

## THE IDEA OF THE UNIVERSITY AND PROBLEMS CONCERNING EDUCATION, INDOCTRINATION AND THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY.

Theoretical reflection about the university and education in general cannot be abstracted or isolated from the complex modern society in which it has to function. Therefore, philosophical reflection about the problems stated in the title of this article must keep in mind the structure of the university and education and must also give account of the perversion of education called "indoctrination". This has to be done within the context of the interrelationships of these phenomena in society. In order to obtain a clear picture of these phenomena it is necessary to see them in context and to isolate them from the societal configuration of the complex society of the twentieth century. In this academic undertaking it might prove that either the one or the other aspect of the problem has at some stage been over-accentuated; but this is an academic risk one must be willing to run when trying to grasp the complexity of reality with its immense structural variety.

Modern society is in love with the idea of *change*.<sup>1)</sup> And this courtship has become so intimate that change as such has been proclaimed as a criterion or norm of society itself; it has in fact become a goal in itself. This even holds true for the so-called "establishment" of modern society, i.e. the current institutional groups invested with power and authority and the responsibility of leadership in society. They are also in the process and the grasp of change.

What will be the task of education in general and university education in particular in this newly developing constellation? Will the university and education, which are in the throes of change, be able to critically direct a society-in-crisis and a society-in-change in the desirable direction? These are the crucial questions which have to be answered in any reflection upon the idea of the university, the concept of education and other related concepts.

The type of society in which and for which a university has to fulfil a task will also to a large extent determine the nature of its task. This calls for an analysis of the twentieth-century society, a society in transition.

## A SOCIETY IN TRANSITION

The well-known futurologist, Alvin Toffler, characterizes the society of the future as a "super-industrial" society.<sup>2)</sup> That implies a society in which the last remnants of industrialism have disappeared and in which a rapidly changing super-industrial society is taking shape.

Rapid, fundamental change will play such an important role in this future society that Toffler wants to speak of the occurrence of "future shock" as an analogy to the phenomenon of "cultural shock" which can occur in the confrontation with a strange culture.

Toffler states that this super-industrial society with its accent on technology will not in the first instance need millions of literate people, but "... men who can make critical judgements, who can weave their way through novel environments, who are quick to spot new relationships in the rapidly changing reality".<sup>3)</sup>

Toffler argues that modern society is characterized by a type of change which is quantitatively different from the type of change experienced in earlier periods. This has given rise to a different type of experience in reality, which in turn has had the effect of changing the most fundamental relationships of man towards other men, material things and values. In this respect he speaks of a so-called "accelerative thrust" which has become typical of contemporary culture. This has also given rise to the state of transience of which instability and temporality are characteristic elements.

With this loss of stability a type of society and of culture has arisen in which a "throw-away" mentality has developed — a mentality which considers all things as temporal and fundamentally discardable. Functionalism and transient relationships are characteristic of the super-industrial society.<sup>4)</sup>

If this analysis of the society of the future by Toffler is correct — and it would appear that the basic tenets are in accordance with many of the trends of present-day reality — it is evident that the adaptation of the university and education to this rapidly changing reality constitutes one of the most important crises in education.

This means that an old-fashioned and out-dated educational model and concept of the university cannot be an adequate educational vehicle for the highways of modern society. This also calls for a clear analysis of the crisis of modern education.

### **THE EDUCATIONAL CRISIS**

Many differing theories have been formulated about the educational crisis experienced by contemporary society. The main lines of a few of these diagnoses will suffice to prove how diverse the analyses of the current educational crisis are and how these analyses are influenced by the respective authors' differing concepts of education.

L J Lewis<sup>5)</sup> states that, although educational systems have changed tremendously in the past decades, "... they have adapted all too slowly to the faster pace of events on the move all around them. The consequent disparity taking many forms — between educational systems and their environments is the essence of the worldwide crisis in education".

This situation is, furthermore, accentuated by the growing number of students and the devaluation of academic standards and qualifications which creates one of the greatest problems of the future, viz. many academics will find themselves unemployed and without direction in the society of the future. Two aspects of the problem have by now become evident: On the one hand the practical impossibility of coping with the demands of the rapidly developing modern society and on the other hand the inability to cope adequately with mass education, simultaneously retaining the intrinsic nature and quality of university education. Closely related to the abovementioned analysis of the educational crisis is the diagnosis of P H Coombs<sup>6)</sup> in which the nature of the crisis is seen as the breach between the provision of educational resources and the population explosion. Christopher Dawson<sup>7)</sup> evaluates the crisis of Western education as the crisis of Western Christian culture and the gradual development of a religious vacuum in which the basic Christian traditions have been secularized. This situation can only be remedied, according to Dawson, when the educational ideals have again been brought into line with the (Roman Catholic) Christian tradition.

These diagnoses all reveal basic truths concerning different aspects of the educational crisis. One important question should be added to these different points of view. How is it possible that in an age in which education for the masses has become possible and the best educational resources have become available, that we have still not succeeded in educating a generation with vision and perspective, and which is engaged in the affairs of modern society with a real sense of spiritual commitment?

The cause of the crisis of education is often sought, on one hand in the explosion of knowledge and on the other hand in the population explosion. Although these factors play an important role in the problems which education in general faces, there is another factor which is seldom taken into consideration, viz the content of the curriculum which a student has to absorb intellectually within the span of time accorded him in an educational program.

Ayn Rand<sup>8)</sup> can be credited for drawing attention to the importance of this factor in the derailment of modern education. She accentuates the part played by the content of education in the historical developments which eventually led to the student unrest of the sixties in the U.S.A. She states unequivocally that humanity could not stay untouched by what she calls "intellectual fission debris," which consists of the basic components of epistemological agnosticism, irrationalism and ethical subjectivism.

It is evident that the external factors which are the causes of many of the problems which are being experienced in education cannot be compared with the basic underlying factor of the educational content and direction and the influence of this factor on the religious and motivational vacuum which is discernible among modern students. This accentuates the necessity to formulate what education is all about and to contrast this normative view of education with forms of education such as indoctrination, in which there is a disregard of the norms which are held to be valid for education.

#### **THE CONCEPT OF EDUCATION**

Education constitutes an integral part of the everyday life of every human being. As such it is an important

function and aspect of the life of man within all societal spheres in which he has a task and a calling. This implies that education is not restricted only to the school, university and the family.

All forms of education whether in the family or at school or at the university, are integrally related to a world and life view. In a certain sense all these societal structures function as channels for knowledge about reality and the place and task of man in reality.

This basic view of life which governs all forms of education within different societal situations is therefore also basic to all theories of education and all the different practical ways in which these theories are implemented in educational institutions.

Although it is possible to distinguish between the naive, pre-theoretical notions which influence differing concepts of education and the typical theoretical pre-suppositions which can be found within educational theory proper, it is important to note that these theoretical and pre-theoretical notions are intertwined in such a manner that they cannot be isolated.

With these remarks in mind education can be defined as that formal and informal process by which persons or institutions in authority, which are called to guide, nurture or form a child, young person or student, help to unfold or disclose or develop the potential of those who have been placed in their care to such an extent that they discover the meaning and goal and direction of life and are able to have a clear view of their own place in the world in which they live.

This is a very general exposition of what education is all about. In actual fact, it is necessary to broaden the scope of this definition to include all people who find themselves in an educational situation; that means that not only young people, children and students are involved in the process of education but all persons who have to be helped to a better realization of their possibilities and tasks in the world.

Of course it will be necessary to specify in what manner university or academic education differs from all other

types of education which is included in the above general definition of education. Before this is done, education must be clearly distinguished from indoctrination.

### **EDUCATION AND INDOCTRINATION**

The process and the concept of education includes a great variety of activities of which many could be characterized as conditioning whereas others could practically be seen as forms of indoctrination. The limits of these activities are very fluid and the determination of the boundaries between these concepts is rather difficult. In spite of this it is possible to qualify those activities generally regarded as "education" in such a manner that the structure of education becomes clear. A preliminary attempt has already been made with this in view, but it is necessary, in addition, to specify in which manner tertiary education differs from the type of education which can be found in practically all societal structures.

University education is academically qualified by the structure of the university within which it functions. Science aims at the discovery of truth; academic education intends to guide the student into truth. In distinction from this, the absence of truth or the negation of the inner relationship between education and the quest for truth is fundamental to indoctrination. With respect to this (Tomas F Green<sup>9</sup>) states: "Indoctrination begins precisely where a concern for truth ends." With this statement one of the most fundamental issues concerning the university and university education is unequivocally revealed.

What is the task of the university in this respect? What are the limits of academic education and academic formation? At which point are the limits of responsible academic schooling and independent critical thought exceeded and the first steps taken in the direction of indoctrination? These questions can, of course, be multiplied endlessly.

Even more important is the issue concerning the effects of indoctrination in education. Related to this is the question whether indoctrination should only be judged as a negative phenomenon. Even more intricately interwoven with all these important questions is the whole issue of authority within any educational setting or system. For

example, does indoctrination always accompany an authoritarian educational system? Is this aspect automatically eliminated when an authoritarian educational system is changed into a democratic or permissive system?

Many of these important crucial questions can only be answered within the context of a survey of history. Historically the concept of education has always had some kind of link with the idea of indoctrination. Indoctrination has primarily been regarded as a negative phenomenon which was practically always pejoratively associated with an authoritarian educational system in which coercion played an important role. Originally, indoctrination literally meant the implantation of dogma or doctrine. In medieval culture education was practically synonymous with the implantation of Christian dogma or doctrine, with the result that indoctrination and education were used as interchangeable concepts.

In the historical evolution of this concept it acquired a pejorative connotation, which was also automatically associated with coercion.<sup>10)</sup>

In the majority of conceptions of indoctrination in literature, the relationship between authoritarianism and the use of coercion in one form or another is accentuated.<sup>11)</sup> Indoctrination is also often seen as the uncritical "implantation of those beliefs" which is undemocratic because this destroys the freedom of choice of those who are subjected to indoctrination.

Two crucial questions concerning indoctrination have crystallized historically. In the first place there is the question whether indoctrination concerns the method, content or intention of education. It appears as if most of the authors are of the opinion that the content and the intention should be seen as the decisive factor in the determination of the indoctrinational character of education and that the method which is used in this process should be seen as being directly related to the intention and the content of education.

With respect to the *content* there are also differing opinions. The discussion centres around the question whether only inculcation of doctrine should be seen as

indoctrination or whether all other kinds of statements of a "scientific" nature could also be regarded as possible subjects of indoctrination. For instance, is the mere acknowledgement of God as Creator in a biology lecture to be regarded as a type of statement which could be employed for indoctrination? Or would it also be possible to use an ordinary "scientific" concept such as the idea of the evolution of different species, for the purpose of indoctrination?

The second problem concerns the negative or pejorative connotation of the concept of indoctrination. Is the idea of indoctrination as such necessarily negative and ethically and educationally not justifiable? Answers to these questions are of course predetermined by the concept of indoctrination. The questions require at least a preliminary formulation of a point of view as to what indoctrination is.

To the extent that any form of education implies guidance of persons towards a definitely formulated educational goal, it entails a type of prejudiced approach which could easily be equated with indoctrination. This pedagogical partiality or bias, which is an inherent component of any form of education, differs from indoctrination in the sense that it does not seek to guide in the direction of an uncritical acceptance of what is stated by the educator. If the natural "built-in prejudice" of any type of education is abused in aid of this dogmatic or uncritical acceptance of what is taught by the educator, it would imply indoctrination in the most negative sense of the word.

Indoctrination should be seen in a larger context, viz the whole process of enculturation which forms the background of all types of education within a given culture or society. In a certain sense this process of enculturation always implies a type of indoctrination which is a necessary prerequisite for the continuity of culture within a given society. It is astonishing that this aspect of enculturation, without which cultural transmission can hardly take place, is very seldom seen as indoctrination, whereas it often reveals many of the traits of indoctrination as described above.

It appears that in American literature on this topic a preference can be found for the concepts of enculturation and



socialization as substitutes for indoctrination.<sup>12)</sup> In this wider sense the concept includes more than indoctrination in its negative and pejorative content within the confines of university education. These are far more inclusive terms which also cover forms of transmission of culture by other institutions of society.

The important relationship between university or academic education and indoctrination now calls for attention.

### **INDOCTRINATION AND ACADEMIC EDUCATION**

The thesis has already been expounded that indoctrination is always related to an uncritical implantation of ideas and that it often implies more concern for the acceptance of these ideas than truth expressed by them. Green<sup>13)</sup> calls attention to the fact that indoctrination always is found where a "non-evidential style of belief" is found. The cultivation of this type of education is indoctrinational because it does not stimulate critical and independent thinking by those who are subject to the process of education.

Education within an academic situation is not primarily concerned with what the student learns but with the manner or way in which he learns to know, ie it is not primarily concerned with "correct answers" but with correct answers being conceived on adequate and correct grounds. In this educational process authority plays an important role. "Correct answers" arrived at on the grounds of information transmitted by authorities (lecturers or text books) does not imply student participation in truth. In mathematics, for example, the emphasis on correct answers without the accompanying insight or understanding of the problem is the mathematical equivalent of indoctrination.

"Critical" thought always implies the use of "criteria", therefore critical thought can never be interpreted as being value-free or neutral or unprejudiced. Critical thought, the acquisition of which is one of the most important goals of university education, implies the cultivation and guidance of the student's power of discrimination in order to train him to be able to discern the truth concerning a given state of affairs. ●

In this respect it is important to note that not only the person who argues from a religious point of view and realizes that truth can only be known fully with the full acknowledgement of religious commitments is prone to the dangers of indoctrination. Also the person who claims that truth can only be discerned with the exclusion of all religious convictions can use this point of view in order to indoctrinate. This is stated in contrast to the current opinion that indoctrination is only possible in the first case.

This aspect of the problem immediately brings the various goals of education into perspective.

### **EDUCATIONAL GOALS**

In recent literature which discusses the goals of education varying formulas are found. Practically all formulations of the goals of education give a certain insight into an important aspect of this process and also highlight the typical concepts of education which seem to have been forged by the demands of modern society. Three of these goals will be discussed to give an idea of the complexity of education within the confines of modern society.

Karl Mannheim writing after the Second World War, argues the case for "social awareness"<sup>14)</sup> as a goal of education against the background of the tremendous changes which were wrought within society during and after the war. Different factors lead to the absence of "awareness" in society, such as over specialization. This causes a lack of perspective in the student and the teacher, with the result that the student is trained uncritically and without the necessary perspective on the full situation. The effect of this lack of perspective on the full situation causes defective adjustment. This adjustment is related to values, which regulate behaviour and conduct and which spring from a religious focus as a way of interpreting life from some paradigmatic experience.<sup>15)</sup>

Although Mannheim accentuates the relationship of adjustment, social awareness and conduct with a perspective of the whole of a situation and its connection with values, the context of his book reveals that his educational goal is bound to the type of society which he visualizes as the ideal society which is to be created after the devastation of the Second World War. In this conception

he needs a new man for his newly planned society and in this process his educational ideas will have to be instrumental.<sup>16)</sup> In the further discussion of the concept and goal of education according to a Biblical point of view, it will become clear that although one can go along with his stress on the value-character of educational goals, the societal framework within which his educational goals eventually will have to function cannot be shared.

A second aim of education — very attractive when judged against the background of the streamlined modern society — is “understanding”. “Understanding” is intended to portray education with the ultimate goal of autonomous decisionmaking. This goal is dependent on the vast changes in the concept of authority which have become part and parcel of modern educational systems. Over against the authoritarian type of education of the past decades, the modern concept of democracy has been highly influential in recent literature on education. A society is considered democratic — among other things — when there are no restrictions on the kind of topics about which one might think, speak or write. The fundamental question here is how an educational process can aid the development of this “understanding” and what the role of authority should be in the acquisition of this “understanding”. Approaches to this problem swing from the one extreme of the defense of absolute authority on the one hand to total permissiveness (democracy?) on the other.

The elements of truth in these widely differing points of view concerning authority must not mislead one to a search for the golden mean! What should be very clearly seen is the fact that both these extremes are detrimental to the cultivation of understanding and that only a balanced conception of authority, in which there is room for the recognition of the authority and responsibilities of both teachers and students, will in the long run aid a true understanding of reality.

Alvin Toffler, whose book has given rise to an awareness of the necessity to pay heed to the educational goals of the future, formulates a third goal for education: “copeability”.<sup>17)</sup> This refers to the speed and economy with which an individual can adjust to rapidly changing circumstances. In this process the adjustment according to

values figure prominently. When an individual is confronted with alternative choices, he chooses that which is in accordance with his own system of values. With the increase in the possibilities of choice only the person who is fully cognizant of his own values will be able to adjust to changing circumstances.

Toffler is also an important proponent of the idea of the value-laden character of education; but simultaneously he rejects the uncritical acceptance of the value-system of the older generation. He states that a radical revision of an educational system must begin by formulating radical questions concerning the status quo. In a static and stable society, such as the pre-industrial type of society, the right of the older generation to transmit its values to the younger generation was not questioned. It is only since the shock waves of the industrial revolution have toppled the value-architecture of society that educationists have shrunk from the idea of values in education. This had the effect of the substitution of traditional values by cultural relativism and the idea of neutrality. He concludes that educators were "... deluding themselves into believing that they were not in the value business at all".<sup>18)</sup>

Although many educators realize that educational organization and ideas of authority are value-laden, yet the formal curriculum is often presented as if it is value-free. Ideas, occurrences and phenomena are stripped of all value-implications and cut loose from moral reality. Toffler states the resulting confusion had the effect that systems of value have seldom been analysed critically, and this in turn has occasioned uncertainty about goals on the part of the younger generation, which therefore does not possess the ability to pass effective judgements. As a reaction to "clerical education" only "facts" were taught about which the student was supposed to form his own opinion. Against this background Toffler pleads for an emphasis on educational processes in which the student is helped to define his own values and to make his own values explicit. The curriculum of the future must include a wide range of data courses but must also accentuate what Toffler calls "future relevant behavioural skills". "It must combine variety of factual content with universal training in what might be termed 'life know-how'".<sup>19)</sup>

Although Toffler stresses the necessity of values in the educational process, he does not explicate the content of these values. What gradually becomes evident in his arguments is the fact that he is radically opposed to the values which have directed the educational process until today. Although he advocates the introduction of values and 'life know-how' into a curriculum with factual content, he does not radically change the type of educational system in which "facts only" are permitted. The same fundamental dualism of facts and values<sup>20</sup>) is present in his own solution to the problems of education in the supra-industrial society.

It is clear that the character of the future society will to a large extent determine the relationship of values and educational goals. The recognition of this is not sufficient for the organization of education in the society of the future. What is needed is a definite choice of position, a stance, with respect to the content, direction and motivation of these values. This implies that education is value-laden to such an extent that when it is conceived as value-free it is a disparagement of the idea of education as such. Of course, such a point of view does not imply the provision of the student with ready-made and completely formulated problems and instant answers according to a prefabricated system of values; but it does imply the authorized (not authoritarian) guidance of the student to a point of reverent wonder about the intricate nature of reality and the direction of this wonder within the frame of reference of a world and life view. In a theoretical or academic context this entails a philosophy. If one of the most fundamental problems of the contemporary academic situation is the absence of responsibility and motivation of young people because they lack a sense of direction as the result of so-called neutral, impartial, objective science which sidesteps fundamental issues, then one of the indispensable components of educational renewal must be the idea of responsibility with its correlate concepts of vocation and authority. This is true of educational renewal in general; it is especially true of Christian educational renewal. For these concepts are essential within a Christian world and life view, and therefore must of necessity be built into academic practice, educational goals, and the theory of education. One way in which this can be done is by means of the exposure of the philosophical presuppositions of secularized and

humanist theories of education. But this necessitates a vital and vibrant academic discipline of philosophy which is sensitive to the rapidly changing situation in society and which is also sensitive to the various theoretical reactions to these fundamental changes in society. This calls for an analysis of the role of philosophy within the framework of the university.

## PHILOSOPHY AND THE UNIVERSITY

Many scientists agree that the crisis of the modern university is constituted by the incoherent and disintegrating collection of special sciences which are linked to professional training.<sup>21)</sup> In this connection Polak refers to the modern university as a "diploma factory" which has to produce standardised products for the scientific society and which has lost its character of *universitas*.<sup>22)</sup> Popma<sup>23)</sup> draws attention to the fact that the technical capabilities of man have become so important in modern science that the university is being abused in order to cultivate minds that have to be employed for the end of technical, scientific and professional training. This means that the university has become little more than an administratively connected group of professional schools. He characterizes this approach as *fabrilistisch* (which implies an identification of man with *homo faber*), ie, the over-accentuation of technical and professional training at the expense of academic education. This must be seen in connection with the whole problem of professionalization and specialization in university education. The modern type of university, which is practically a multiversity, cultivates students who lack a perspective on the coherence of reality and who have been conditioned by the specialized sciences to perceive only one aspect of reality and to see this aspect only within its professional framework. Directly connected with this problem another, far more fundamental crisis manifests itself, viz the crisis of the basis of the university. In the Christian university this problem manifests itself in a choice between the different Christian philosophical systems for the grounding of the various sciences in order to guarantee the unity of the sciences, whereas the so-called neutral university is confronted with the problem that it lacks any unifying basis for a possible integration of the special sciences into an organic whole. Within the structure of the Christian university this brings with

it the additional problem of either fragmentation, in order to include all possible points of view, or the canonization of one philosophical system. In the so-called neutral university practically any point of view can be defended, all under the guise of objectivity — which is, of course, contradicted by this very multiplicity of viewpoints.

In this light it becomes evident that all of the “traditional” tasks of the university are affected by this crisis of fragmentation and value-neutrality; and the need for a philosophical point of departure, which will guarantee at least homogeneous starting point, should be clear to anyone deeply concerned. If education, research and the transmission of the culture of a relevant period can be regarded as the three basic functions of the university,<sup>24)</sup> then it should follow from the above diagnosis of the structure of education in general and the value-laden nature of education the lack of a unifying basic philosophical point of view has been one of the causal factors in the process of the disintegration of the modern university. Since culture can rarely be seen as not being interwoven with values of some kind, this third function of the university has been neglected with the result that the other two functions — education and research — have not been kept in proper perspective. This has given rise to the idea of the multiversity and the isolation of research and academic training in fragmented and isolated professional units. The legacy of positivism has greatly contributed to this concept of science and the university.

The reaction to this state of affairs on the part of the proponents of the so-called “critical university”,<sup>25)</sup> with its demand that science be politicised, has at least had one positive side effect, namely the recognition that science and the education of students at a university cannot be value-free or neutral. The negative aspects of this development, however, is that it subordinates science to politics, which is a radical disparagement of the true nature and structure of science, the university and university education.

Especially the third important task of the university — the transmission of culture and the cultivation of “wise men of culture”<sup>26)</sup> — has proved problematic within the context of the crisis of the university. This factor and the

problem of the lack of a philosophical point of departure which can unify the disintegrating special sciences bring the role of Philosophy in the university into perspective.

A brief overview of the history of philosophy as a discipline reveals some most intriguing features. At the dawn of theoretical reflection in ancient Greek culture, philosophy developed out of mythology. Then, from the period of the pre-Socratics to the end of Graeco-Roman civilization, philosophy stood on its own feet as the mother of specialized theoretical endeavours. For nearly a thousand years during the Middle Ages, philosophy was subordinated to theology. At the beginning of the Modern Age, rationalism contributed to the emancipation of philosophy from both religion and theology - an emancipation which gave rise to the autonomy of philosophical thought. The rise of positivism at the beginning of the last century led to a new juxtaposition: philosophy became the handmaiden of the rapid rise of the new special sciences, the natural sciences and the so-called social sciences, with their emphatic insistence on the value-free character of scientific investigation and academic juxtaposition. But this reaction has not led to a restoration of philosophy to its legitimate place in the university as the foundational, coherent and interdisciplinary link between the special sciences. Instead, the old subordinate position appears in new garb: philosophy is becoming the handmaiden of the politicizing direction defended by the proponents of the "critical university". This is one of the main trends on the European continent and in some sectors of American university life. In contrast to this development we notice that traditional Anglo-Saxon philosophy still defends its neutral and value-free character by reducing philosophy to a tool for linguistic purification.<sup>27)</sup>

Both of these extreme conceptions of the function of philosophy constitute a hindrance to the role of philosophy as a foundational discipline in which the radical basic problems of man and reality can be analysed within the framework of a unifying perspective. If philosophy is called upon to fulfil this important interdisciplinary and interfaculty task within the university, the luxury of philosophy as a mere addendum to the edifice of science cannot be afforded. The answer must lie in a university or academic system in which philosophy is intrinsically



engaged in all the special sciences and varieties of professional training.

The crucial question is: how can this restoration of philosophy to its proper position in the academic curriculum occur in practice? If the university curriculum permits students to take philosophy courses as options to fill gaps next to their hard-core "scientific courses", as is generally the case today, we will not be closer to a solution. For this very optional character of philosophy courses expresses the underlying positivism prevalent in the universities. In such a curriculum structure the philosophy courses will be avoided by the average student. For the average student is not competent to deal with the issues raised in philosophy courses; he does not see the relation between these issues and his own "scientific" or "professional" training; and he will consider such a course a waste of his precious time. The detrimental result of this optional approach is clear: few academics are genuinely interested in gaining insight into the fundamentals of their own specialty and they are even less concerned about the interrelationship between their particular discipline and a theoretically responsible grasp of the nature of the whole of reality.

The development of philosophy in our time has only aggravated this problem. Since philosophy has cut its umbilical cord with a coherent, structured reality, it is not able to integrate or unify the special sciences within the current concept of the university ("multiversity"). In view of this it cannot fulfil its function of explicating the foundational, philosophical issues of the respective sciences. Hence the absence of structures, meaningful interaction between philosophy and the special sciences. By stressing their crucial role of philosophy in the university, we do not mean to leave the impression that philosophy should be seen as a cure for all the ills of the modern university. Such a simplistic solution to the complex problems of the modern university only reveals lack of insight into the complexity of modern culture and the history and task of the university within that culture.<sup>28)</sup>

Nevertheless, if philosophy is to fulfil its legitimate and indispensable role within the university, there is need for a drastic organizational restructuration of the university curriculum relevant to the individual program of studies

of each student and the co-operative, interdisciplinary research projects of the university's academic personnel. To begin with, the "department of philosophy" should no longer be structured as a de-part-ment next to other de-part-ments but as a *central interfaculty*. A central interfaculty can provide a home where philosophy can be developed in its own integrity, in distinction from the special sciences; but it can also create channels for the necessary and natural interaction among the specialized sciences in order to stimulate interdisciplinary research and teaching and to facilitate the development of the philosophy and theory of the special sciences in co-ordination with philosophy in general.

This is not the only way in which philosophy could function. Attention to the history of the special sciences will also uncover many of their basic presuppositions, this will also create opportunities for interaction between philosophy and the special sciences. In this respect attention must be drawn to the important book of Hooykaas<sup>29</sup>) on the history of science and the discussion concerning the role of paradigms in the natural sciences instigated by the work of Thomas S Kuhn<sup>30</sup>).

Multidisciplinary research and teaching constitute another important way in which the interaction between the sciences in general and the sciences and philosophy can be stimulated. In this respect a central interfaculty framework can be very valuable. Other possible methods of creating channels for this interaction can be found in the study of the relationship of faith and science and the ethics of science.

The creation of an organizational framework within which philosophy can function presupposes at least a minimal unity of starting point which is necessary in the study of science, by means of which it is possible to provide a perspective or a context within which reality can be perceived. A unifying point of departure gives direction and motivation to the work of a university and determines the nature and character of education and research undertaken there. This point of departure or starting point is present in all academic or theoretical work even though this might not be explicitly acknowledged. Because of this, not only the Christian university is a "confessional" university but all universities are bound

to tacit philosophical and religiously determined assumptions. In this sense the choice for a neutral university or for politicizing engagement in the sense of the New Left can also be seen as "confessional" choices.

In a religiously and philosophically divided culture, the ancient ideal of a *universitas* or *collegium* can at least be partially recovered if all of the participants in academic pursuits would honestly and explicitly admit their religious and philosophical assumptions so that nothing hidden will obscure theoretical clarity — imperative to lasting scientific advance.

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