails him.

Even when affirming the intrinsic value of liberal and general studies, there is little agreement on what should constitute a "core" program of such studies. In fact, the dominant practice is to require a few basic courses (for example, English composition and physical education) and to define the remainder of the "general education" requirement in terms of options to be elected from a preselected list of humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Many colleges (and some universities as well) are currently directing attention to revitalization of liberal and general education by use of new organizing principles. Some have expanded the scope of required courses and reduced the scope of electives and majors. Some are focusing on outcomes—competences or behaviors—in cognitive and affective learning, and for citizenship. Some have redefined liberal education in terms of modes and processes of inquiry. Some are focusing on "holistic" education, that is, emotional and attitudinal development, value awareness, aesthetic sensitivity, physical dexterity, and practical skills. Some have attempted to relate liberal learning directly to professional and career preparation, restoring the ideals of service and vocation to a central place in the formal curriculum.

A number of universities have sought to capture the best of both worlds—the world of the undergraduate liberal arts college and the world of science and research, professional schools, and academic specialization—by creating undergraduate "living-learning" residence complexes which give attention to the teaching-learning task and student personal development.

Universities, by their very complexity and comprehensiveness, face many dangers and enticements. They confront difficulties associated with scale, their very size producing an environment of impersonality, specialism, fragmentation, disciplinary isolation, and primary attachment of faculty to their disciplines and professions; each of these factors contributes to loss of unity in the university. They are exposed to the danger of becoming intellectual cafeterias rather than communities of scholarly life in which members of the community seek to relate their special disciplines and professions to the whole of learning. The proliferation of professional and graduate programs may lead to their domination of undergraduate instruction and a subservient role for the arts and sciences. Emphasis on scholarship, research, and publication runs the risk that these activities will overshadow the importance of good teaching, leading professors to seek "released-time" from teaching as the higher good. Increasing involvement of professors in remunerative consultantships and professional "moonlighting" activities may deflect them from their academic calling and cause the loss of their independent roles.

Converging Ideas of Higher Education

Except by means of negative definition—that is, defining a term by identifying what it does not mean—there appears to be no single, univocal, normative "idea" of higher education. Each institution must clearly delineate the "idea" of higher education it affirms and then flesh out this "idea" in its statement of mission. This statement should include the institution's purposes and programs, the common agreement held by its members and sponsors as to where the instutution is going, and the criteria used for the institution's self-evaluation, change, and improvement. If there is no univocal "idea" of higher education, there are nevertheless notions about some constitutive characteristics of authentic higher education which may be derived from both the collegiate and university models.

(1.) An institution of higher learning is a center of knowledge and enlightenment. In all of its parts and disciplines, and as a whole, it is a community of scholars —both teachers and students—which has unity because of its central goal: to preserve, discover, and disseminate knowledge and to transmit culture. It is a place where teachers and students learn to live on the frontiers of knowledge and enjoy the freedom and pleasure

If a student stated he wished to do liberal studies to cultivate his moral and intellectual virtues, he would probably be referred to the counseling center to discover what ails him.

of intellectual discourse. Each member of the academic community—faculty, student, administrator, staff—is effective only to the degree he recognizes his function as a part of the whole and respects the function of every other member and the unity of the community.

(2.) A principal responsibility of an institution of higher learning is to sift and weigh opinions, truth-claims, and trends in the primary areas of human knowledge and social affairs, and to serve as a forum for the presentation and examination of diverse ideas. It should also serve as a center for the arts and creative work in the realm of imaginative expression.

(3.) Programs of study should be directed toward achieving the institution's own particular mission and purposes, each program being based on a foundation of general and liberal studies and providing also for academic concentrations and professional studies appropriate to the institution's mission and resources. Liberal education components should stress broad knowledge of the cultural heritage, ability to think critically, solve problems, make wise decisions, and use the methodologies of the major disciplines; it should also cultivate the ability to receive, assess, and effectively communicate ideas and provide students with systematic ways to formulate sets of moral, spiritual, and esthetic values. Professional education should stress principles, concepts, and methods for applying ideas—not how-to-do-it techniques, but scientific principles applied in practical situations. Professional education, as well as liberal education, should be concerned with the development of critical thinking, informed decision-making, original thinking, communication skills, and the development of standards of personal and professional ethics.

(4.) An institution of higher learning stands or falls on the strength of its undergraduate programs and the quality of teaching. It needs to appoint and retain faculty members who share the institution's mission and who possess the kind of training, experience, and interests which will make for a well-balanced body of colleagues. They should be oriented to both teaching and teaching-related research and scholarship and be interested in and devoted to the university as a whole—its purposes, communal activities, and academic policies. Since the institution of higher learning should play a creative role in the development of scholarship, science, and the arts, faculty should exemplify the life of learning and culture and a commitment to exploration of the world of knowledge. Faculty must be persons who are alive and growing, who can make learning relevant to life and generate electric contact between themselves and their students and colleagues in the quest for truth. This has less to do with "knowing the material" and processing information than it has to do with freshness of imagination, intellectual breadth and elasticity, and openness to new ideas. There should be standards of teaching performance which are both sufficiently flexible to encourage innovation and sufficiently clear to be taken into account in the reward system.

(5.) An institution of higher learning should provide regular occasions for each academic specialist to discuss with others common intellectual topics, the character and limitations of his own methods, and the functions he is performing in his capacity as specialist. Each academician is not only a teacher-scholar but also an individual person and citizen and a neighbor and family member and he needs understanding and wisdom in carrying out his varied social roles and in interpersonal relations. Every academician, no matter what his field of specialization, needs to be a "humanist," not in opposition to science and technology, but to give meaning, direction, and continuity to his individual and social life.

(6.) The institution of higher learning must exercise care in the selection and retention of students. Since it is an institution of higher learning, and not some other kind of post-secondary educational agency, its students are expected to show seriousness of educational purpose: to be concerned, searching, committed inquirers who are motivated to learn for themselves and to integrate learning. They need help in learning how to ask the right questions, but they also should be venturesome enough to express and defend their own views and to welcome the testing of their own ideas.

(7.) There must be concern for students as individuals and for their personal development. Living conditions and environments that promote interpersonal relations, human concern, personal vitality, sensitivity, positive emotions, and imagination are needed as well as a wide variety of cultural arts and social organizations. Students should be offered opportunities to participate in voluntary recreational activities and sports that are physically, socially, and emotionally beneficial and have value for adult life. The whole atmosphere of the learning community should provide a context of freedom of inquiry, disciplined learning, and responsible freedom that lead to self-knowledge and personal growth.

The Lutheran institution of higher education can be no less a center of higher learning than the independent and publicly-supported institution. But even though the Lutheran institution of higher education shares many purposes and characteristics with other higher education institutions, especially other church-related or church-sponsored institutions, it has a particular institutional mission and special guiding purposes that derive from its own theological tradition and heritage. To these matters we shall turn in the final essay in this series.

Also in a Resurrection Like His / The Speaker, The Cross, and Christ in The Dream of the Rood

David Townsend

Among the 30,000-odd lines of Anglo-Saxon poetry that have come down to us, *The Dream of the Rood* is one of the finest literary monuments of pre-Norman English culture, some might even argue the finest. But though the poem faces its rivals from a literary standpoint, there is no disputing its unmatched religious intensity, the mystical fervor of its entranced narration.

> Saddened and rueful, smitten with terror
> At the wondrous Vision, I saw the Cross
> Swiftly varying vesture and hue,
> Now wet and stained with the Blood outwelling,
> Now fairly jewelled with gold and gems.
> Then, as I lay there, long I gazed
> In rue and sadness on my Savior's Tree,
> Till I heard in dream how the Cross addressed me,
> Of all woods worthiest, speaking these words. . . .[1]

Michael Swanton, in the extensive introduction to his edition of *The Dream of the Rood,* heavily emphasizes the poem's identification of the personified cross with Christ.[2] Both are together derided, both suffer, both are wounded, both are brought to the ground and buried after the ordeal. Both are again exalted, and both become a means of salvation for sinful men who call upon them. The identification is undeniable. It is even reinforced by the physical contact of the two, fastened together by nails, the wounds of the one being as well the wounds of the other.

This identification, suggests Swanton, following Rosemary Woolf,[3] is the poet's careful and deliberate rhetorical means around the problem of representing Christ's consciousness during the Crucifixion. For evidence that this was a potential problem, we may look to the manifestations in England of the christological controversy. That dispute, centered upon the relationship between the human and the divine in the person of Christ, bore directly upon any attempt at the portrayal of Christ's human feelings during the Passion. Too great an emphasis upon Christ's human suffering could incur accusation that the poet denied Christ's full divinity, as did the Nestorians. Too great an emphasis upon his victory over the powers of evil could seem to imply an acceptance of the Monophysite position, which tended to disregard the humanity of Christ.

All of this was a matter of controversy in England at the time of the Synod of Hatfield in 679, when Theodore of Tarsus called upon the clergy of the nation to affirm their adherence to the Catholic position on the issue. Bede's commentaries on the Gospels, moreover, contain refutations of the christological heresies. Woolf asserts that "from the combined evidence of the historical information and of Bede's commentaries it is clear that the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches were a living issue in England for at least the fifty years from about 675-725."[4] And so, Swanton writes, putting the account of the Passion into the mouth of the personified rood is an ingenious method of steering clear of a series of theological difficulties. The poet can thus sidestep the issue. To return once more to Woolf, "the real emotional intensity of Christ's agony is thus communicated without the reasonable and insoluble bewilderment arising of how impassibility and passibility could coexist in one consciousness."[5]

I do not here intend to undertake a refutation of such a position. Indeed, such an insight into the doctrinal background of the poem provides the reader with an enriched understanding, even if he does not accept it as an adequate explanation in itself. But I would contend that there are other justifications for the identification of Christ with the cross, a correspondence which both Woolf and Swanton rightly point out. One such justification involves a well-known motif in Pauline theology. It does not replace the other interpretation, but it does render it less absolute as an explanation of the poet's treatment.

The device of prosopopoeia obviously—indeed, by definition—turns the cross, for the purposes of the poem, into a rational creature, capable of speech, of understanding, and of human emotions. The cross arouses our sympathy precisely because it is made human as we are human, a fellow creature with us. The reactions of the cross to the events of the Passion are

[1] Charles W. Kennedy, *Early English Christian Poetry* (New York, 1963). All translated quotations from the poem are from Kennedy's rendering. All line numbers, however, refer to the original text as printed in Michael Swanton, ed., *The Dream of the Rood* (Manchester, 1970), from which the Anglo-Saxon quotations are taken.

> Forht ic waes for baere faegran gesyhde. Geseah
> ic baet fuse beacen
> wendan waedum ond bleom; hwilum hit waes
> mid waetan bestemed,
> beswyled mid swates gange, Hwilum mid since
> gegyrwed.
> Hwaedre ic baer licgende lange hwile
> beheold hreowcearig Haelendes treow,
> oddaet ic gehyrde baet hit hleodrode.
> Ongan ba word sprecan wudu selesta. . . .
> (21-27)

[2] Swanton, pp. 68-69, 72.

[3] Rosemary Woolf, "Doctrinal Influences on *The Dream of the Rood*." *Medium Aevum* 27 (1958), 149.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 142.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 149.

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The personified cross the dreamer dreams in the* Dream of the Rood *is in essentially the situation of the Christian, that of a creature sharing the passion of its Lord.

not the reactions of Christ himself, but of a creature enduring the same pain as its suffering God. Our response to the rood's situation is the response of creature to creature, and, insofar as the cross's pain is the emotional anguish of having to be the instrument of torture to its own beloved Lord, our response is that of faithful creature to faithful creature, of believer to believer. So far as all this holds true, the primary identification in the poem is not the identification of the cross with Christ, but that of the cross with the Christian.

What becomes, then, of the undeniable parallels between Christ and the cross? How can one do justice both to these latter and to the creatureliness of the cross which makes our sympathetic reaction possible? It is here that one benefits by recourse to a familiar theme in the theology of the Pauline epistles. The idea runs through the spirit of much of what St. Paul has to say, but it is summed up in a passage from Romans 6:

> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.[6]

Paul connects baptism with the crucifixion of the old man, as also with the resurrection of the new man. The believer, says the apostle, shares not only in the salvation of Christ, in his resurrection, but also in Christ's death, in his crucifixion. All this takes place through baptism, in which the believer comes to be identified with Christ and with Christ's humiliation and eventual exaltation. If one accepts such a train of thought as influencing the Anglo-Saxon poet, the identification of the cross with Christ, on the one hand, and of the cross with the Christian, on the other, can be maintained in a satisfactory balance. The personified cross is identified with Christ as is every Christian believer, and not otherwise.

The evidence leads one to believe that this Pauline notion would be familiar to any theologically informed Anglo-Saxon Christian and available for his literary use. Aside from his general familiarity with scripture itself, the educated Anglo-Saxon would be likely to know the commentaries of Bede, who expounds upon the passage from Romans:

> For indeed this illustrates, through the mystery of the Lord's death and resurrection, the prefigured end of our old life, the beginning of the new, the forgiveness of sins, and the restoration of righteousness.[7]

Not only does Bede restate Paul's idea, but by a curious twist, he turns the identification of the Christian with Christ inside-out—it is Christ's Passion, tropologically speaking, that is a *figura* of our mortification, not the other way about. Exegetically, this may be an interesting point, but here it does not itself concern us.[8] What is significant for the purpose at hand is that Bede feels completely comfortable with the correspondence of the believer's existence to the Passion.

There is nothing in the passage that strikes one by its originality. Indeed, it is precisely because Bede's commentaries are, by and large, derivative, summing up the attitudes current in his time as they had been gleaned from the writings of the past, that they are so valuable as an insight into the contemporary religious viewpoint. At the same time, it is because these commentaries later became the *summa* of such opinion and were highly respected throughout the Middle Ages that we can accept them as good evidence for the subsequent period. I especially stress this significance of the commentaries because the important point is that the notion was embedded in the contemporary theological matrix, and not that the poet was specifically or consciously concerned with the Pauline passage itself (or with Bede's particular formulation, for that matter). I deal with that passage because it is the concept's ultimate origin, not in order to demonstrate that the poet drew from it directly.

[6]Romans 6:3-11 (RSV).

[7](Free translation my own.) "Nempe satis elucet mysterio dominicae mortis et resurrectionis, figuratum vitae nostrae veteris occasum, et exortum novae, demonstratamque iniquitatis absolutionem, renovationemque iustitiae." Bede, *Expositio in epistola Pauli ad Romanos* 6, in *Opera Bedae Venerabilis presbyteri Anglosaxonis*, 6 (Basel, 1563), col. 97.

[8]For those who do have specifically theological interests, the question of the direction in which the correspondence moves merits consideration. In descent from the Alexandrian exegetical tradition, Bede's reading of the Gospels as *figura* of the Christian's experience suggests that, at least on one level, and to a certain extent, the accounts are about us as well as about Christ.

Dr. Gordon Lathrop, speaking at the 1979 Institute of Liturgical Studies at Valparaiso University, made something of the same point as applied to the liturgy: "the Easter vigil is Christ's passage [from death to life] made our passage." What happens in the liturgy of Easter, asserts Dr. Lathrop, is not so much that by the congregation's action in the ritual Christ is brought out of the grave again, as it is that the congregation, and more specifically the catechumens, themselves pass out of death into life through a baptismal participation in Christ's work of salvation. (And here we come full circle to the passage from Paul.) Again, the identification of Christ and the Christian is the central correspondence. The identification between the liturgy and the work of Christ is made through the former connection. In this way the liturgy, as the *transitus* of the Christian, is kept distinct from the historically unique Resurrection of Christ, while retaining a fundamental connection with it. All this stands in analogy to my reading of the mutual relations of Christ, the cross, and the speaker in the poem.

Still, one might also note that, in all likelihood, the Anglo-Saxon would be familiar with the passage as a lection for the Mass. Romans 6:3-11 appears as an appointed lesson in all three forms of the Roman epistolary treated by Frere.[9] Of course, without attempting to pin down the poem's geographical and historical provenance, one cannot insist that a non-Roman, viz., Celtic lectionary was not in use at the time and place of writing. The nebulous state of our knowledge of contemporary lectionary systems prevents one from closing the argument by pointing to the inclusion of Romans 6:3-11 in all possible usages. But at least one can say that we would have to assign an extremely early date to *The Dream of the Rood* in order to maintain its author's lack of acquaintance with Roman systems, since by the year 700 the Roman rite was everywhere making its way, rendering it all the more likely, the later we date the poem, that its author was familiar with the Roman cycle of readings.

Thus, the liturgical use of the Romans passage also demonstrates, though with less likelihood than does the commentary of Bede, that Paul's notion of the believer's union with the suffering Christ was accessible to the poet. The cross's union with the suffering Christ then becomes an extension of the identification of the cross with the Christian. The Christ-cross connection is as important as Swanton and Woolf hold it to be, but it does not exist by itself. This correspondence is mediated by the other.

On Distinguishing Modes of Allegory

To my contention that the personified cross is identified with Christ as is every Christian believer, and not otherwise, one might object that the poet venerates the cross, rather than treating it as an equal. This exaltation would imply that the identification with Christ is primary, and not mediated as I have said. Moreover, the poet considers the cross a source of salvation. This would suggest that it is deified and is a thin disguise for Christ himself.

One ought to distinguish here between two modes of allegory, between correspondences arbitrarily established by the author, such as those in the pageants at the end of Dante's *Purgatorio*, on the one hand, and correspondences in the world itself which are discovered by the author, such as Dante's sense of Beatrice's significance, on the other. The crux of the argument over the personified cross lies in this distinction of allegorical types, a distinction which has been commonly recognized in recent years. True, a close identification of the cross with Christ might be established by the arbitrary decision of the poet. The identification would then be allegory of the first variety and we could treat it as a rhetorical device, as Swanton does. But the correspondence might, just as easily, be set up as the poet saw levels of meaning inherent in his subject matter. The correspondence would then constitute an allegory of the second type.

One criterion, in making the interpretive decision as to which variety of allegory is present, is whether the relationship preserves the distinction between the entities one of which is a symbol of the other. Allegory of the first type tends to blur this distinction. To put it in mathematical terms, the relationship is an equivalence. The symbol is only a shorthand for the thing symbolized. Allegory of the second type, on the other hand, is a congruency. The symbol corresponds to the thing symbolized by its very nature. For Dante, Beatrice is not a thin disguise for Theology. She remains who she is. If, likewise, the cross remains what it is, if the distinction between it and Christ as well as their correspondence is stressed, then we are not dealing with an allegory of arbitrary disguise, and treatment of the allegory as a rhetorical device trivializes it.

Five lines from the poem speak to the remaining difficulty of the cross's exaltation:

> Lo! the Lord of glory
> The Warden of heaven, above all wood
> Has glorified me as Almighty God
> Has honoured His Mother, even Mary herself,
> Over all womankind in the eyes of men.[10]

The exaltation of the cross does not imply a primary identification with Christ himself any more than the exaltation of the Blessed Virgin implies such a correspondence. Mary, for all her pre-eminence, remains first among created beings. So also the cross remains a created being.

This duality, this distinction between Christ and the cross is too important in the poem to let it slip into the background. The poignancy of the cross's situation lies precisely in its position vis-a-vis its Lord. This is the poignancy of the paradox rightly noted by Swanton: "The creator is destroyed by his creation."[11] A critic must describe the poem's undeniable identification of Christ with the cross in such a way as to do justice at the same time to this distinction. The allegorical relationship is a congruency, not an equivalence. Because the

[9] Walter Howard Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy*, 3 (London, 1935), p. 109.

[10] Hwaet, me ba geweordode wuldres Ealdor
ofer holmwudu, heofonrices Weard,
swylce swa he his modor eac, Marian sylfe,
aelmihtig God, for ealle menn
geweordode ofer eall wifa cynn.
(90-94)

[11] Swanton, p. 70.

Putting the account of the passion into the mouth of the personified cross avoided the possible heresies of overemphasizing either the humanity or divinity of Christ.

personified rood is in essentially the same situation as the Christian, that of a creature sharing in the Passion of its Lord, the Christian's situation is taken up into the cosmic symbol of the cross. But the Christian and the cross do not merge. The particular Christian who narrates the poem does not in his vision confuse himself with the cross. Likewise both cross and Christian, though united with Christ in death and resurrection, do not literally merge into Christ. *The Dream of the Rood* is an expanded version of the anguished cry "I am thy crucifixion!" This means that Christ and cross, Christ and Christian, must remain distinctly "I" and "Thou." The "I" is not a thin disguise for the "Thou."

On the Cartharsis of the Cross's Story

The analogy between the cross and the Christian, in its particular application to the analogy between the cross and the individual Christian who narrates the poem, provides the key to the healing quality of the vision as a whole. At the beginning of the poem the dreamer is "a transgressor, soiled with my sins" (synnum fah, forwunded mid wommum—11. 13-14). After the vision he has been cleansed, and his eagerness for spiritual effort renewed:

> Then with ardent spirit and earnest zeal,
> Companionless and lonely, I prayed to the Cross.
> My soul was fain of death. I had endured
> Many an hour of longing. It is my life's hope
> That I may turn to this Token of triumph,
> I above all men, and revere it well.[12]

It is the holy splendor of the cross that inspires the dreamer's sense of sinfulness: he is "smitten with terror at the wondrous Vision" (Forht ic waes for baere faegran gesyhde—1. 21). It is something between this point in the poem and that at which the narrator describes his renewal—that is to say, something in the cross's story itself—that accomplishes his catharsis. Specifically, the cross assures the dreamer that it has power to save the faithful:

> Now I tower under heaven in glory attired
> With healing for all that hold me in awe.[13]

One would assume that this is the climactic point in the cross's speech. The assurance of the ability to impart grace relieves the fears of the sinful visionary and cleanses him. But I would propose that the cross's story as a whole is cathartic, as well. If all holds that has been said above about the identification of the cross with the Christian, and of both with Christ, then the torment of the cross in conjunction with its Lord's Passion—a Passion that it shares, but of which, at the same time, it is the instrument—corresponds to the crucifixion, in Pauline terms, of the old man in the dreamer. As the cross is wounded, so the visionary is wounded. As the cross stands to Christ, so the visionary stands to Christ, both sharing in suffering and causing suffering. The cross is buried. "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death," says St. Paul. The cross is rediscovered and exalted. "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." The analogy between the dreamer and the cross that began with similar sufferings, if continued, promises the dreamer's resurrection and glorification in analogy to that of the cross. He is assured, thereby, of a part in its ultimate exaltation.

In terms of a structural interpretation of the poem, this train of thought has the great advantage of demonstrating an integral link between the cross's speech and the frame of narration surrounding it. The poem does not fall into a disjointed tripartite scheme, "narrator's speech—cross's speech—narrator's homily." What transpires in the middle section—the whole of what transpires in the middle section, in all its detail—relates directly to the narrator's states of mind, the description of which occupies the first and third sections. One discovers that neither is the narrative framework of the vision a mere pretext for a recounting of the Passion, nor is the homiletic conclusion a stylistically inferior afterthought, as some have contended, but that the poem is in fact a well-crafted unit, whether or not it is a product of multiple authorship.

I do not in any way propose that *The Dream of the Rood* is a conscious poetic restatement of a single passage in one of Paul's epistles, or even of a tenet of Pauline theology in general. I merely suggest that such theological premises ought to be considered in an interpretation of the poem, and that they in fact do shed light on its thought and structure. At any rate, one must admit that insofar as the poet presents the rood as a rational creature, he renders its situation analogous to that of a human being. One must therefore take seriously not only the identification of the cross with Christ, but must attempt to deal with the analogue of the cross with the Christian. The Pauline framework makes this possible; nor was its structure remote from the mind of a theologically sensitive Anglo-Saxon Christian, which the author of the poem most certainly was.

[12] Gebaed ic me ba to ban beame blide mode,
elne mycle, baer ic ana waes
maete werede. Waes modsefa
afysed on fordwege; feala ealra gebad
langung-hwila. Is me nu lifes hyht
baet ic bone sigebeam secan mote
ana oftor, bonne ealle men,
well weordian.
(122-129)

[13] Forban ic brymfaest nu
hlifige under heofenum, ond ic haelan maeg
aeghwylcne anra bara behim bid egesa to me.
(84-86)

The arts of gardening are contemplation, anticipation, orchestration, incubation, determination, and not a little digging in the dirt.

If Winter Comes, Can Spring –

Humphrey: He says the Day of Judgement
Is fixed for tonight.
Margaret: Oh no. I have always been sure
That when it comes it will come
In the autumn. Heaven, I am quite
sure, wouldn't disappoint the bulbs.

—The Lady's Not for Burning

As a gardener I have particular sympathy and in fact share the conviction that "heaven wouldn't disappoint the bulbs." You don't have to be a gardener, however, to appreciate this unique theological viewpoint; all it takes is living in a northern climate. How unfair and frustrating—for us as well as the bulbs—if Judgment Day were to arrive just when we've all made it through those seemingly endless months of cold and ice and snow. How particularly unfair for the gardener who's spent all those months plotting and planning next summer's garden. Viewing that situation from this side of eternity, I'd pick autumn too.

Winter, in fact, is when a garden begins. Nonsense, you say. Look at those bare and frozen flower beds and vegetable plots, with only a few brown withered stalks—remnants of last summer's display—rattling forlornly in the icy winds. There's nothing to be grown out there. But winter is when next summer's extravaganza is mentally lined up and plotted on paper. In fact, in some ways, the winter months can be the most enjoyable for the gardener since there's no backbreaking digging or continuous weeding to struggle with. One can curl up in the coziest chair available, spread out one's seed catalogs and design a multitude of gardens.

Through November most gardeners are still concentrating on tidying up the garden that was: raking, mulching, and generally tucking things in for the long cold months ahead. And in December like everyone else, we surrender to the Christmas holidays. Gardening, if not totally forgotten is relegated to care and feeding of poinsettias, azaleas, and Christmas cactus on one's window sill.

But come January and the seed catalogs arrive, crammed with page after page of vibrant full color closeups of what seems like a thousand and one vegetables and flowers. Once the catalogs are in hand, there's no stopping the person who has gardening in his or her blood. Gardening is 90 per cent anticipation of whatever you are awaiting: the first crocus to appear, the first seeds to sprout, the first rose to bloom, the first tomato to ripen. But when the catalogs arrive, it's time not to anticipate a single event but the whole unfolding of the coming growing season. Veritable "wish books," the catalogs offer the known and the unknown, the tried and true and the exotic.

Will the coming year be the one to build up the perennial beds, ensuring not just one summer but a whole succession of blooming seasons? Should one attempt a knot herb garden in the manner of medieval monks and Victorian ladies? Is this the year for day lilies or tuberous begonias? Should one do all vegetables and no flowers or vice versa? Is this the year to construct that water lily pond you've always thought about? The possibilities seem endless.

There are several methods of perusing the catalogs. You can first examine the new varieties of vegetables and flowers being introduced by each company. Now to a non-gardener one tomato or bean or marigold seed may be like any other tomato or bean and marigold seed. Nothing could be farther from the case. Over the past 75 years or so, seed companies have "invented" new plants, programming different features into the seeds by means of cross pollination and hybridization. Such things as color and size variation, the timing of fruit bearing, and adaptability to heat and water conditions have come under experimentation. For example, plant one variety of tomato seeds and you'll get perfectly round but small tomatoes in, say, 65 days. Plant a different variety and you'll get tomatoes the size of softballs in 80 days. Each year the seed companies announce their latest "discoveries," promising bigger flower, sweeter fruit, more flavor and so on. For example, this season one company has featured a new variety of sweet corn that it promises is so tender it can be eaten raw.

An avid urban gardener, Janet Seefeldt*'s interest in real estate also includes her present position as Director of Publications and Book Editor for the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers headquartered in Chicago and her recent purchase of a large garden with a home attached to it in Chicago's historic Logan Square. A former editor of the* Lighter*, the student literary magazine of Valparaiso University, she was graduated from the University in 1963.*

Be Far Behind?

Janet Seefeldt

After you've reviewed what's new and different you can proceed to those inevitables that no garden would be complete without—things like lettuce or petunias or marigolds. Or you can start at the beginning, and go from astilbes and asters all the way through wisteria and zinnias.

The major objective is to come up with a garden continuously blossoming and maturing from earliest spring to the first frost. It becomes a matter of orchestrating such things as colors and plant heights and leaf shapes and sizes and blossoming times.

In one sense the seed companies have us at their mercy since there's nothing in the yard at the moment that one can compare their picture perfect specimens with. Certainly, you think, it will be possible to duplicate any of these gems in your own yard next summer. The bleakness outside combined with the profusion of color in the catalogs makes us susceptible to wanting to grow anything and everything. Maybe this time, you think, the petunias seeds really will germinate, even though in every preceding summer you've had to buy greenhouse-grown plants to supplement the few frail seedlings that managed to sprout.

Photograph by Ken Bazyn

To curb this tendency, it's best to begin actually mapping things out on paper. A scale diagram of the space available might reveal that based on your initial selections, you'll have to plant three crops on top of each other to accommodate them all, so a paring of the list becomes critical. This effort may be the work of one evening or prolonged into some heavy landscaping efforts—on paper, of course—that may take a week or more. At this point there's no real rush except that once the seed order is in the mail, spring seems that much more inevitable. And so finally the selections are made, with cutbacks based both on what your garden plot can support as well as what your pocketbook can support, and the order form filled out and sent on its way.

Within a month or less the seeds arrive and the next major decision arises: should you start the seeds inside immediately, hoping that spring will arrive on time (if not early) or wait a few weeks? If started too early, the seedlings will reach a gangly teenagehood inside; with all energy being used to create stems and leaves and roots, little is left to bear the shock of life out of doors when the time comes. And some seeds should be planted directly in the ground outside for optimum survival, and one look at the frozen ground without indicates it's much too early for such efforts.

Even if planting is postponed, the excitement of the arrival of the seeds can be maintained by setting up the "nursery." This may mean a corner in the basement, a back room or merely a window sill—anyplace where tray upon tray of peat pots can be lined up and given an intensive light source. The area may take on the atmosphere of a mad scientist's laboratory once fluorescent "grow" lights are installed, giving off their slightly ominous purple-pink glow. But the seeds don't mind; in fact the light source acts as a snake charmer, with the miniscule seedlings poking their way out of the soil, bending and swaying in the direction of the light. If only natural light is used the seedlings must be rotated daily or even more often or else they will quickly grow horizontally, leaning frantically in the direction of the sun.

Once the seedlings have all put in their appearance, it's up to the gardener to reduce the population of the seed trays drastically. Sometimes it takes will power to do this, after you've so eagerly anticipated any growth at all, but under controlled conditions many more seeds will germinate

The routine of digging the garden in the spring puts one on a sort of remote control. Unlike a painting or a poem, a garden is an endless occupation and never finished.

than one would ever have space for or that in fact would survive into adulthood. As with anything in nature, the law of survival is essential and if all were left to grow they would mutually choke to death. And so you determine which are to be the fittest. At this point it's hard to imagine any of these plants, if one can call such slender needle-like things "plants," as ultimately turning into six foot bushes or vines or bearing fruit weighing a pound or more.

Along with watching the seedlings progress inside, you begin to observe changes outside: what had been Mt. Everest high snow drifts are melted down to a few spotty patches on a brown lifeless lawn. A few snowdrops and crocus valiantly appear, unminding of the still chilly air and snow squalls that descend on them. On some days the air begins to smell a bit fragrant and clean and warm—best of all warm.

On Buying a Yard with a Home on It

Now the game to outguess nature truly begins. No spring arrives quite like another and what and when you've planted in previous years may be disaster this time. Patience is critical. Despite your desire to start planting, you know that a day of 70 degrees in early April can be succeeded by another month of snow and sub-freezing temperatures. And so the wait begins.

Finally, just when the seedlings appear their straggliest, a whole week of warmth descends and out you go. The winter hardened ground must be broken up, fertilizers and other soil additives dug in and it all smoothly raked and readied. At this point you're operating on a sort of remote control. Although the work is the most physically exhausting, it's the most routine. If your plot or plots are sizable, use of a mechanized tiller may be beneficial but there's nothing like falling into a dead sleep the evening you've personally turned over every inch of ground using spade and pitchfork and every muscle in your body.

Your scale diagram of what's to be planted handy, you position seedling firmly in the soil and construct straight neat rows, using sticks and string, for the rest of the vegetable seeds. Everything seems spaced much too far apart as you step back and view your labors; surely another one or two rows could have been possible. But then you recall how things looked last summer, around early August, when tomato bushes grew on top of the cucumber vines that had sprawled into the bean plants that had overtaken the beet tops. What seems like too much open space in May vanishes by August.

As you work you can pause to admire the clumps of tulips and daffodils already coloring the garden and a random thought strays through your mind: now, next year, I'm going to plant a few more bulbs here and perhaps a few more over by the fence . . .

Unlike a painting or a poem, a garden is never finished, which provides its endless source of enjoyment and occupation for the gardener. Plantings can be added, dug up or moved to new locations from one year to the next; even without such variations no two years' gardens will be exactly alike given the variability of nature. An early spring one year will have the rose bushes and peonies blooming by Mother's Day; a delayed spring and it may be closer to the Fourth of July!

Someone recently asked me how long I had been gardening. All my life was my answer; although I know there were a few early years where that was impossible, I've been planting seeds and watching them grow for as long as I can remember. I distinctly recall a couple of summers of Victory Gardens when I was small. Several acres at the edge of a cemetery were turned over to the community and my family and all our neighbors met there on a daily basis through the summer. There have been at least 20 years' worth of backyard gardens. As a city apartment dweller for several years, gardening at first seemed out of reach. Then a construction site around the corner from my building was converted into an urban garden plot. Working in soil that was more concrete and bricks (from the building that had previously been demolished on the site) than tillable dirt, I managed to grow enough tomatoes and lettuce to distribute to numerous of my friends and co-workers at the office. My cherry tomatoes, in fact, received rave reviews from everyone for being the sweetest ever tasted.

It's only been within the last year that I've truly come into my own—my own yard. I'm probably one of very few people who bought a yard that had a house come with it. The yard came fully furnished: strawberry beds, raspberry bushes, two fruit trees, lots of lawn and plenty of flower and vegetable growing space—what more could one want?

But I fear I've rambled on long enough and actually it's time for me to get back to master plan for this summer's garden: should I do tomatoes and beans and squash or corn and peas and cabbage . . . now, I must check those catalogs one more time. . . .

Books

High Art, Tribal Art, Popular Art, And Christianity

Review Essay

Thomas J. Christenson

Art is fundamentally a set of actions, not a set of objects; aesthetic contemplation is only one of its many purposes.

Art in Action: Toward A Christian Aesthetic

By Nicholas Wolterstorff. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1980. Pp. 240. Paper, $9.95.

Nicholas Wolterstorff has written a book that should be read by all persons who have something to do with the arts; these should include critics, teachers at all levels, creators, planners, liturgists, building committees, and other producers, distributors, and consumers of the arts. What makes Wolterstorff's discussion of the arts unique is that he does his work from a Christian point of view. It is not his purpose merely to write about the relation between the church and the arts, but to think about the arts in all their aspects from a Christian standpoint. The result is a thorough and explicit critique of prevalent patterns of use and thought about the arts.

In an earlier work, *Reason Within the Bounds of Religion,* Wolterstorff described what it means to be a Christian scholar. He states:

> . . . the religious beliefs of the Christian scholar ought to function as *control* beliefs within his devising and weighing of theories. . . . they also ought to help shape his views on what it is important to have theories about. . . . (many of us) fail to see the *pattern* of our authentic commitment and its wide ramifications. We see only pieces and snatches and miss the full relevance of our Christian commitment to our devising and weighing of theories. . . . Christian philosophy and theology are at the center, not because they are infallible (obviously they're not), but because it is in these two disciplines that the Christian scholar engages in systematic self-examination.

Art in Action is a working out of a theory of art employing the author's Christian beliefs as control beliefs. A control belief is the most basic assumption on which the construction and critique of theories is based. For example, the control belief for the Inquisitor's judgment of Galileo's theories was a belief in the authority of the scripture over scientific theories. The control belief for positivists was the belief that the contemporary state of science presents us with a paradigm of knowing. The Christian beliefs that are at work in Wolterstorff's theorizing are: (1) that persons and their actions are more important and more fundamental than objects, (2) that we, through our work with the arts, are called on too assist in God's work of redemption, and (3) that we should evidence the life of those to whom God's grace has been shown.

The reader of Wolterstorff's book who is not familiar with contemporary aesthetic theories may not understand what a revolutionary approach Wolterstorff makes to the problems of art. For most aesthetic theorists assume that the paradigm of art is given by the institution of high art and that problems of aesthetics are generated by the avant-garde of that artistic community. One of the common assumptions of these theorists is that art is identified primarily by the fact that it has *no use.* Art, so understood, is a state of play, not something that serves any purpose or does any other good at all. It is a good unto itself. Into this context Wolterstorff brings what may appear to be a very naive notion, that aesthetic contemplation and participation in the institutions of fine art *is a use,* and that it is but one use among many. A closer look at his argument shows, however, that his view is anything but naive; it is deeply examined and thoroughly argued.

Wolterstorff's argument is built upon a contrast between a Christian view of art and what he calls, "the bewitchment exercised by our institution of high art." The latter is the pattern of thought prevalent in our contemporary western way of thinking about the arts. When under the influence of this point of view we explicitly or implicitly assume the following:

a. The arts may be fundamentally divided into different classes: the fine arts, crafts, popular arts, advertising arts, utilitarian arts, etc.
b. The fine arts are the paradigm cases of art. Our use and thoughts about the fine arts are paradigms for our thinking about art in general.
c. The essential purpose of art is for aesthetic contemplation.
d. Art is mainly a set of objects, the foci of aesthetic contemplation —paintings by Rembrandt, the novels of Jane Austen, Bach's "Easter Oratorio," etc.
e. Our institutions of fine art (concert halls, museums, educational institutions, etc.) facilitate this use of art (by being quiet, by mounting or displaying objects in a certain way, by keeping out the rabble).

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According to the prevailing mythology of artistic creation, the artist creates value in the same way God creates the universe, as an expression of his own nature alone.

f. The act of creation in art is a creation of values *ex nihilo,* an establishment of something that was not there before.
g. Excellence in the arts is found in the solving of a problem set by the "institution of high art."
h. Art objects are to be criticized by the extent to which they are solutions to problems encountered in the history of art.
i. Artistic creation is not a copying of nature but a creation of new value, a creation like unto God's creating.

Wolterstorff contrasts to this the view of art from a Christian perspective:

a. The distinction "fine arts" is a modern European invention, in fact the lumping together of various activities, poetry, carving, dancing, theater, etc., in a single class. The stone carver at work on a medieval cathedral, a dancer in a tribal dance, the singers chanting work songs, the faithful joining in the congregational hymn, none of these think in terms of the grouping of their activity with the activity of the others, nor as being either fine, or non-fine art. They are performing actions that are appropriate to their use and context.
b. Nor do the participants in any of these "arts" think of themselves as doing poorly what "fine artists" do well. The dancer in a tribal dance does not think of himself as doing poorly or primitively what the ballerina does well in the "Palais de Beaux Arts." Nor do the participants in the congregational hymn ever think of themselves as doing poorly what the professional choirs do well. But the prevailing view would have us use all arts as they are used in museum, concert, or exhibition hall. The latter use of the arts, i.e. for aesthetic contemplation, has no priority over these other uses or contexts. Yet our modern institutions of fine art place next to each other, on their walls or in their programs, the works of Picasso and Papuan masks, the sarcophagi from Egypt and the sculptures of George Segal, a symphony of Brahms and a liturgical setting by Bach. This seduces us into thinking of all of these in the same way, namely as objects lifted from their irrelevant or befogging contexts and placed into the context which facilitates the modern use, aesthetic contemplation. But Wolterstorff argues the opposite, that torn from the context of worship this music has not realized its true purpose but has been severed from its true purpose. The ritual mask hanging in the museum next to Picasso's "Mademoiselles d'Avignon" is not in its true context, but torn from it.
c. Wolterstorff maintains that his Christian control beliefs will not allow him to make a set of objects the foundation of his understanding of art. He argues that art is basically a set of actions, not a set of objects. Actions have a purpose and occur in certain contexts. He admits that one of the purposes of the action, art, is to produce occasions for aesthetic enjoyment. But this is only one among many purposes for art. It may serve as the vehicle of, or background for, worship. It may serve moral or didactic purposes, or social or political purposes. To make the one use, aesthetic contemplation, *the* use of art is to create a separation between art and life, and to establish an intellectual elite. It is to turn art, its understanding and creation, into a religion itself with high priests, temples, and initiatory mysteries.
d. Wolterstorff criticizes the principal modern mythology of creation in the arts which puts the artist outside the realm of responsibility to anyone. According to this mythology the artist creates value in the way God creates the universe, as an expression of his own nature alone.

We are all embedded in creation as creatures with a calling to master nature for human benefit, to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to give God glory and honor.

Wolterstorff contrasts to this creator-hero view another in which we are all embedded in creation, as creatures with a vocation. This vocation has both its responsibilities and its fulfillment. Wolterstorff argues (1) that we have been given the responsibility to master nature for human benefit and God's glory. An example of this is the artist's stewardship over his material and his calling to make nature *cosmos.* (2) We are responsible to love our neighbor as ourselves. (3) We are responsible to render God honor. These are the three classes of action for Christians. The end of the Christian's life (in fact the goal of all humanity witnessed in the life of the Christian) is what Wolterstorff calls *Shalom,* "living in delight" and "having joy by giving joy."

Wolterstorff introduces a typology of uses of art: *High art* is the art of the cultural elite, exhibited in museums, performed in concert halls, etc. *Popular art,* by contrast, is art not assimilated by this cultural elite. Finally, *tribal art* is art that is used by everyone, regardless of educa-

To make aesthetic contemplation *the* use of art is to separate art from life and turn art into a religion with high priests, temples, mysteries, and rites of initiation.

tion or social status. Jazz originated as an anti-establishment art form but is presently one of the few examples remaining of tribal art, performed both in concert halls and bars. It is not uncommon for things which began as tribal or popular arts to become the sole possession of high art. But almost never does the reverse occur; it is rare that a work of high art becomes popular or tribal. Bach's cantatas were originally tribal, not intended for concert performance, but for the embellishment of the Sunday service. Non-western arts that were originally tribal arts are assimilated by our society into the institution of high art.

The existence of different uses of arts is by itself not a bad thing, but these uses often reinforce a class structure, so it is here the Christian's participation must be questioned. High art has made an exclusive claim to reveal the true nature of art, and our young artists are trained by our schools to serve the institution of high art almost exclusively. There is a shameful lack of artistic attention paid to the features of life outside of the institution of high art and to the needs of the tribe for artistic joy. There is ever less art of a tribal nature. The aesthetic quality of life outside the museums and concert halls and the aesthetic quality of our acts of worship have correspondingly declined. Almost all that's left of tribal art is advertising art. Should we be surprised at the pervasive influence of the TV-ad image? Even the Christian life is "sold" by an appeal to sex, status, and the well-groomed life. It is for these reasons that we need to be reminded that art may serve other uses than aesthetic contemplation.

While Wolterstorff insists that aesthetic contemplation dominates among the many uses of art, he also insists that the aesthetic is independend of other uses, moral, social, and religious. Thus, for example, he wishes to deny the Tillich's view that the aesthetic is intrinsically connected to the religious. It may be important to stress the independence of the aesthetic use among those for whom some other use of art has been dominant. But apart from its heuristic value the independence of the aesthetic use seems overstated. It is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish Michelangelo's aesthetic from his humanism.

Christians resist any claims of ultimacy for art, or claims for art as a way of rising to God, for art displays man's degradation as well as his dignity.

Nor can we make sense of the unity of a surrealist painting apart from the psychology that it supposes. A surrealist painting is unified, but not apart from the meaning of the symbols presented. Michelangelo's figures are more than "bags of shot" because of their heroism. Is it not more profitable to argue that the aesthetic is an abstraction from a complex whole, not an independent part? If this is so another criticism of the institution of high art follows, that it has committed the "fallacy" of misplaced concreteness, identifying as the main function of art something that is not even an isolatable aspect of it.

One of the most interesting aspects of Wolterstorff's study is the fact that what he has seen to be true and deserving of criticism in the institution of high art is also true and deserving of criticism in other modern institutions. It would be interesting to repeat his analysis and apply his arguments to our medical, legal, and political institutions as well, and not least to the institutions of higher education. It is as true of these institutions as it is in the world of art that we work for self-agrandizement more than we work to serve those who justify the existence of the institutions, namely those most in need of their services.

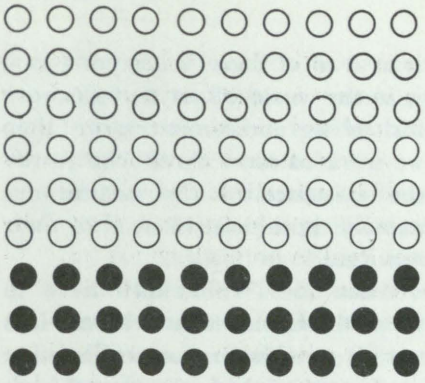
What does Wolterstorff have to say to the Christian in the arts? It is not his conclusion that no Christian can be part of the institution of high art. The Christian can participate and work out his responsibility to God and his neighbor within the institution; witness the work of Eliot and Auden in poetry, and Messiaen and Penderecki in music. But the Christian may not enter the institution without a critical awareness of certain temptations. The institution of high art is open to clique-ishness and fashion, and it can become a system of mutually reinforced narcissism rather than a way to bring delight to people's lives.

The Christian artist will have three concerns. Wolterstorff writes:

> In the first place he [the Christian artist] cannot divorce art from responsibility. He recognizes that responsibility belongs to the constitutive texture of human existence. . . . Secondly, the Christian artist will constantly be struggling to achieve wholeness, integrity to his life. He will not be content to let his life fall into pieces—religion as one piece, art as another. For he knows that to answer the call to be a disciple of Jesus Christ is to commit his life as a whole, not just some fragments thereof, to God's cause in the world. . . .
>
> Thirdly—and this goes almost without saying—the Christian must resist the claims of ultimacy which repeatedly erupt from our institutions of high art. . . . Art is not a way of rising toward God. It is meant instead to be in service of God. Art is not man's glory. It displays man's degradation as well as his dignity.

On the foundations of his critique, Wolterstorff sketches a multifaceted aesthetic theory. He includes excellent discussions of the nature of artistic fittingness, and world-projection in the work of art. Wolterstorff closes his book with two brief but illuminating essays on the aesthetics of the city and the church.

Theatre



The Ghosts of Ibsen

The Father Figure Of Modern Drama

Nelvin Vos

It is strange how history repeats itself in different forms like variations on a musical theme.

Ibsen in a letter, 1866

"I'm half inclined to think we're all ghosts," comments a character in one of Henrik Ibsen's plays. "It's not only what we've inherited from our fathers and mothers that exists again in us, but all sorts of old ideas and opinions. They aren't actually alive in us, but they hang on all the same, and we can never rid ourselves of them."

The ghost of Ibsen has been haunting me. More accurately, I have pursued his Scandinavian vision frequently over the last several years. A production of *Rosmersholm* with Claire Bloom at the Royal Haymarket in London several years ago was closely followed by seeing Liv Ullmann in *A Doll's House* in Philadelphia. *Brand,* a late play portraying the tortures of calling and vocation, was part of a discussion I was assigned to a year or so ago as a guest lecturer at the Lutheran Seminary at Mt. Airy.

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And so it was predictable that on a recent stop at Broadway's TKTS Times Square booth (tickets are available there for half-price a few hours prior to performance), I opted for Ibsen. My experiencing a performance of *John Gabriel Borkman,* Ibsen's play of 1896 currently at the Circle in the Square Theatre, confirmed the importance of Ibsen as the ghost who haunts all of modern drama.

Indeed, Ibsen is pivotal; he is certainly the pivot on which twentieth-century drama turns. The cliché has truth: Ibsen *is* the father of modern drama. Joseph Wood Krutch calls him "the key to modernism;" Robert Brustein is more specific: Ibsen "initiated the theatre of revolt." "Everything since Ibsen that isn't a copy of him, is a reaction to him," says Eric Bentley who continued by commenting, "everyone who has written for the modern theatre has had to come to terms with this giant father figure —he has been loved and hated, but he has never been ignored."

I

To trace specifically the implications of such a hypothesis is to teach a course in modern drama. But even a cursory sketch will convey that Ibsen has left his imprint on his literary heirs.

One of the most obvious strands in the legacy is Ibsen's wrestling with socio-ethical issues. Syphilis, euthanasia, illegitimacy, and feminism were some of the subjects which shocked his contemporaries. One critic in 1881 at the opening of *Ghosts* described the play as "an open drain, a loathsome sore unbandaged, a lazar house with all its doors and windows open . . . this so-called master seems to resemble one of his own Norwegian ravens emerging from the rocks with an insatiable appetite for decayed flesh." Such terms could be, and were, used to describe several of Ibsen's successors: Strindberg, Shaw, O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, and Edward Albee. The cutting edge between traditional morals and avantgarde mores is at the center of much of contemporary drams.

Ibsen is the first dramatist to understand the spiritual implications of Darwinism.

Before Ibsen, tragedy only occurred to the noble and aristocratic. But Ibsen put tragedy in the living rooms of the middle class. In a letter to Edmund Gosse, Ibsen wrote: "The illusion I wished to produce was that of reality. I wished to leave on the reader's mind the impression that what he had read had actually happened." His plays, as if taking place in a Norwegian house down the road, make no attempt at distance, but concentrate on the here and now. We eavesdrop as if looking through the fourth wall. The stage is life, and photographic realism became the dominant mode for the next half century.

The theme of the family, particularly of hereditary guilt, is one of the most lasting of Ibsen's contributions. Again, a good number of Shaw's plays treat this theme, among them *Major Barbara, Candida,* and *Man and Superman.* In the American theatre, O'Neill and Arthur Miller have continued to mine this rich lode of dramatic possibility. Rolf Fjelde, who has translated many of Ibsen's plays, including the text used in the *John Gabriel Borkman* production, accurately notes that Ibsen was "the first dramatist to understand the spiritual implications of Darwinism." In modern drama, the sons spend their lives living in the shadows of their fathers, and finally either accept or rebel against the guilt which they have inherited.

Ibsen used realistic, middle-class settings in his plays to challenge his audience. "Zola goes to bathe in the sewer, I go to cleanse it," he once said, explaining that he used realism

In modern drama the sons spend their lives living in the shadows of their fathers and finally accept or rebel against the guilt which they have inherited from them.

not to document the surfaces of domestic life, but to penetrate them. The inner doubts are laid bare; the hidden secrets from the past are exposed. Illusions (and again dramatists as diverse as O'Neill and Pirandello learned much from Ibsen about the drama of living within a world of illusion) which persons cling to are stripped away. Man must stand bare, if not before God, at least before others, and most of all, before self.

Yes, Ibsen is the social critic, one of the prophetic reformers who led the way for modern artists. But if he were only that, the plays would be at best, essays; at worst, propaganda. The truth is that Ibsen's power lies, as it does for all artists, in his poetic rendering of his world. The dramatic vision conveyed in poetic prose was the greatest revolutionary force in his art.

A few years after Ibsen's death in 1906, Rainer Maria Rilke saw his first production of an Ibsen play and wrote from Munich that he had come upon "a new poet, one to whom we will go by path after path, now that we know there is one." Rilke is accurate; Ibsen is poet par excellence. The poetry is not one of Rhyme and regular line length, but (even in translation) the effect is that of heightened lyricism and elegiac statement. In the same letter to Gosse, Ibsen wrote: "My desire was to depict human beings and therefore I would not make them speak the language of the gods." Though Ibsen wished to avoid verse as well as elevated affectation, his prose is not that of tape-recorder flatness. It is prose, but not at all prosaic. Rather, the language has psychological density, and is composed of a mesh of implications, hints, cross references, silences, and guarded metaphors. Ibsen, along with Chekhov, made the term "subtext" meaningful to modern readers and viewers.

Ibsen's shadow falls heavily on twentieth century drama. One can see why Pirandello commented: "After Shakespeare I unhesitantly place Ibsen first."

II

I knew that Ibsen loomed large in twentieth century drama, but exactly how pivotal Ibsen was in relation to his past, I discovered rather accidently. The night after the Ibsen play I bought tickets for an Off-Broadway theatre, the Classic Stage Company in the East Village, a repertory group which I have followed with great interest since its beginnings in 1967. Christopher Martin not only founded the theatre company (which has moved from its early days of a shoestring operation to its present first-rate facilities), but he is still its Artistic Director, and also acts major roles in many of the plays. Productions of Shakespeare, Moliere, and Shaw as well as performances of avantgarde dramatists such as Buchner and Genet have been well-received by critic and audience. They do the classics and they do them superbly. I recall a memorable Sunday in the early Seventies in which my Contemporary Drama class and I experienced a classically sound *Hamlet* at 3 p.m. and after a supper break, saw *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* with the same cast now engaging in non-Stoppard wit and wisdom.

This season the CSC has tackled an even more challenging venture: the Oedipus cycle of Sophocles. Several times in the past months, including New Year's Eve, the Company performed all three plays in a marathon session: *Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus,* and *Antigone.* Although I have as yet only seen the first play, I join the many rave reviews which asserted that ancient Greek tragedy could not be better served.

The set—a few pieces of silvered metal and several tree boughs—as well as the costumes and lighting are all austere and simple. What is front and center is the dramatic conflict conveyed with power in this translation by Paule Roche, currently poet-in-residence at the University of Notre Dame. No histrionics mar the style; restraint enclosing deep emotional intensity is the dominant tone.

As if in a nightmare, as if putting together pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, as if walking in a labyrinth, Oedipus, exceptionally well-played by

The sin for which there is no forgiveness is to murder love in another human being.

Robert Stattel, relentlessly engages in the search for truth which leads to his own self-destruction. He who was blind now blinds himself. The ninety minutes without an intermission is taut. At the end, one responds once again to the self-knowledge which is gained in Greek tragedy: "Out of suffering may come wisdom." If I had not known there was such a term as "catharsis," I would have had to invent it as I left this *theatron*, this place of seeing, on East Thirteenth Street.

III

The juxtaposition of Sophocles and Ibsen in two nights of theatregoing (on the third night, I changed pace and laughed over antics of Snoopy in a lively Muhlenberg performance of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*) confirmed what I long vaguely thought: Ibsen is the major bridge between classical tragedy and modern drama.

John Gabriel Borkman is still a titanic figure when we meet him late in his life. A miner's son who grew very wealthy, he is repeatedly referred to as king. He speaks often of restoring his kingdom, and E. G. Marshall portrays him with the majesty appropriate to his state. "I loved power," he says, and describes his ambition as having made him feel like "a voyager in the air." He wants no dishonor to be attached to his name. His pride is classical *hybris* combined with an unhealthy strand of Faustian dynamism.

The present is less important than the past. The plot of the play, like many other dramas of Ibsen, is essentially a gradual exhuming of a buried past. The action begins at a point just before the catastrophe, and proceeds like a detective story to its terrible and inevitable conclusion.

A web of betrayals took place long before the play begins. We discover that the rising career of the once-wealthy banker ended several years earlier when he went to prison for embezzling funds which he wanted for one of his grandiose schemes. But his legacy is not only financial disaster; it is also a legacy of spiritual ruin. For he has destroyed the lives of the two whom he most loved, the twin sisters, Ella (played by Irene Worth) and Gunhild (played by Rosemary Murphy). Borkman had forsaken his first love, Ella, in return for the promise from a business partner to begin his own banking career. Now he has been married to Gunhild for many years, but his cold ambition has frozen the warmth that was present in their earlier relationship. Ella accuses Borkman:

> You have killed love in me! (*Goes toward him*) Do you understand what that means? The Bible speaks of a mysterious sin for which there is no forgiveness. I've never understood what that meant before. Now I understand. The sin for which there is no forgiveness is to murder love in a human being.

Ibsen makes dramatically clear that to betray the deepest part of one's self—one's love—is the cardinal sin. Love is sacrificed for the sake of power, and the struggle for power destroys all.

John Gabriel Borkman thus is a play of the dead. Borkman, close to insanity, paces up and down, in the upstairs drawing room, like a sick caged wolf. The two sisters, spectral and rigid, confront and circle each other constantly, as if performing the last steps of a dance of death.

The house of the Borkmans, like the house of Atreus, is infected and polluted, and therefore a curse is upon it. As Borkman attempts to find the source of this malady, he finds that he himself is the cause, and thus he together with his house falls in self-destruction. He is trapped in the truth of his own doing. Oedipus and Lear and Borkman and Willy Loman almost merge into one figure on the stage of world drama.

Books

A Consideration Of The Question Of The Ordination Of Women

Review Essay

Richard John Neuhaus

Man and Woman in Christ

***An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences.* By Stephen B. Clark. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Books, 1980. Pp. 753. Cloth, $15.95.**

Stephen B. Clark has written extensively on Christian renewal and is a coordinator for The Word of God, an ecumenical community in Ann Arbor, Michigan. For the Christian reader, *Man and Woman in Christ* is one of the most important books on sexual roles to have appeared in many years. The stunningly comprehensive combination of scriptual research with sociological, anthropological, and psychological data is, I believe, unprecedented. It is one of those books that will be hard to bypass in any further discussion among Christians about women's ordination, sexism, and the possibility or desirability of an androgynous society. Admittedly, that is high praise, but it is

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Some fathers interpreted "in Christ there is neither male nor female" to endorse celibacy, an anticipation of that heavenly state in which there are no marriages.

fully warranted. The book is well argued and well worth arguing with.

From the start, Clark asserts that his is not a book about the political issues raised by the feminist movement. "If there was any issue that gave rise to the ideas in this book, it was the issue of raising children. What are we to say to children about the fact that they are boys and girls? How are we to teach them to relate to their maleness and their femaleness?" That may be the issue that got Mr. Clark going, but in truth and inevitably the book is about the feminist movement. Not about that chiefly but about that as a foil for setting forth what the author believes is the Christian perspective on male-female relations. It is impossible to imagine this book being written in 1880 or, for that matter, in 1950. Not until recently have the "taken for granted" facts about men and women been challenged seriously. As Clark notes almost 700 pages later:

> To say that men and women are different seems like stressing the obvious. Indeed, in a less politicized time, this would be so. Much of what has been written in this book, in fact, amounts to restressing the obvious.

But Clark's primary purpose is not to counter the feminist movement or to prescribe the laws and regulations by which society should be ordered. His primary purpose is to underscore those truths by which Christians should order their life together in a culture that is largely hostile to Christian truth. To this end, he exhaustively—always humorlessly and often repetitiously—sorts through the scriptural evidence, beginning with Genesis and working his way up through the pastoral epistles. The consistent theme is that woman is to be "subordinate" to man, and that this in no way denigrates but, in fact, elevates the role of woman. (The Greek word for "subordination" is *hypotasso* which, no doubt by a printer's devil, is misspelled *hypostasso*.) Clark insists upon the translation "subordination" even though, as he says in a stunning understatement, "its English connotations . . . cause confusion." I will return to the question of whether another term might not avoid some of that confusion.

The Bible, says Clark, does not support coercive subordination, nor mercenary subordination (in which one buys the services of another), but calls for the voluntary subordination of faithful obedience. Such subordination is not oppressive but takes the form of care-subordination, as in parent-child relations, and of unity-subordination, in which people find their oneness in devotion to a higher cause. Clark is keenly aware that this notion is today profoundly counter-cultural. The repeated gravamen of the whole book can be summed up in one passage:

> The ideal of scripture is not independence. It is community. The independent individuals of today confort in scripture a very different ideal of human relationships. They confront God's desire to form one body out of many different self-willed, selfish individuals. They confront the call of Jesus to lose their lives so that they can gain them. The contemporary world demonstrates little real community. This is no accident, because the principles by which so many people live do not allow real community. Contemporary people need a conversion to a whole new ideal, to the call of God to lose one's life and to be united with other members of the body of Christ. They must be ready to subordinate their lives to the Lord and to other human beings.

Clark is insistent that the basic question is not one of relations between individual males and females but of men and women *in family*. After a thorough study of the "household codes" of the New Testament and a demonstration of the continuity between Jewish and Christian traditions, Clark asserts, "The Christian teaching on the roles of men and women in the family and in the Christian community can be understood only by seeing the basic patterns and structure of the Christian household." In this family structure:

> The wife in the household is the "heart," the "inside center" of the family. She directs a set of family activities essential to the functioning of the family. The husband is the "head." He both directs a set of family functions and is over the wife's activities, but he cannot "keep the body alive" without her.

What scripture means by "headship" in the family and in the Church is, Clark emphasizes, a role of governance based upon mutual submission and, above all, submission to the Lord who is *the* head. In the course of making this argument, Clark convincingly exonerates Paul of the charge of "sexism," demonstrating that Paul is, if anything, even more favorably disposed toward women and their roles than is Jesus. So much for the Jesus vs. Paul assumption that is such a commonplace in Christian feminist literature.

It is understandable that Clark devotes many pages to Galatians 3: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ." He has to, because it is the chief passage, sometimes the sole passage, advanced by those who oppose his position. He correctly contends that the focus of Galatians 3 is not sex roles. To the extent that inferences about sex roles can be drawn from Galatians 3, he notes that some of the early Fathers interpreted the passage to endorse celibacy, namely, the transcendence of sexuality as such, the anticipation now of that heavenly state in which there will be neither male nor female nor giving nor being given in marriage. Clark does not accept that interpretation but employs it to demonstrate the ambiguity of a passage that has become the classic proof-text of Christian feminism. Galatians 3, he argues, must be subordinated, so to speak, to those NT

The differences between men and women are not absolutes—both possess every trait commonly associated with the other—and the differences do not decide their roles.

passages that clearly and explicitly address the question of the roles of men and women. There are six such major texts: I Corinthians 11:2-16, I Corinthians 14:33-38, I Timothy 2:8-15, Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:18-19, and I Peter 3:1-7. In addition, two minor texts deserve attention: I Timothy 5:1-2 and Titus 2:1-6. In light of these passages, Galatians 3 appears in perfect consistency with NT teaching, says Clark.

He well knows that saying what the scriptures say does not solve all the problems. "It is one thing to say that the scripture states that the wife should be subordinate to her husband. It is quite another thing to describe what that subordination consists of in such a way that a woman in twentieth century America would know whether she was doing what the writer of the scripture had in mind." But Clark does try to say what the scriptures say. He is persuasive in his claim that "the exegetical position taken by this book is a basically uncontroversial one in its overall outlines . . .The distinctiveness [of the exegesis] lies more in the attention paid to responsible restating of what the scripture says than in a distinctiveness of the positions taken on controversial points." His findings only appear to be controversial today because they are countered by a "feminist exegesis" that beging with assumptions that demand one of three strategies: calling into question the authority or applicability of scripture, dismissing self-evident meanings as "sexist" and therefore in error, or finding "contradictions" in scripture which therefore throw into question even the points of inescapable clarity.

Clark makes the telling observation that in 1951 all but one of all those teaching NT in Swedish universities issued a statement declaring that the "ordination of women would be incompatible with New Testament thought and would constitute disobedience to the Holy Scriptures." Twenty-five years later, he notes, it would be hard to find one NT professor in a Swedish university who would endorse that statement.

> For some, the reason for their change has been a change in their view of the applicability of scripture. Such a change is credible. But many writers today would dispute the exegetical results embodied in the statement. No significant new evidence has been found to warrant such a reversal.

The only explanation is that the climate of opinion has changed and exegetes have conformed to the climate. "Either the Swedish exegetes in 1951 were determined by extra-exegetical factors, or the current exegetes are so determined." Clark's logic is compelling.

The author gives considerable attention, as is appropriate, to the Christian tradition, demonstrating that, as much as anything can be, the conviction is unanimous, until recently, that scripture and orthodox teaching do not permit the ordination of women to "headship" of Christian communities. It is unmistakably clear that the Fathers and numerous theologians and teaching authorities *believed* that that conviction was made necessary by scriptural and theological considerations. It is therefore somewhat presumptuous for us to attribute the belief of teachers over the centuries to "cultural conditioning" and hence not authoritative; as though our attitudes are not culturally conditioned, or are conditioned by a superior culture. Not only is it presumptuous, such reductionism trivializes and finally makes impossible any notion of distinctive Christian truth claims. Thus, if I say the Fathers only *thought* they were speaking theologically when in fact they were just reflecting cultural biases, I can use the same ploy across the board and end up evading any claim to truth that may be laid upon me by scripture or tradition.

This is the ploy employed by John Boswell in his recent and much acclaimed *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* (Chicago). Although Boswell's book was not available when Clark was writing, it admirably illustrates what Clark calls a "bypass" of Christian teaching. Boswell, an historian at Yale, wants to demonstrate that Christianity is not responsible for the anti-homosexual bias of Western culture, and may in fact be viewed as sympathetically tolerant, if not favorable to, homosexuality. How does Boswell handle the myriad and consistent condemnations of homosexuality through Christian history? Quite simply: the appeals to scripture and the religious language merely "cloak" cultural bias. Thus, in order to exonerate Christianity, Boswell reduces Christian teaching to an epiphenomenon. The real thing, the phenomenon, is an elusive and unexplained cultural bias, of which Christian teaching is but an unreflective reflection. Clark has a keen even relentless, smell for such bypasses and he exposes them with apparent relish.

Toward the end of his survey of Christian history, Clark writes:

> The witness of tradition is consistent in teaching both that women should not be elders and that the reasons for this are Christian rather than cultural. The patristic writers approach the matter as one of obedience to God's directives for his people . . . In fact there are very few areas in all of Christian teaching that have as clear a consensus . . . If this teaching can be changed by Christians, there is very little that cannot be changed.

The statement is part of an undercurrent of alarm that runs through the book. If this, what next? If scripture and tradition can be set aside for women's ordination, why not for moral issues such as adultery or even for the denial of the deity of Christ? One answer, a partially reassuring one, is that the Christian people are not always consistent. A

Only in particular relations—notably the family and the church—does the headship fall to the men. It does not follow that all women are always to defer to all men.

principle adopted in one instance is not pressed to its logical and perhaps disastrous conclusion. An appreciation of illogic and even whimsicality is essential to understanding the formation of what is deemed orthodox at a particular time. Francis Pieper, the Missouri Synod dogmatician, used to speak of "felicitous inconsistencies." After railing against an opponent's idea that would, he said, logically deny the existence of God or something else rather basic, Pieper noted that his opponent did not in fact believe logically and thus did not fall into the greater error. This he attributed to felicitous inconsistency. As happy as Pieper's concept may be, it is only partially reassuring in the face of Clark's concern.

The differences between men and women should be stated descriptively rather than evaluatively; the most significant differences are in psychological structure and social behavior rather than ability.

Clark well knows that changes in teaching about male-female relations are but one part of a cultural assault on Christian faith and life. And in fact, without subscribing to an allegedly discredited domino theory, there are churches that have logically extended changes in one area to fundamental changes on monogamous marriage, divorce, homosexual eroticism, euthanasia and a host of other questions. Even if Clark's alarm about "next steps" is not warranted, it surely remains true that Christian teaching should be about *truth*. There should be a striving for consistency, for integrity, even for simple honesty if the Church's witness is to be credible. When biblical scholars, also in American Lutheranism, cut their exegetical cloth to fit accepted practice in, for instance, the case of women's ordination, it is a moral scandal and should be condemned as such. That is quite apart, for the moment, from the question of whether women can be ordained. Nor is it a pecularly Christian standard. A biological researcher is drummed out of the profession for faking laboratory evidence.

As compelling as Clark is with respect to the Christian tradition, he is not satisfied until he has examined with care the secular wisdom that might also have a bearing on how we order male-female relations. Although he makes no clain to present new evidence, his skillful collation of massive and growing research on sex roles makes this a most rewarding section of the book. With the exception of writers with a manifest, and usually declared, feminist intent, the scientific evidence is overwhelming. Sexual roles are not primarily the product of socialization but are deeply and universally based in the nature of the human beast. The anthropologist Lionel Tiger speaks of the "human biogrammar" (much as Noam Chomsky, the language theorist, speaks of an inherent grammar that is prior to language use) and I wish that Clark had employed more of Tiger's findings with regard to women and men in the Israeli kibbutz. There, for more than forty years, has been the perfect laboratory for "socializing" sexual roles out of existence. But despite the controls that made it possible, the ideology that demanded it, and the intensity and longevity of the experiment, men and women in the kibbutz irrepressibly gravitate toward those roles in every dimension of life that are "normally" associated with maleness and femaleness.

The supportive/scientific evidence is so abundant that one senses Clark being almost excessively cautious and nuanced in his description of it. Perhaps he does not wish to appear to be basing his case too much upon secular sources. Be that as it may, he suggests seven helpful guidelines in evaluating the evidence: The differences between men and women should be stated descriptively rather than evaluatively; The differences are not absolutes; Both sexes possess every trait primarily associated with one or the other; Many trait comparisons are not universal but hold only with the same social group; The most significant differences between men and women are in psychological structure and social behavior rather than in intelligence, skill, and ability; The differences should sometimes be controlled, not maximized; The differences do not determine men's and women's roles. Clark is determined not to be a determinist, certainly not a biological determinist. His appearance of Christian freedom is too great for that. Also, his scientific view is better described as "structuralist," which means that he resists any reductionism that would, by exclusive reference to one factor or another, make the human phenomenon less complex and wondrous than it is.

He quotes approvingly Sherry Ortner, a feminist scholar with no "biodeterminist" sympathies:

> The universality of female subordination, the fact that it exists within every type of social and economic arrangement and in societies of every degree of complexity, indicates to me that we are up against something very profound, very stubborn, something we cannot root out simply by rearranging a few tasks and roles in the social system, or even by reordering the whole economic structure.

What *is*, of course, is not the last word on what *should be*. But here Clark takes a leaf from the manual of ecological "consciousness raising." He notes the irony that, just as we have become aware of the mysterious interrelatedness of nature that cautions us against techno-

Christians are not always consistent, and an appreciation of illogic, even whimsy, is essential to understanding the formation of what is deemed orthodox at a given time.

logical interventions that may produce unforeseen disasters, just at such a time it is proposed that we engage in societal tinkering, or even revolutionary change, in the at least equally complex and mysterious phenomenon of male-female differences. Even if one agreed with advocates such as Mary Daly that an androgynous society would be desirable—and Clark obviously does not agree—the experiment would be recklessly dangerous. It is ever so much more than a matter of giving dolls to little boys and toy guns to little girls. (Even at that level, however, it is maddening to some and reassuring to others that the boys and girls, following their "trait pattern," would likely switch gifts.)

Before getting to his conclusions about what all this may mean for the Church today, Clark offers a marvelously lucid analysis of the technological culture that militates against a Christian understanding of community. The analysis draws upon and develops the basic idea of technological society that is associated with the work of Jacques Ellul. This section alone is almost worth the price of the book. It will reward the attention particularly of Lutherans who, when it comes to thinking about Christian ministry, are typically bedeviled by a "functionalism" that debases any scriptural or catholic understanding of the organic and communal nature of the Church. Witness the statement on ministry adopted by the Lutheran Church in America just this year, although it is far from being the most debased instance in American Lutheran history.

I trust it is obvious by now that I think this book very important and meritorious on a host of scores. It is past time, however, to get around to saying what is wrong and what is troubling about Clark's enterprise. (True, some readers will think that what I have already described is both wrong and troubling, but the challenge for them is to come up with a better case. On the teaching of scripture and the larger tradition, on the scientific evidence, and on the cultural analysis, Clark is always persuasive and, on the essential points, convincing.) The author himself obviously senses one troubling aspect of his agrument. At several points he rather defensively insists that he is not being legalistic, but he protests too much. At least twice he states that the gospel of salvation through Christ is the center of the Christian message, not the truth about male-female relationships. He underscores that the argument he makes does not "compel" men and women to fulfill certain roles. But, if the whole work were more structured by and oriented toward the proclamation of gospel freedom, his defensiveness would not be necessary. I have no reason to doubt Mr. Clark's centeredness in the gospel, but the absence of gospel focus will discourage some readers from giving him the credence he deserves.

Closely related to this fault, I believe, is a curious absence of what can best be described as theological reasoning. His argument is essentially this: Here is what the Christian teaching is, it is supported by common sense and scientific evidence, therefore we should follow it. It is almost wholly an appeal to authority. There is scarcely any theological defense of the teaching such as one finds, for instance, in Roman Catholic and Orthodox statements about the impermissibility of ordaining women to the priesthood. Despite his repeated insistence that he is not a fundamentalist, there is a troubling fundamentalist-like suggestion that a theological defense of scriptural statements is unnecessary and perhaps blasphemous. It is written, period!

I believe Clark is wrongheaded in persisting in the effort to rehabilitate the term "subinordination." It is not simply, as he says, that it has "confusing connotations." What "subordination" means in both dictionary and everyday meanings is not what Clark means. Nor is it what the scriptures teach. One need go no farther than Webster's Collegiate: "Placed in a lower class or rank . . . Inferior in order, nature, or importance . . . To make or consider as of less value or importance," and so forth. And that is what almost everybody means by subordination. There is nothing sacred about the word, so why fight for it? It might be answered that it should be kept precisely for its shock value, because it is so blatantly counter-cultural. But that is too clever by half, if one is serious about wanting to persuade people. Anyway, one should not, like Humpty Dumpty, declare words to mean whatever one says they mean.

The Greek original and, more important than the term, the clear biblical intent are better served by terms that emphasize *mutual* submission in different roles within the context of common submission to the Lord. Complementarity, not issues of who-whom dominance, is the point. Why not speak positively about the *leadership* of the man in the family, rather than devoting so much energy to polishing the other side of the coin, subordination by the woman? What Clark wants to argue is that women should respect, within a bond of mutual reverence, the leadership of the man. Which in no way suggests the superiority of the male—intellectually, morally, or otherwise. And it does not mean, as Clark emphasizes, that all women are to defer to all men. He means to suggest that in particular relations, notably the family and the gathered Christian community, the headship or leadership falls to the

Orthodoxy is not found by going back to the Bible; orthodoxy is achieved and defined by the church in, one hopes, fidelity to God's intention witnessed in the scriptures.

man, which in turn reflects the headship of Christ in relation to the whole body.

Closely connected is another flaw: Clark does not even attempt to present a balanced view of the duties of the man. The title is *Man and Woman in Christ,* but the book is chiefly about the responsibilities of woman to man. This is an egregious error and is shocking in a writer of such manifest intelligence and earnest desire to communicate. Except for people like Ms. Morgan's "Total Woman" who simply love to be put in their place by their men, women reading Clark's book will be put off by this imbalance. Again, it is disappointing because it is so unnecessary. In truth, there is nothing demeaning to women in Clark's argument. I suspect he could write convincingly and sympathetically about the legitimate aspirations of many women to break out of limitations to which they have been wrongfully confined. At some points he hints at ways in which a function-based technological society demeans women, and he notes the ways in which women are forced into a distorting dependence upon men, but these themes are not developed, alas. And I am even more sure that Clark could write convincingly about the breathtaking responsibilities of men to women. After all, if Ephesians 5 is right in saying that husbands should love their wives as Christ loves the Church, there is an awful lot to be said on the subject. It is a shame that Mr. Clark did not make the effort.

There are two remaining bundles of problems. They do not challenge the scriptural, historical and scientific evidence Clark advances. On those scores, as I said, he has done his job very well. But these problem bundles do raise questions about what Christians should make of the evidence. The first set of problems has to do with the relationship between scripture and the Church, the second with what I will call models of the Church.

When we say that scripture is the highest authority, writes Clark, "highest authority means that there is nothing which should cause Christians to contradict or otherwise set themselves at odds with scripture." "The issue is whether the scripture *ought* to determine the way people think and act in the area of the roles of men and women." "Approaching scripture is approaching the Lord himself. It should be received as a message from the Lord. The appropriate attitude is one of submission—the submission that should mark any relationship with the Lord." "But when people understand that something is actually taught in scripture, and then disagree with it, they are on spiritually dangerous grounds for a Christian, because they are disagreeing with the canonical word of God. For a Christian, this is rebellion." Well, you get the idea.

Our fundamental concern is not the authority of the scriptures but the gospel and the Church embodying the gospel. The fatal danger is not rebellion against the scriptures but rebellion against the Holy Spirit.

There are a number of curiosities here. Not least among them is the fact that most Lutherans, including pastors and bishops, are impaled by Clark's thrust. That is, their understanding of *sola scriptura* makes Clark's logic irrefutable. Now scriptural authority is a difficult and much controverted topic and the problems involved can hardly be mentioned, not to say settled, in the course of this review essay. Suffice it that the nub of the problem is indicated in Clark's consistent use of "the scripture" rather than "the scriptures." The plural is important. It avoids the dichotomy between scripture and tradition to which Clark seems to subscribe. The truth is that the scriptures are a part—a singular part, to be sure—of a continuous tradition. The Bible is the book of the Church. Scripture *is* tradition. Orthodox Christianity is not to be found by going back to the Bible; orthodoxy is achieved and defined by the Christian community in, one hopes, fidelity to God's intent as recorded in the scriptures.

Clark is not unaware of the development of Christian doctrine. In that connection he discusses John Henry Newman and argues that the ordination of women, for instance, is not a development of doctrine by Newman's criteria but a reversal of Christian teaching. I think it is true that the churches that have decided to ordain women to the priesthood did so in a way that violated any plausible understanding of the development of Christian doctrine. As some Lutheran leaders in the ALC and LCA candidly admit, it was for them chiefly a matter of "an idea whose time had come" (read: cultural conformity) and of changing a few minor phrases in bylaws and the such. And for the AELC it was merely a question of going along with the Lutheran majority in North America.

One could imagine, however, that after two thousand years Christian teaching could legitimately change in order to permit the ordination of women. After all, we may be the early Church with millennia of tradition still to come. Contra Clark, our most fundamental concern is not the authority of the scriptures but the gospel of Christ and the Church that is to bear and embody that gospel for the world. Ultimately, the fatal danger is not rebellion against the scriptures but rebellion against the Holy Spirit and his promised guidance of the Church

One could imagine Christian teaching changing to permit the ordination of women. After all, we may be the early church with millenia of tradition still to come.

and its gospel mission. Of course the Church can err and has erred. Between Church and scriptures is, despite the scriptures being part of the Church's tradition, a necessary element of critical "over againstness" by which the Church must ever be challenged. At the same time, the scriptures are produced, preserved, and interpreted in and by the believing community, apart from which they are only an antique collection of interesting stories and ideas, one of many books of sacred writings chiefly of interest to historians.

Clark's argument is thoroughly ecumenical in tone and substance, but I take it that he is a Roman Catholic Christian. In that light, it is regrettable that he does not address a question that haunts his case: What difference would it make if an authoritative ecumenical consensus were reached in favor of ordaining women? Surely Clark knows that on the most foundational trinitarian and christological questions there is ample biblical material to challenge what for centuries classical Christians have defined as orthodoxy. Those who came to be designated heretics never lacked for biblical evidence to support their deviations. It seems unlikely that in the next century Rome will change its position on ordaining women, and that in large part because it is almost unconceivable that Eastern Orthodoxy would countenance such a change. But *what if* Rome, Orthodoxy, Lutheranism and others who lay claim to the catholic tradition were to agree on such a change? Would Clark and those who share his convictions continue to insist that that would be a reversal, rather than a development, of the tradition? This line of questioning raises intriguing issues about what Lutherans and Roman Catholics mean when they speak, as the official dialogues between these two communities do speak, of the "indefectibility" of the Church.

As mentioned earlier, one could imagine such an ecumenical consensus developing on the ordination of women. Were one to have confidence in it, the process should be marked by uncompromising honesty about what the tradition has been and about the theological warrants for developing it in a different direction. Such honesty would be in dramatic contrast to the mendacity and evasiveness that have characterized the decision of some Lutherans to ordain women. The process should be marked by a credible continuity of intent with the catholic tradition, in contrast to the cavalier indifference to that tradition demonstrated by some Lutherans and others. And the process would have to be motored by a clear and compelling need for change *for the sake of the gospel*, rather than for the sake of conforming to cultural convulsions.

One encounters people who are not impressed by the ecumenical factor in ordaining women. They want theological reasons that challenge the practice. They fail to see that the ecumenical argument *is* a theological argument. Ecumenism is not just a nice additional consideration; the advancement of the visible unity of the Church is a theological and missiological imperative. One LCA official remarked, "If we believe we should ordain women, we don't have to wait for Rome or anyone else. We have a corporate legal right to act for ourselves on what we think is right." Of course no one disputes that legal right, including the legal right to become a sect. Some Lutheran theologians have declared that the Roman, Orthodox, and Anglican problems with ordaining women are not problems for us because of our different understanding of ministry. If true, we need to take another look at our Lutheran understanding of ministry. At stake here is whether we are really serious when we claim that Lutheranism is not a sect but a renewing movement within and for the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. If being Lutherans means that we hold ourselves accountable to the catholic consensus of past and present, then decisions that are not catholic are not Lutheran. The related point, on which Clark is so very helpful, is addressed to those who do not share the view of doctrinal development affirmed here. If such people really believe that scripture alone is the authoritative norm, Clark issues a powerful call to repentance for having violated that norm.

Some of us who do not understand *sola scriptura* in that way find ourselves in the awkward position of belonging to churches that have in a most questionable manner decided to ordain women. Of course it may be—it may even be hoped—that that decision will be vindicated by a later catholic consensus. In that case, these churches will be seen in retrospect as having anticipated the development of the tradition. Thus it would turn out that, while the process of the decision was sectarian, the substance was orthodox. That may or may not happen. I do not think it likely in the foreseeable future.

Meanwhile, the ordination of women is a fact with which we must cope. It is far from being the most appalling defect in our churches. The legalistic obscuring of the gospel, the indifference to spiritual formation, the stifling of the Spirit's gifts for radical vocations, the contempt for the fullness of sacramental life, the dismal failure to defend the unborn and other "expendables," the absence of zeal in ministry to the poor—all these are defects of immensely greater importance. Unless one entertains the illusion that it is possible to belong to a church of "pure" doctrine and life, these defects are not shattering. One pro-

It may be that churches ordaining women now will be vindicated by a later consensus, and these churches will be seen in retrospect as having anticipated the tradition.

tests, but does not sever the bonds of unity in a fellowship of ambiguity that is graced by divine promise. The temple of the Lord always has been and is in large part a house of prostitution. It is nonetheless, by virtue of the recklessness of God's incarnational love, the body of Christ. I do not mean to seem offhanded about departures from scriptural and catholic teaching. It is both desperation and confidence to declare, in agreement with the Reformers, that so long as the gospel of God's justifying grace in Christ is not excluded we can put up with almost anything.

The Church is a sacrament to the world, and it is its mission to sight, support, and celebrate the oncoming Kingdom of God and, within the culture, whether hostile or friendly, to signal another possibility.

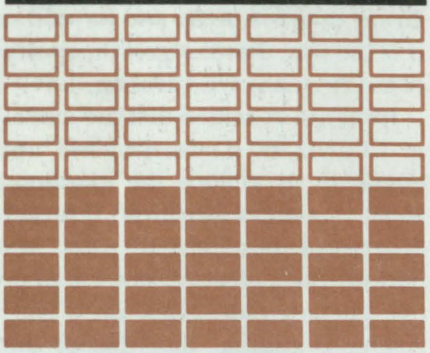
These are some of the questions about authority, and particularly about the relationship between Church and scriptures, that Clark fails to address or to address adequately. Finally, there is a cluster of questions that turn on Clark's too narrow view of the alternative ways in which the life of the Church can be conceived. The phrase "models of the Church" recalls Avery Dulles' fine book by that title, and one wishes Clark had explored some of those models more thoroughly. Clark essentially posits two models: the Church as a religious service institution, and the Church as intentional community. By service institution he means that the Church is essentially an organization that specializes in dispensing the means of grace and otherwise responding to felt spiritual needs. We have already seen what Clark means by community. He says, for instance, that the question of community is prior to the question of women's ordination. That is, if the Church is merely a service institution, women are obviously as capable as men in offering the required services. But if the Church is an intentional community (such as the Word of God community) seriously trying to live out a biblical life style in a hostile culture and demonstrating now the promised "new humanity" in Christ, then issues of male-female relations and "headship" of the community are urgently important.

However, not all Christian people are called to such special communities. For most of us, there is another and more useful model of the Church: the Church as sacrament to the world. As I have written elsewhere, it is the mission of the Church to sight, signal, support and celebrate the oncoming Kingdom of God. Solidly within the culture, whether hostile or friendly, the Church signals another possibility, a promise that includes the hope for the beloved community. This promise is declared in the preaching of the gospel and is enacted now in the eucharistic life. Here in Word and sacrament, as we Lutherans say, the possibility of the new humanity is invoked and, however partially, actualized. This frightfully ambiguous community, gathered around the Word declared and embodied, points the world toward a future vindication beyond ambiguity. Some Christians are called to intentional communities that attempt to dramatize more clearly the nature of that promised community; all Christians need the provoking and correcting witness of such intentional communities. There is a way—admittedly, a tenuous way that is understanding of compromise and totally dependent upon grace—between the Church as service institution and the Church as intentional community. Perhaps it is not a way "between" but a third way. In any case, for better and for worse, it is the way that the great majority of us Christians are traveling.

It should be added that the model of Church as sacrament does not eliminate or reduce the questions about women's ordination. *If* sexual differences and sexual roles are part of God's creative and redemptive purpose (and Clark's is a convincing argument that that is the biblical and traditional teaching), then the matter of who presides at the liturgical symbolization of that purpose is a question of some moment. This is the tack taken in Roman Catholic statements claiming that the Church is not permitted to ordain women. It is not, as the opponents scornfully contend, simply because there were no women among the disciples and apostles ("I suppose that means that only Jews can be priests, because there were no Gentiles either!"). It is rather because only a male can symbolically represent Christ in his relationship to the community, a community in which sexuality is an essential element. The irony should not go unnoticed that in our hyper-sexed culture it is the opponents of women's ordination who are criticized for putting too much emphasis on sex.

Stephen B. Clark has written a very important book. He has masterfully brought together biblical, historical and scientific materials in a way that invites the attention of anyone who wants to get beyond the conflicting slogans about male-female relations in our time. Because it is genuinely counter-cultural, one can safely predict that most Christians will not want to be disturbed by it. That is a great shame, for, whatever the flaws in his argument, Stephen Clark is calling the Church to reexamine the presuppositions upon which its life continues to slide into a parody of its mission.

Campus Diary



Mae West, 1892-1980

John Strietelmeier

One of my ambitions which must now remain forever unfulfilled was to take Mae West up on her invitation, delivered *urbi et orbe,* to come up and see her sometime. Miss West died last November.

I should say that, for me, the operative work is *see.* Were I minded to stray from that path of husbandly rectitude which has earned me the Thirty-Third Degree in the Dull Man's Club, it would not be Miss West's apartment that I would seek, but that of Miss Katherine Hepburn, who wasted the best years of her life on Spencer Tracy without even exploring the possibility that there might be more exciting fun and games a-going on the Valparaiso Moraine.

But we were going to talk about Miss West.

The first thing that has to be said about her is that she probably did more than the total membership of the Moral Majority to keep sex from becoming the dominant religion of the American people. And she did this by caricaturing sex in such outlandish ways that the caricatures kept popping back into your mind even when you were engaged in such solemn undertakings as reading the latest epistle of Masters and Johnson.

In matters of sex, Miss West had the same zany, irreverent attitude that Groucho Marx brought to his portrayal of the habitues of high society. The affected diction, the grossly overdone wardrobe, the patently fake hair, the make-up that grew increasingly grotesque with the advancing years, the chutzpah of the old broad still out hustling years after she should have settled for a condominium in St. Petersburg—it was a performance worthy to be ranked with Groucho's flapping eyebrows and lascivious lope. Watching it you felt the need, not for a cold shower but for another round of beer.

Now as long as sex is funny it is not a serious competitor of religion as an ultimate in human life. But for a long time, and especially since people began to misunderstand Freud, sex has not been one whit funny. Boring, yes for an apparently increasing number of people. Tragic, yes for millions of people who have been conned into believing that real life should conform to the sexual fantasies of a few imaginative pulp-fiction writers. Deathly serious, yes for the many victims of Puritan upbringing who search the literature of sexual liberation for a cure of the guilt they were taught to feel at being human. But funny?

Yes, Mae West insisted, funny. A spice of life, but not the substance of life. Worthy of humanity, but not constitutive of humanity. Priests and nuns can forswear it for a lifetime with no harmful results. Young people can postpone its enjoyment without warping their psyches. Married people can reserve it for each other without developing neurasthenia. Unmarried people can live without it and not end up walking funny.

Now that, of course, runs directly counter to the received orthodoxy. But that is why Mae West, like so many clowns, may be seen also as a prophet. It was not, perhaps, within her call or her competence to call us back to the true and living God, but she sure did a great burlesque of Venus and thus, as I have said, helped to prevent sex from becoming the dominant religion of the American people.

But a second thing can be said about Miss West, also. She married only once, and that for a brief period when she was very young. One suspects that she knew that she could not handle the serious business of marriage.

The roles she played were those of sex-pots who were good at their hobby but not deeply involved with their partners. There was no element of intimacy in her relationships with any of her leading men. And in this she showed great wisdom, for the king of gum-cracking, one-night-stand sex that she was pushing has no room for intimacy.

But intimacy is what marriage is all about. In the ordinary course of things, this intimacy will from time to time be expressed sexually. But it will also from time to time be expressed in laughter or in tears or in silence or in any of a score of other ways. There is nothing to suggest that Mae West, for all of her knowledge of sex, knew anything at all about intimacy. There is nothing in the record to suggest that she cared much one way or another about other human beings. She apparently liked to keep a stable of muscle men around the house, but it does not appear that there was anything of deep calling unto deep in these associations. She was just not the marrying type and she had the good grace not to prove it by repeated excursions into matrimony.

One should not pretend that she was more than she actually was—a hard-shelled show biz clown who made a good living catering to our tastes for the bawdy. But she played that role with integrity and, like all good clowns, told us something about ourselves.