

³ Brian Tierney, *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory*, Cambridge University Press, 1955.

⁴ Leclercq, *Jean de Paris*.

⁵ Antoine Dondaine, "Documents pour servir a L'Histoire de la Province de France: L'Appel au Concile (1303)," A.F.P., Vol. XXII, 1952, pp. 381-439.

⁶ Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Random House, 1955.

⁷ Quidort, *De Potestate Regia et Papali*; 215, 17.

⁸ Philip the Fair had the University of Paris debate the question whether the Pope might lawfully resign. As one might expect, the answer was in the negative. The fact that John of Paris, in the face of this decision by the most distinguished theological faculty in Christendom, defended Celestine's right to resign need not be as significant as Leclercq believes. As Dr. Tierney has pointed out, this alleged inability of the Pope to resign rests on an extreme version of papal plenitude of power—an admission that would have forced a rewriting of the entire tract.

⁹ Marc F. Griesbach, "John of Paris as a Representative of Thomistic Political Philosophy," pp. 33-51 from *An Etienne Gilson Tribute*, Marquette Univ. Press, 1959.

¹⁰ Griesbach, p. 43 and p. 48.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 39.

¹² Quidort, 229, 32-35.

¹³ *ibid.*, pp. 212-213.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 223.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 174.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 230.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 215.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 212.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 189.

²⁰ Dr. Brian Tierney.

²¹ Philip Hughes, *A History of the Church*, Vol. III.

²² J. C. Murray, S.J., "Contemporary Orientations of Catholic Thought on Church and State in the Light of History," pp. 177-235 from *Theological Studies*, Vol. X, 2; June, 1949.

LIBERALISM AND THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

THE QUESTION of whether or not Catholic high school graduates should be allowed to attend secular colleges and universities has been a headache to the Catholic hierarchy for over a hundred years. The question is still a live one today, but the intention of the present article isn't to meet head-on the question of Catholics in secular colleges. Our

aim is more modest, to probe a little into the ideologies that make secular university education a possible danger to Catholic students.

All the "things to fear" for the youthful Catholic student attending a secular college can be lumped under the twin terms "secularism" and "liberalism." What are these two dreaded "isms"? Of the two, secularism is certainly the easier to pin down: as used by the bishops of the United States in one of their more famous messages, it stands for a particular variety of materialism that is identified with some of the meaner aspects of today's "American way of life." It stands, in simple terms, for an exclusive concern with this world's goods—in terms of luxury, comfort and modern living—that steals in to sap the strength of any genuine and otherworldly religious attitudes a man might have. Secularism, in this sense, is a danger present in every age, closely allied with Original Sin and natural human weakness.

Liberalism, on the other hand, represents more of an intellectual attitude. Its potential dangers, therefore, are all the more serious. The term "liberalism" can be used in a great variety of ways, as a term of opprobrium or as an accolade of supreme distinction. "Liberalism," for instance, can be used to describe a particular political philosophy that is very influential on the American scene today. It can also be used, as it once was by Pius IX, to label the anti-God, anti-supernatural philosophy of the nineteenth century that was condemned in the Syllabus. Possible uses of the term could go on and on, but we can eliminate such innocuous meanings as that of political liberalism—which the prospective student might well find being taught in Catholic as well as secular institutions—and concentrate on *philosophical* liberalism. Here we find a manifestation of liberalism that is at the same time open to view and adapted to our purposes here. What sort of "philosophical liberalism" is taught in American universities? How influential is it? How much of a danger does it represent to the Catholic college student?

Philosophical liberalism has been characterized as the application to philosophical matters of the Protestant religious principle of private judgment, and the description is certainly appropriate. Since the advent of modern philosophy, beginning with Descartes, philosophers have followed an unswerving course toward greater and greater individualism. Closely paralleling this course is another toward greater and greater liberalism. Only in our own day have exponents of this double trend subjected their beliefs to a philosophical examination of conscience; these self-critical thinkers have had to turn somersaults in their efforts to reduce excessive

individualism to "scientific harmony" without, at the same time, destroying the liberalism they cherish so highly.

This close relationship between individualism and liberalism in philosophy often leads to a confusion of the two. It is often claimed that the greatest ill of current intellectual life is an excess of toleration. Liberalism, in an outburst of truth-relativism, will often carry toleration to the extreme of accepting any and every individualistic scheme dreamed up by man, no matter how radical it may be, or how much at odds with common sense. Truth, of course, is not relative, and it is undoubtedly the most perilous feature of the liberal dream in philosophy that it tends to foster the view it is. Carried to extremes, this excess in toleration would say that any man's opinion is as good as the next, since no man can ever really claim to have discovered the truth in any absolute sense.

Against this background, let's take a look now at the various philosophical schools currently popular in American colleges and universities. If we use philosophical liberalism in the sense described as our criterion, how do the schools measure up? Today's schools of philosophy, for the most part, represent a new generation that has grown up since World War II. Diverse as they are in many respects—as we shall see—the most popular of them at least share a common inheritance handed down to them by the three schools predominant in the twenty-five or so years between the two World Wars. This "older generation" of twentieth century American philosophy was headed by New Realism, Critical Realism, and Dewey's Instrumentalism. Instrumentalism was a direct descendant of James's Pragmatism and in later years itself broadened out to become Naturalism. It is this last phase of the movement which is still active today and which claims our attention now.

Naturalism stands squarely for liberalism in its fullest and most flamboyant sense. In most instances Naturalists are frankly atheistic, and this school comes closest of any to fulfilling the definition attached to the term "liberalism" in the Syllabus of Pio Nono. It is opposed to any and every dualism, rejects all hints of the "supernatural," and therefore also denies the existence (or at least the "scientific relevance") of God. Strangely enough, however, the "naturalism" of this school is not just another form of crude materialism; its adherents pretty generally are interested in human values, noble ideals, freedom and of course "the liberal outlook." Without doubt this latter aspect of Naturalism is what makes it most insidious for the youthful and enthusiastic student. Interest in humanitarian ideals and noble ideas will always appeal strongly to youth. But the young student

will seldom realize that the denial of God is a high price to pay for humanitarianism. Nor will he see that this atheism in effect cuts out the very roots of genuine work for social betterment, since God is the ultimate source of all true human values.

At present Naturalism is losing ground and doesn't enjoy the following in American schools it once did. Even so, it has remained strong in several important universities, and many of its outstanding exponents are still active and influential in philosophical circles. An impressive array of the Naturalists got together a decade or so ago and collaborated on a work entitled *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*. The group was headed by John Dewey and also included such outstanding Naturalists as Sidney Hook, Sterling Lamprecht, George Boas, Ernest Nagel, Harry Costello and Yervant Krikorian. Those of this group who are still living are the most influential Naturalists at work today. N.Y.U.'s Sidney Hook has taken over Dewey's place as leader of the group.

The school that has taken over the position of pre-eminence from Naturalism at the present time is Logical Analysis. Other names for the school are Logical Positivism (the oldest term), Scientific Empiricism, Philosophical Analysis, Analytical Philosophy, and Linguistic Analysis. This multiplicity of labels indicates something of the variety of forms the school has taken. Nevertheless, there is a central core of principles generally agreed upon by all the adherents of the school. Primary among these principles is that of placing science on a pedestal as the supreme hope of humanity. A similar primary purpose is that of working toward a unified science, with the further aim of utilizing this unified science for ultimate human betterment.

Philosophical Analysis has an unlimited faith in science. It rejects most of the controversies of philosophy's long history as meaningless, claiming that they couldn't even be stated, at least in a meaningful way, in a properly clarified language. This emphasis on language—the school, as already noted, is also called Linguistic Analysis—is another fundamental principle of the school. The ideal toward which the analysts would like to work is a universally agreed upon philosophical language that would allow for the same lack of equivocation among philosophers that there is among scientists. And the whole task of philosophy, in their estimate, would be that of a “science of the sciences.”

Where does Analysis stand in relation to philosophical liberalism?

While it's true that they deny validity to a number of the controversial issues usually connected with liberalism, the analysts try to remain liberal without being individualistic. (Recall the distinction made earlier and the difficulty of being liberal without being individualistic.) They do cling to many liberal tenets. Many of them carry their "anti-metaphysics" to the point of atheism or agnosticism. And all of them pay due respects to the violently anti-metaphysical founders of the school, the Logical Positivists of the Vienna Circle.

The difficulties with Philosophical Analysis are reducible to three: scientism in the bad sense, rejection of many important philosophical problems by reason of a prior rejection of metaphysics, and a barrenness of any positive content in philosophy—for the analysts the only genuine philosophical problems are logical and linguistic, having to do with the logic of the sciences, which alone furnish any positive advances in knowledge. Of these three deficiencies the most dangerous for young men and women in college is scientism. Science is not the savior of the world. Science itself can only be saved by the right use of moral principles and moral action. Not all the analysts would rule out moral principles, but they would tend to reduce them beyond the limit to which they can be reduced; and a great number of the analytic philosophers heap ridicule on moral principles based on God and other-worldly rewards.

The pre-eminence of Logical Analysis is being threatened today, perhaps most strongly by Existentialism and Phenomenology (or a combination of the two). It will take some time to tell whether or not it will fall before their assaults. Meanwhile, Analysis is still the philosophy most likely to be encountered at most secular universities in this country. Its influence is so widespread, in fact, that it is difficult to select any names as most representative of the school. Several analysts have made significant contributions in the field of symbolic logic, and there are several big names from among the old Logical Positivists who are now working in the U.S.: Rudolf Carnap, Hans Reichenbach and Herbert Feigl among others.

Both the schools mentioned so far are distinctly liberal. In addition, as we have seen, they are unalterably opposed to metaphysics of any kind. This opposition to metaphysics is in its turn being opposed in certain sectors of American philosophy today by a movement that makes an explicit avowal of metaphysics and justifies its own existence

on grounds of its opposition to the anti-metaphysicians. This new movement stems from the belief that the results of the denial of metaphysics have proved to be philosophically barren and sterile. The accusation is made especially against the analytical philosophers and their older forerunners of the Critical Realism school. In this movement back to metaphysics three groups are involved: the Metaphysical Society of America, the Association for Realistic Philosophy, and American Thomism. The first two grew up almost exclusively as a reaction against the earlier schools and developed their interest in metaphysics by way of opposition to those schools; Thomism of course has always stood for metaphysics.

The Metaphysical Society more or less gravitates around Yale University and Professor Paul Weiss. The movement is largely one of reaction, as said before, but the positive contributions of the Society, which was founded in 1950, have also been impressive in their own way. The *Review of Metaphysics* offers a sounding board for the members (and for other philosophers as well) and will give material for a fair estimate of the scope and direction of the work of members of the Society. The movement, often characterized by real enthusiasm, has one or two less acceptable features in that it tends to be eclectic and could stand some more positive direction.

A similar but potentially more important movement is that set on foot by John Wild of Harvard in 1948 as the Association for Realistic Philosophy. This group is less of a reaction movement than the Metaphysical Society, though it also developed out of a sense of the poverty and sterility of prior systems in American philosophy. The main purpose of the Realist movement is to re-establish contact with the Platonic-Aristotelian realistic tradition and then develop that tradition along lines adapted to the needs of the modern world especially in the sparsely developed fields of social, cultural and political philosophy. The Realists admire the work of the medieval Scholastics, but they avoid assiduously even the slightest hint of "theological intrusion" into philosophical questions, and they believe in placing far greater emphasis than the Scholastics did on induction as a philosophical tool. As a result, the Realists have no ties with and have made almost no approaches to modern Thomistic philosophy in this country.

What is the position of these two movements relative to the question of liberalism? In many respects it is the same. Any movement that makes a show of metaphysics must, to some extent, be dogmatic in the

sense of being non-tolerant of any and every opinion. Moreover, any thoroughgoing realism must reject flatly the notion of unlimited toleration and relativism of truth. For realism begins with the affirmation of the world as real, as an absolute and undeniable fact. It further insists upon man's capacity to know things and arrive at truths, i.e., true judgments about things that are not merely approximative and hypothetical but certain and irrefutable. The Metaphysical Society and the Association for Realism constitute a positive trend in American philosophy. They are a healthy reaction to excesses in the "liberal" schools. But up to the present they have not been able to dislodge the older schools from their position of pre-eminence. Each of the groups is made up of a small, energetic core of interested men. Neither group has been too successful in the search for new disciples. And now these schools as well as the older established schools face the challenge of the newest trend in American philosophy, Phenomenology-Existentialism.

Existentialism has been known in this country since shortly after World War II. At times it has even become quite the philosophical fad. But the new movement is not quite the same; this is not merely Existentialism but Existentialist Phenomenology or Phenomenological Existentialism. It stems more from the German Existentialists Heidegger and Jaspers than from the French Existentialist Sartre. As yet this newcomer has not taken over American university faculties, but it definitely constitutes a threat to the current leading groups, Logical Analysis and Naturalism. It also dulls the edge of the realist rebellion. Existentialism in its newer form is not as dangerous as the belligerently atheistic version of Sartre, but it is often agnostic at the very least and is much closer to the liberalism of the Naturalists than to the realism of the two "metaphysical" schools mentioned above.

One other school of American philosophy that deserves mention is Thomism. It isn't likely to be met on very many secular college campuses (with the exception of the University of Chicago), but it is beginning to win the respect of at least some of the philosophers belonging to the other schools. This is true especially of such Thomists as Maritain and Gilson, whose works are read even by the general public. But these two are not the only ranking Thomists, or even the best, in the professional view. The work of other Thomists is less spectacular but not any the less genuine in its scholarship or any the less deserving of being well known. The American Catholic Philosophical Association in its two chief publications, the *Proceedings of*

its annual meeting, and *The New Scholasticism*, the quarterly journal of the Association, will give anyone interested a fair sampling of the stature of the work being done and of the men involved.

Now that we've seen the breakdown of the various schools in relation to liberalism, a few theoretical considerations on liberalism are in order. How much truth is there in it, and in what does it consist? Can we distinguish an excessive from a sound liberalism? And so on.

The fundamental principle of philosophical liberalism as outlined here is a personal assimilation of truth. A genuine philosopher, an honest thinker in any field must make his own judgments. It is not enough for him merely to repeat what he has heard from his professors. He must seek the truth wherever it can be found and follow it wherever it leads. . . . These are some of the slogans of liberalism, and they indicate how much fundamental truth there is in the system. For philosophy is indeed a personal pursuit and the acquisition of knowledge a personal process.

Nevertheless, this principle of personal assimilation has its limitations. It is first of all an assimilation of *truth*. Truth comes first and is the absolute. Assimilation is nothing if it is not aimed at truth. Secondly, the assimilative process, the process of learning, will in the normal course of things be carried on under the direction of a teacher. While it is true that the teacher can't furnish his pupils with ready-made answers, it's equally true that the teacher can and does dispose the matter to be assimilated. The better the presentation the better the assimilation. And the process of learning will only be complete when the teacher instills into his pupil the lesson that learning is a lifetime project. It won't always be carried out in a classroom—our "teachers" as we mature will be the world around us and the hard facts of experience, the advice of older men, and, above all else, the great books of our cultural heritage; in one form or another we will always have a teacher before whom we have to sit down and listen. In substance, then, our criticism of liberalism on this score amounts to this: the search for truth is not such an individual thing that there can never grow up a body of truth from which a man can draw and to which he can aspire to add his modest bit. If it were, then intellectual pursuits would be vain and fruitless.

Another principle of liberalism is a humanistic concern for the primacy of the individual. Humanism, of course, is older than philosophical liberalism, older even than modern philosophy. In its modern

form it first flowered in the Renaissance. It passed, however, into modern philosophy intact and there became, in a very real sense, the root of all other liberal principles. Emphasis on man means emphasis on freedom and human rights and social welfare—all tenets of the liberal *credo*. It is the cry of the intellectual against collectivism, of man against the superstate. It is the affirmation of man as the crowning glory of the universe.

Much as these notions have been abused, they are nonetheless by no means false. Man *is* the glory of the universe, provided we mean this in the sense that he is the highest of all visible creatures. Man is free and endowed with inalienable rights, but liberty is not license and man's freedom is a freedom under law. In short, man is subject to a being higher than himself, man is the master, but only *under God*.

Without God the liberal dream of freedom and individual independence will be found to break down in the face of family, state and national pressures, as well as in the face of the greater force of fate or destiny (once a system has ruled out the benevolence of Divine Providence). The only thing left is an act of Stoic defiance "courageously" proclaiming the integrity of its freedom as it bows before the forces of a "hostile universe." Christian humanism holds out to man a far greater dignity than this. The freedom held out by the most idealistic of humanisms isn't even a pale shadow of the "freedom of the sons of God." In the context of the Redemptive Incarnation man is truly master of the universe since he is raised to a share in the Divine Nature itself. But no philosopher could ever dream of such as this, and the philosopher can be pardoned if he can't see the "reasons" for Revelation.

At the same time, the believer may be pardoned if he seems often to pity the philosopher. The tragedy is that neither party is satisfied to "pardon" the other for his difference in outlook. The believer has a Gospel to be preached, to the truth of which he is dedicated heart and soul. The philosopher, on the other hand, and particularly the "liberal" philosopher, will often decide that he must do battle against "the forces of superstition and ignorance." This latter attitude is, whether we like it or not, a prominent one in many of the philosophers of the two "liberal" schools that predominate in American universities today.

It is against such men and the battle they have taken upon themselves, not against the fundamental truths around which liberalism has been formulated as a system, that the Catholic bishops are defending themselves and their flock when they issue mandates against attendance

at secular universities. Their aim is not to hinder "academic freedom," or any other kind of freedom, but to safeguard their sons against those who would steal from them the "freedom of the sons of God."

—Reginald M. Durbin, O.P.

WILLIAM JAMES AND RELIGION

WILLIAM JAMES literally captivated the American public of his day. A man at his best in the center of a crowd, James delighted his audiences with his sparkling wit and his cunning remarks on all facets of human nature. James was no less enchanting in his written works. He has been called "the philosopher who wrote like a novelist," and "a painter with a pen." James himself confirmed that he was after the popular audience of the day, stating that he wished to present a "tolerably definite philosophic attitude in a very untechnical way."

Born in 1842, James in his youth received an eclectic education in the schools of Europe. This training gave him a thorough facility in languages. His father had once expressed his wish to "go to foreign parts . . . and educate the babies in strange lingo." And this he certainly did. Between 1855 and 1860, the "babies," William and his brother, had attended school successively in Geneva; Paris; Bologna; Newport, Rhode Island; and back in Geneva again!

William was an avid reader. A restless, curious youth, at one time or other he was a "dabbler" in such things as biology, anatomy, philosophy, chemistry, physics, and painting. This universal scope of interests no doubt is one factor which helped make him a popular, engaging and fascinating teacher, lecturer and author.

Having received his M.D. from Harvard Medical School in 1869, James soon became an instructor in Physiology at Harvard. Then he turned his attention to the ultimate philosophic problems. The decade from 1893-1903 is usually classed as James's "religious period." During this time he wrote *The Will to Believe* and *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.

During the last few years of his life, James lectured extensively. He was at Stanford University in 1906. In the next year he gave his last lec-