

11/19/79

DICK - My TOPIC - How EUGEN TRANSLATES OR TRANSFORMS THEOLOGY + SOCIAL SCIENCE INTO A

313

SCIENCE, SUPERSTITION, EDUCATION

and

THE THREE STOREYS OF A UNIVERSITY

EUGEN ROSENSTOCK-AMESSY

"HIGHER SOCIOLOGY"
- The Cross of Reality
applied as method
to education.

(About 1939
FOR FACULTY
SEMINAR AT
DARTMOUTH)

Survey:

- I. Summary of the four attitudes of man in time.
- II. Development of the four attitudes in politics and science.
- III. The superstitions of the scientist and his destruction of education.
- IV. The three storeys of a university.
- V. The terminology of a Science of Time.

I. Summary of the four attitudes.

The four grammatical attitudes of human beings are: You, I, We, They (it). We all enact with everything which we hear, every thought which we think, every word which we speak, every idea which we bequeath to posterity, willy nilly, one of these four attitudes. Golden Rule! Speak of your own life in the light of the universe, speak of the universe in the light of your own life.

II. Development of the four attitudes.

2.

(a) Although every human being must be open to all four attitudes always, our temporal existence passes through four stages in which a definite preponderance of one attitude is significant. Youth is the age of listening (you), preponderantly, manhood the age of action (I), and the elders (We) bind together. And the dead are the most objective form of human beings. The dead, our ancestors, allow us to treat man as 'they', as objects of analysis.

(b) Hence, the temptations of every generation differ. It is the danger of every one of these four groups to be treated as purely childish, purely egotistic, purely tolerant, purely dead. Evidently, children must not listen only, adults cannot act only, elders cannot agree or teach only (the "joiner"-type), and ancestors, at times, must speak to us, and must cease to be mere objects of analysis. What we call "science", is the united effort of our race to protect man's generations from this degeneration or lapse into one attitude only.

1. A child listens too easily to a limited environment. The medieval scholasticism broke the fetters of tribalism and parenthood, spiritualised every child, away from mere physical environment, and forced the parents to let the child listen to a universal story. Science of theology was created.

2. Natural science met the special temptation of the adult who is too eager to act. Science organized a counter movement against blind and headless action. As theology cured man from the disease of superficial observation, so natural science cured man of superficial habits of action. The science of space was created.

3. The temptation of the elder is cheap teaching; instruction of knowledge, marking systems, and examinations all squelching immature articulation or so-called self-expression out of terrified rabbits, called students. The We-attitude is too easily assumed today. Agreement is found in verbal acquiescence in definitions, in statistics, in sacred phrases. Hence real agreement is not established. A science of time is lacking.

(c) When we care seriously for the process that we found at

the basis of teaching, we may hope to purify the stage of the elder, as the two older sciences have purified childhood and manhood. The Golden Rule for the elders is: "Speak of your own life in the light of the universe. Speak of the universe in the light of your own experience." When we now look backward, we may say that all science has no other aim. Science is not a progress from ignorance to knowledge; it is, in every generation a delicate balance between the experiences of this generation seen in the light of the universe and vice versa, the life of the whole world seen in the light of the experience of the living. That is why a theologian must have experience of prayer, temptation, sin, mortification. And a scientist must experiment, analyse, etc., again and again. Jesus was the first man who lived his life in the light of the universe and at the same time saw the universe in the light of his own experience.

III. The superstitions of the scientist and his destruction of education.

Since the scientist is unaware of the existence of the different human attitudes; you, I, we, they, he falls victim to all the abuses and vices and superstitions which result from stopping life on the level of any one of the ten commandments of education.

1. They articulate too early. They even begin with definitions.
2. They feed people with knowledge who are not hungry. And they do not know that they breed revolution and anarchy and decadence by doing so.
3. They operate in the social field with a fictitious ego, Robinson Crusoe, individual, by which trick the true problem always is omitted. In economics, Robinson Crusoe is the means of concealing the division of labour and distribution as the two only important problems. In science, the question of authority is evaded by the same trick: If Einstein lived on a South Sea Island alone, he still would be a great physicist. But the important fact is that we speak of Einstein as a great physicist before we have exiled him to the South Sea.

4. Drunk with activity, the scientist will say: "If the man had not done this or that, he would...." Tristram Shandy already turned against this guinea-pig - if. We cannot say: if I did not exist, if Jesus had not lived, if the World War had not happened. Existence transcends the experimental action of I's. If is alright in an experiment. Experiments, however, are based on our accepting the whole universe, and being willing to pay the full price for re-arranging it by our own actions. A society that can afford to experiment, draws on human sacrifice, faith, love, hope. There is *faith* no "if" involved since these powers of the human heart are part of reality. In history and education, "if" is trespassing on reality's grounds.

5. The scientist is a time server in social matters. He has no direction. Underrating the pressure upon human thought from outside the laboratory and ignoring the ten commandments of mental growth, he follows stolidly and unconsciously all the political fashions of the times: 1914, a liberal, 1932 a socialist, he today is an anti-semite and tomorrow, a fascist. Hence he does not foresee why youth, treated as it is now, must go either fascist or communist, in violent reaction against the scientific I-man. For, the factions represent a jumping backward and a jumping forward, away from the adult into childhood or "elderhood". The communist is at the end of time, with all problems solved, in a "we" of all men. The-racist is at the dawn of the world, with his constant and recurrent nature all alone, in a universe speaking to him only, to an eternal "you".

6. The student is treated as a lost atom in the universe, he is not respected as a member of a group of his generation. A class in college is a unity at sports; it is a hodgepodge of atoms for all mental aims. The only exception is dramatics and music (glee club). Yet, all these students have considerable experience, as waiter, at odd jobs, etc. This, their real experience, goes unshared and unheeded, even at Antioch.

7. The scientist ignores the three tenses of time. Hence he mistreats himself, the student, and the administration. (a) Himself. He is not aware that as a scholar, he is living more in the future than the young who attend his lecture in the flesh. He accepts the superficial superstition that a man has more future

because he is younger in years, and a man belongs to the past simply because he is older physically. If this were true, teaching would be impossible. It is the obvious basis of any teaching that the future is vested in the words of the teacher, and the teacher who is not convinced that his teachings are essential for a full life in the future, has no right whatever to teach. (b) The student. The student must get something for his distant future life. So, current events of today will mean little or nothing in his life when he is 40 or 50. Knowledge will mean less than nothing. Every seed is inconspicuous. The things that make a student grow, are inconspicuous things. The teacher feeds the students with all the masterpieces of art, all the miracles of the world. He plasters him like a wall. The introductory course is carried over into the realm of values with disastrous results. (c) The administration. The scientist does not understand what the administrative problem is. He thinks the administration has the power anyway. But it takes, as we have seen, a constant pressure from future and past, for an administration to reach a decision. Horrid examples: Teachers of art having a conference! we must wait a century. Or, a manuscript is laid before a professor, carrying out his own dream: we must wait until the American student will be mature enough for this. The teachers talk salaries, instead future.

8. In this country, the scientific superstitions are increased by historical circumstances. Mere geographical expansion served as the compass of the future for centuries. Space seemed to give direction. Space never directs human life. Space only invites expansion, re-iteration, reduplication, growth in size. The quality of life is unchangeable without the full process of teaching, listening and acting. There is no directing inspiration in American society today.

9. Since the bigger units of time rule the small ones, the four years in college must first be considered as a unit. Then, we shall be free to give every year a different character. The terrors of the sophomore year simply accrue from our treating the four years as four times one year. They are one single hour in the life of the student. The scientist is unwilling to see a temporal "whole."

IV. The Three Storeys of a University

-6

A. A university lives on three levels:

- (a) The apprentice college.
- (b) The fellows.
- (c) The masters.

The problem of a university is the universe.

1. We are impressed by the universe.
2. We operate within the universe.
3. We organize the universe.

We generally call the impressive or superior aspect of the universe, God; the inferior or working aspect of the universe, nature; the humanly organized aspect of the universe, society.

B. Survey:

(a) The Apprentice College, 4 years:

1st year, year of hearsay:

The universe as the challenge of superior, inferior, and equal powers to our thought: Eternity, Space, Time as heritage.

2d and third years, years of doing:

Direction, Vitality, Order, Peace, as experiences in doing.

4th year, year of articulation:

Revolution, Decay, Anarchy, War, as dangers of society. (See particulars at the end, under C.)

(b) The Fellows, 2 years.

They are the foremen and group leaders in the apprentice college. They partly stay on after the four years of the apprentice college, or they return after at least three years of graduate work. The fellows attend the work and study of the apprentices. On the basis of this work they get

special instruction in education and psychology, arts and technology, sociology and law, according to their choice and talents.

(c) The Masters.

They must be trained specialists. They live together under the convergence principle for one year. They study and discuss their latest professional and scientific problems.

- (1) in the light of the history of the science.
- (2) in the light of the future of society,
- (3) as their personal, responsible choice.

The convergence group, at the end of their collaboration, decide the group-programs of the apprentices for the next years for which the masters will be responsible.

C. Further details of the Apprentice College:

1st year: The year of hearsay and tradition.

Groups of 20 to 30 students study the hieroglyphics or ideas or pictures or names of our tradition. Three topics taught in three terms: (a) Space, cosmos, nature, (b) Time, "polis", society, (c) Eternity, ecclesia, God.

- (a) deals with Greek pre-Socratic and Hindoo material;
- (b) with Roman and Chinese law and doctrines (Confucius);
- (c) with paganism and the Old Testament.

The three questions, Space, Time, Eternity, are unfolded so as to become important, harassing and unanswerable. This result may be achieved in every group quite originally. Still, a real university of mankind must expose its student from the very beginning to the three great traditions: European Philosophy, Revealed Faith, Eastern Practice, in one form or another. In no other way, can we prove our complete faith in the unity of the spirit. In the first year, the three mysteries are laid before the student, which the spirit reveals when we begin to act ourselves.

Years of Doing:

2d year: The apprentices, led by fellows, move out in groups to a common task of rehabilitation. They establish themselves as a pioneering community. Tripartition of the week: Work, Study, Arts.

Natural science and the practice of the arts center around the group's manual experience. Biology, and according to the specific task, geology, zoology, or what not, are studied.

3d year: The task is devolved. The group carries over its work into a permanent frame. In connection with this task economics plays an important part. The sciences are followed up. The experiences in arts are continued. History and theory of the arts are now taken up, and, especially, as the new subject of his year, literature and language are studied.

4th year: The year of recognizing. The groups assemble from their two years of group life. This year unites the whole senior class. They all attend the courses on articulation of common dangers. These courses deal with war, decay, anarchy, and revolution as the four scourges of society, narrate the victories of man over them, and train in the anticipation of their appearance. They take the place of the courses in general history, politics, law, social ethics, education, and history of the church and religion. The principal method is that of re-cognition. The universal names and notions of the 'year of hearsay' and the personal experiences of the years of doing are confronted, and, in mutual comparison, the laws of incarnation are re-identified. The work in this course of recognizing (after the Golden Rule mentioned in Part I), is done competitively between the groups. It is their task to vivify chapters

of the past and future issues by all the means at their disposal; and to every group different tasks will be allotted. Besides, the individual seniors will follow up their previous studies in the sciences, arts, literature, language, economics, as free electives.

The four years may be listed as:

- I. Challenge.
- II. Action.
- III. Devolution.
- IV. Identification or Recognition.

V. The terminology of a Science of Time.

In every school, we should distinguish clearly four elements: The faith of the (absent) parents who support the place, the attendance and toil of the student body who physically offer themselves to the process, the liberty of the teacher to speak his mind, and the power of the administration to steer these three groups. The inspirational liberty and creative freedom is with the teacher, the physical youth and strength of the bodies is with the students, the moral and legal power is with the administration. This leads to a re-statement of the wholly confused issue regarding what we mean when we speak of physical, moral and spiritual values. The human body, the human spirit, and the human soul or "being", are reflections on man in the light of the grammatical tenses. Whenever we speak of the physical world, we mean the incarnated world of the past, taken as recurrent in the future, too. This is the world of Copernicus and Vesal. Whenever we speak of change, surprise, risk, faith, novelty, creative processes, we appeal to the spirit or inspiration. And in the same degree as we throw the shadow of the past into the future by observing recurrence, we also may cast the future back into the past, by listing there miracles, catastrophes, and revolutions.

The moral, social, monetary, political powers "that be", always embody the present. This present is given them only as the indispensable hour between future and past. Today, power is thought of in terms of space. Hence, power is abused or misunderstood. The power of the soul is sorely needed by every human being, for the soul connects the body and the spirit. We must neither give up the body nor the spirit. Soul is the power to survive change by making this change meaningful.

Spirit, Body and Soul are three inevitable aspects of the human being under the government of the three tenses of grammar, future, past and present. The scientists, however, since Descartes, eliminated the tenses, they rejected the soul and they degraded the spirit into the mind. This process has gone on for so many centuries now that we cannot take up the old terms just as we left off in 1500.* With the abolition of the time sense by the science of space, the word soul and the word spirit both have been made into cranky notions; and the word body has lost its vital character of recurrence by being mistaken for dead matter. Body, however, is living, organized substance in as far as it has been incorporated already into recurrent processes. Hence, the scientist compels us today to use a new terminology, in part. For the realm of bodies, he himself is giving up matter or body in favour of energy. This is very near to what we called toil of the student.

For the realm of the spirit, he uses research, discovery. Properly understood, teaching selects the values of the future. One thing is certain: the word "mind" cannot be used for "the mind in action", for, a jump into the unknown future is implied whenever we try to speak.

For the realm of the power of the soul, we might consider the use of the word human being. "Being" of course, has a great tradition behind it in philosophy (Parmenides) and in theology (ens realissimum). In insisting that man is a human being, we literally vindicate his divine quality of creating a present. And the very form "being" seems to stress the present by being the participle of the present tense. "Human Being" then, might be a term to be used instead of soul, as long as it is properly understood to be the delicate balance between the power of becoming and the power of having been incarnated.