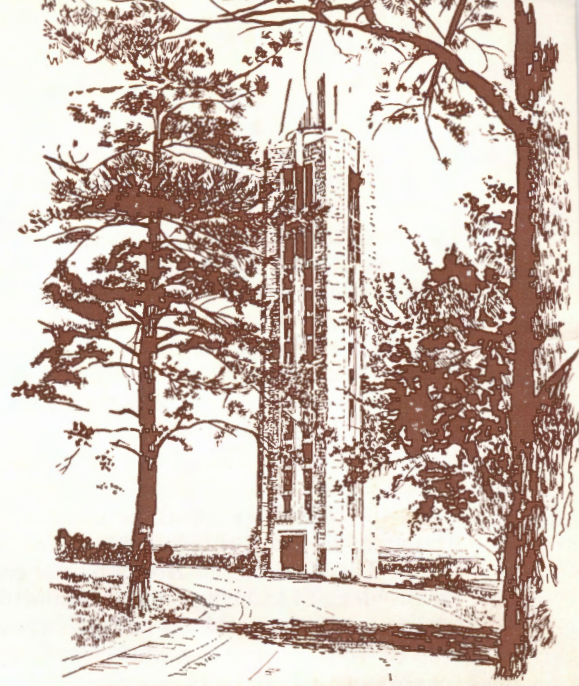


RELIGION

Bulletin of Kansas School of Religion at The University of Kansas

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From The Editor's Desk

The article by Dr. Stanley W. Thomas, Chairman of the Faculty of the Idaho School of Religion at the University of Idaho, should prove useful to readers of RELIGION. We are often asked for information on what is happening in the area of teaching religion in state universities. This article has such information. Quite recently news has come through on some small but significant gains at the University of Illinois. Within the last year the University of Indiana has assumed much larger responsibility for the teaching of religion in what was already a highly important program. In recent years the University of California, which had been on the defensive under severe criticism by Bishop James Pike and others for neglecting its responsibility in the field of religion, has modified its stand, and a significant program in this area is being launched on its campus at Santa Barbara led by Robert Michaelson, long associated with the Iowa School of Religion. Basic to advances of this sort is clarity of thought about the issues and the Society for Religion in Higher Education is contributing much to such clarity. That society supported Robert Michaelson in a project that has been written up by him in a recent volume entitled *The Study of Religion in American Universities*, ten case studies with special reference to state universities. It can be bought for one dollar from the Society for Religion in Higher Education, 400 Prospect Street, New Haven, Conn. 06511.

At a meeting on September 25, 1965 in connection with the K.S.R. Development Campaign, K.U. Chancellor Wescoe described the relation between K.U. and K.S.R. as symbiotic. We are in this issue printing the main part of his address.

Studying and Teaching Religion at State Universities: Developments 1958-1965*

Stanley W. Thomas

The question of the relation between church and state as it pertains to higher education is up for review in the United States. Pressure for reopening this question is not coming so much from fringe positions as from a broad base of concerned people. In a society that seems to be more rather than less self-conscious of its pluralism, public interest is forcing us to consider new and creative ways of making a substantial religious heritage available to our students.

In response to this new awareness and through their own creative initiative many state universities have initiated programs of religious studies of various types. Some of the heterogeneity of contemporary approaches to the study of religion at state universities is well presented in a survey made by Harry H. Kimber and Milton McLean in 1960. The Kimber and McLean study needs to be updated because of rapid

developments in recent years, but it does serve to provide an overall picture of the scope and variety of course offerings. At that time, 12 of these state institutions had established Departments of Religion, 3 had established Inter-departmental programs, and 10 had cooperated in the development of Schools of Religion serving their students.

Developments in recent years with respect to the teaching of religion at state universities may best be summarized with reference to two national conferences: the National Consultative Conference on Religion and the State University held at the University of Michigan in November of 1958 and the Invitational Conference on the Study of Religion in the State University held in October of 1964 at Indiana University Medical Center.

The Michigan Conference

The first conference was sponsored by the University of

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Michigan with the cooperation of The National Conference of Christians and Jews on the occasion of the Centennial of Student Religious Activity at the University of Michigan. Those attending this Convocation heard Dr. J. Edward Dirks, Editor of *The Christian Scholar* and Professor of Religion in Higher Education at Yale University insist that religion ought to be studied in the university with the same departmental base as other areas of study and should include not only undergraduate courses but graduate and research programs. Dr. Paul G. Kauper, Professor of Law, The University of Michigan, argued that religion may be studied and taught within a state university without jeopardizing the principle of "separation of church and state." Kauper differentiated between the compulsory aspect of state education below the college level and the voluntary aspect of state education at the level of higher education. In a symposium entitled "The Teaching of Religion" the conference considered the problems of teaching religion from within a given religious tradition and the problems of teaching religion from outside a given religious tradition. The conference adjourned with the awareness that the study of religion in the state university is growing and important issues need to be studied and understood.

The Indiana Conference

The second conference, which was held in Indiana in the fall of 1964, was more limited in its scope and membership. The first conference had covered a wide range of relationships between education and religion that went beyond the question of study and teaching religion at the state university. The Michigan conference also brought together persons with a wider spectrum of interest and included in addition to teachers - campus ministers, religious coordinators, and personnel administrators. The conference in Indiana was sponsored by The Society for Religion in Higher Education. Focusing upon the teacher of religion in state universities, this conference brought together men and women already involved in the study of religion within state universities across the country. A listing of the positions held by some of those in attendance at the Indiana conference suggests the variety of approaches and the degree of emphasis being made in the study of religion in state universities. Those in attendance included: the Professor of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara; Chairman, Dept. of Philosophy and Religion, University of Georgia; Professor of Humanities and Religious Studies, Pennsylvania State University; Chairman, Department of Religion, Michigan State University; Professor of Religion, University of Florida; Director, School of Religion, State University of Iowa; and two representatives of area study programs involving the study of religion: Professor of South Asian Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, and Director of the Indian Language and Area Center, University of Wisconsin. There are also two titles of faculty members at large non-state institutions that are of interest in themselves: Professor of Religion and Director of the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University and Professor of Sociology, Department of Religion, Columbia University.

This second national conference meeting some six years after the Michigan conference continued to note the growing interest in the substantial study of religion in the state universities across the country. Reasons for this development, in addition to the usual references to public sentiment and the needs of students, pointed to the growing need of those universities involved in Area Study Programs and Exchange Programs with universities in non-western cultures to have competent scholars in religion on their faculties.

The Indiana Conference also displayed a shift in "problem areas." Whereas at the Michigan Conference in 1958 considerable time was given to the legal aspects of teaching religion in a state university, those participating in the Indiana Conference no longer saw the legal question as the primary one but rather gave considerable attention to the educational question, that is, how can religion be taught with competence?

Fundamental Agreements

By 1964 it became more evident that the study of religion within the curriculum of the state university was increasingly seen as a more substantial task than acknowledged in the recent past. Departments of Religious Studies at State Universities now include graduate and research programs on a limited but expanding scale. The old argument as to whether religion ought to have its own departmental base or instead of this, be studied by those disciplines throughout the university that have reason to study the phenomenon of religion was settled by insisting that the large university should incorporate both approaches. Delegates were warned that the reasons for teaching religion are no more compelling than the reasons for teaching art, philosophy or history. Dr. Luther Harshbarger suggested, however, that the following assumptions can form a practical starting point for considering the establishment of the study of religion in a state university: 1) That the study of religion is an important field of study, 2) That there is competent faculty both in religion and in the fields it will be in tension with, 3) That there will be complete freedom for a pluralistic approach to the study of religion, 4) That a strong emphasis upon research is necessary if for no other reason than to maintain competent staff, and 5) That no such department be established as a political or public relations move. In short, a department of religion must be established for the same reason as other departments of the university, that is, in the interest of education.

Whither the study of religion at the state university? The indications at this time are that it is here to stay. More and more state universities are engaging in religious studies and many of the larger schools who do not have such programs are in the process of establishing them. Many responsible educators are now agreeing that to deny the fact of religion by ignoring it is to engage in a kind of irresponsibility that does not do justice to the proud heritage of the academic community.

It is not the task of the church to be a pressure group in this matter. The decision to establish a Department of Religion at a state university is rightfully in the hands of the university itself. The church may assist, however, by way of preparing its own people for understanding such developments and by furthering information that can contribute to a more knowledgeable public with respect to the relationship between religion and higher education. To this end a brief bibliography is attached listing some of the more recent contributions to this discussion.

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- Casad, Robert C. "On Teaching Religion at the State University," *Kansas Law Review*, XII (March, 1964), 405-416.
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Symbiosis

Chancellor W. Clarke Wescoe
The University of Kansas

This is one of those wonderful circumstances that we call in biology and in medicine a symbiotic relationship—we live side by side. Each one of us gains something from the other. We live so closely that to the unschooled eye there is no difference that is discerned between one and the other. There is the university and then there is beside it, actually considered by most people to be part of it, the school devoted to teaching at the scholarly level—at the non-denominational level, if you would have it that way—of religion, something of great meaning to all of us, to every student, to every citizen. It is a school that has touched the lives of thousands of alumni of the university and will continue to touch the lives of thousands of students in the future, those who now will be coming to us. This year there were 13,500, more or less, on the campus. All of them are acquainted with the work and the program of the School of Religion and many of them by way of enrollment show their enthusiasm for it. As the years go on, that enrollment will become larger and the work there in the classes taught by the members of the faculty of the School of Religion will carry credit in the records of The University of Kansas just as if the courses had been taken within the classrooms of the university itself and given by people who were full-time members of the university faculty.

It seemed to me when I came to this campus, and as you know I came after nine years of experience on another campus of the university, it was rather a tragedy that here on the campus where religion was taught—where there was, so to speak, the central core of those things that relate to faith and religion, those things that touch upon the lives of all of us—that this particular program was housed in one of the most dilapidated of the facilities in Lawrence, that here where we talked about faith and taught about it as well there was a facility that was overcrowded, inadequate and one that should be replaced. I'd been talked to several years earlier by one of our distinguished alumni about this partic-

ular point, and it didn't take me long to agree that as the university grew so would the School of Religion have to grow, side by side with the university. And as the facilities of the university became better so it would be necessary for the facilities of the School of Religion to be better also. But it was apparent to me that this was something that was the responsibility of those who believe in the teaching of religion on a campus such as this,—that it was the responsibility of those who felt as I do and as the members of the faculty do, because this institution is assisted—and I use the term advisedly, not supported, but assisted by the state of Kansas. The responsibility lay with those who believe in it to fulfill its responsibilities, to provide the wherewithal for it to grow with the university.

There are on this campus youngsters from every denomination. There are on this campus youngsters whose faith is deep and who want the teaching of religion as it can be given in that particular institution. They want it in this particular day of ours, that is seeing the spread of the ecumenical movement, to be done in the ecumenical way. The state cannot do it and the university cannot do it either. It requires the substance, the time and the energy of those who believe that this is the thing that should be done. It calls for the active support of all denominations because all are represented here in the university.

This is not a godless place—not meant to be that way and certainly never to become one—but a place where religion will occupy its proper place within the curriculum, a place where always it will be important for all of us. The School of Religion provides for the university a religious atmosphere. It really emphasizes the fact that faith is the central portion of our lives. It has served thousands. It will, as I have said before, serve thousands into the future. It is not possible for it to grow without the active support of all denominations. No one should be asked to carry the load; all of us together must do it. In my own small and insignificant way, I started to, two years ago, but now we need the bigger effort. We need now the culmination of the effort. We need it done quickly. We must be ready for those who will come.

It is the responsibility of all of us to see that the university and the School of Religion will grow together, not in a divisive way but together cooperatively—cooperatively from the standpoint of the school and the university on the one hand and cooperatively from the standpoint of the denominations on the other. But as the university vigorously moves forward toward its second century, as its facilities grow and as its faculty expands, so must the facilities and the faculty of the School of Religion. I don't want the university to move forward unless the School of Religion can move forward with it . . . I hope to see the day when that building is there, when the endowment has been provided for the school to grow so that the two of us, side by side, symbiotically, one supporting the other can move forward to an even greater century than the one the university is about to close.

An Ecumenical Institute

According to one of the ancient Hebrews' wisest, "for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, etc." (Eccles. 3:1 ff). This is the time to hold an ecumenical institute. The Vatican Council has ended, the Blake proposals for the union of a number of major Protestant groups are being explored thoroughly,

the discussion of other union projects is proceeding encouragingly, and ecumenicity looms large in the thinking of churchmen generally.

For many weeks plans for an ecumenical institute at The University of Kansas have been taking form and we are prepared to make some preliminary announcements. The time will be May 1, 2, and 3. Our conference will be related to the K.U. Centennial observance,

at which various facets of American culture will be treated by distinguished visiting scholars. The K.U. committee planning centennial affairs has been concerned that the cause of religion be presented in its program and it looks now as though K.U. and K.S.R. can work together on a project that will serve the interests of both institutions. The purpose of the institute is to clarify thought about the ecumenical movement, con-

sider most recent developments such as those associated with the Vatican Council, and to look for guide lines with the help of competent leaders as the church faces the coming years. We will have the competent leaders in Father Dan O'Hanlan of Alma College in Los Gatos, California and Dr. Joseph Sittler of the University of Chicago, representing Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. It would be hard to find people better equipped for our purposes than these. They are popular public speakers, have participated long in "the dialogue," are extremely sensitive to the fine points of theological discourse, and attended sessions of the Vatican Council in Rome. Many regard Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum of the American Jewish Committee, an observer at the Vatican Council, as the best spokesman for Judaism in ecumenical discussions. As this goes to press we are waiting for a letter from him confirming a tentative oral agreement he made to participate.

We expect that clergymen from Kansas and other Midwest states will attend the institute in large numbers. Many lay leaders in the church should come, but probably not many will outside of the Kansas City-Lawrence-Topeka area. The institute should also appeal to the students and faculty of K.U., for two reasons: first, because the ecumenical movement is one of the most important factors in our contemporary social situation and, second, because the institute will be related to the impressive K.U. Centennial program.

The Ecumenical Dialogue at St. Mary's College

St. Mary's College, the Jesuit theological seminary at St. Mary's, Kansas, in the fall and early winter conducted a seminar in Protestant theology that was a noteworthy instance of ecumenical dialogue for the Jesuit participants and the visiting Protestant lecturers. On each of six evenings spaced two weeks apart the seminar was host to two Protestants, one of whom delivered a paper (45 minutes to an hour) on the history and teaching of his denomination and the other, from a different tradition, followed with comments on the paper. Then came a general discussion of the subject under the direction of St. Mary's Dean Van Ackeren, the teacher-moderator of the seminar.

It was the privilege of the Dean of the Kansas School of Religion to be the visiting lecturer on the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Kansas School of Religion's Professor Paul Has-

vold, a Lutheran, also participated in the St. Mary's seminar.

St. Mary's College is to be congratulated for creating a situation in which high-level Protestant-Catholic dialogue may be conducted. Other institutions of higher education, both Protestant and Catholic, might well follow its example.

The Kansas School of Religion Development Campaign

The campaign to raise money to complete a fund for a new building and to provide support for an expanded program for the school in the coming ten years is on in earnest.

The campaign is handicapped by certain liabilities:

1. Kansas School of Religion has the weakness of an ecumenical project. It is the expression of a common interest of many religious bodies, but everyone's business often turns out to be no one's business. The good work of the churches is normally structured in independent denominational organizations. An ecumenical structure, fathered by many, is in danger of being treated as an orphan.
2. Kansas School of Religion's bid for private financial support must be projected circumspectly with reference to the interests of K.U., which itself is highly dependent upon private support, and is planning a large fund campaign of its own.
3. Kansas School of Religion's appeal for funds is directed to people who are barraged by a multitude of appeals. The present Kansas School of Religion effort is in danger of being treated like the yearly United Fund or the Father Flanigan Boys Home drives instead of the big, once-in-a-lifetime project it is. Actually the Kansas School of Religion Development Campaign is

the only capital funds project in the School's 44 years of history. On the other hand this campaign has favorable supports:

1. Ours is an extremely worthy cause. There is nothing more important in American higher education than adequate provision for the study of the Bible and religion basic to our culture. Furthermore, our plans for expansion include some quite unique and exciting elements that constitute a strong appeal to people of ecumenical sympathies concerned about the best kind of higher education for youth.
2. K.U. provides an unusually favorable climate for the teaching of religion. The opportunity for high-minded men and women to do something significant through Kansas School of Religion must be grasped.
3. With each year in these times the tide of the ecumenical movement flows stronger. The interdenominational and interfaith Kansas School of Religion was born for such a time as this. It provides Jews, Catholics and Protestants an opportunity to translate ecumenical idealism into reality.

We must impress our friends with the urgency of the campaign. For various reasons it must end by the summer 1966.

Our circumstances call for deep, sacrificial involvement on the part of all concerned. As Chancellor Wescoe said on September 25, support must come not from tax funds but from the pockets of those who believe this important work should continue and flourish.

We have calls for extra copies of each issue of RELIGION. The printer will hold the type for this issue until March 1. If you wish to have extra copies for the bare cost of printing plus mailing charges, PLEASE NOTIFY US BY MARCH 1.

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