STUDIES

IN
THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

JESUIT SCHOOLS AND THE HUMANITIES YESTERDAY AND TODAY

JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J.

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Jesuit Schools of Humanities Yesterday and Today

JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J.

STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

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the first word . . .

What am I doing here? More at issue, what is anyone doing here? In other words, what is the university doing here? Or any school? What's the point of it all? Those of us engaged in the ministry of education probably ask ourselves these questions from time to time, and with good reason. And, if we set up shop in one of the humanities, we have an added motivation. Is it a paranoid fantasy on my part, or do we seem to be under siege these days? What we teach is really pretty useless in the real world, and it seems more people are gaining the courage to say it out loud.

Not that these are a new questions. Far from it. As teenagers in the middle of the last century we had ongoing conversations with our teachers about the value of having to take four years of Latin in a Jesuit high school. It was hard, time consuming, of no practical value, and to use the much overworked teenage adjective, "boring." Devoting an entire semester to one of Cicero's orations, parsing each subjunctive and ablative absolute into oblivion added a great deal of credibility to our reasoning. Irony of ironies, a mere decade later I was a scholastic teaching Latin. One of my classes—how to put this diplomatically—was not a likely recruiting ground for Mensa. Late one afternoon, during my third class on the same passage from Cicero in a stifling, overheated classroom, as one of my charges labored through his translation, I dozed off. I was standing, but leaning against a window sill. The giggles abruptly awakened me after a few seconds. Knowing I had been caught, yet striving to save face, I said: "Well you can't blame me. Cicero has to be the most boring man who ever lived." Without coming up for a gerundive, one of my prize students replied in a stage whisper, "Second most boring." Any student who can up with a remark like that gets an *A* in my class any day!

And so we subjected our students to the same ordeal year after year, decade after decade for centuries. The brave scholastics who taught us defended the system, of course, as did we in our turn. It was what we had experienced in high school, as had generations of scholastics before us. The arguments that we chose might have been the best ones to reach the mind of a fifteen-year-old, but they don't really stand up to adult scrutiny. We would point out that

many technical terms in their future professions have Latin roots. They would be a step ahead of their peers and competitors from non-Jesuit high schools. Fair enough, but if I'm going in for a coronary bypass, it offers little assurance that my surgeon can translate *superior vena cava*. If that's all he knew about the term, the next translation might be *rigor mortis*. And if I'm on death row, knowing my attorney knows the Latin meaning of *habeas corpus* does not really provide much incentive for planning a vacation in the Bahamas next year. Building an English vocabulary made sense, especially while our students were prepping for SATs, but I wonder if taking Latin for four years is actually a more efficient way to learn the mother tongue than buying one of those Word Power paperbacks or actually reading English literature. Those of us who entered seminaries surely profited from the experience, but along came Vatican II, and that was that. Very few years after regency an older classmate, who had skipped through the earlier sections of our training, told a stunned theology professor that he never had a single class in Latin. The professor was speechless, possibly for the first time in his life. The course notes were absolutely useless for him. I remember the moment as one of those great historical turning points witnessed in my life time, right up there with "The Eagle has landed," or "Red Sox have won the World Series."

The question of "useless" education extends far beyond Latin, of course, and far beyond our world of Jesuit schools. President Obama got himself into trouble last year by making a remark that students who major in art history should not be surprised to find a closed job market. Quite predictably, several sectors of the academic community responded vigorously. The president retreated as best he could, but as he continued his commendable effort to attack unemployment through expanded educational opportunities, especially through community colleges, the position took on a different shape, but remained essentially unchanged. To monitor the effectiveness of government money, the Department of Education would provide ratings of different institutions based on "outcomes" assessment: Did their graduates get jobs and what income level did they achieve? How soon? Official educational policy doesn't seem to leave much room for the poet who starves for several years and then returns to his alma mater to deliver a commencement address as a Nobel Prize laureate. Or what about the missionary sister who spends her life as a midwife for the impoverished in a remote mountain village? Are they negative factors in the process of outcomes assessment? And are they drags on the economy?

The government perspective merely reflects the expectations of more than a few of our students and their families. Here at Boston College, accord-

ing to a recent news release, the most popular major among undergraduates is economics, followed by finance. Understanding and managing wealth place high among priorities. Biology and nursing were also among the leaders as well, no doubt because health care is currently viewed as a growth industry. (Organic chemistry traditionally thins the ranks of pre-meds, but I wonder if it comes in time to allow for a switch in majors.) It doesn't seem much of a leap to conclude that a good number of our students and their families regard education primarily or even exclusively as an investment or, more bluntly "preparation for a job." In student advisement interviews, it comes out with distressing regularity that "core courses" (literature, language, philosophy, history, and theology) are regarded as distractions to be gotten out of the way with the least effort possible. A confidential survey might reveal that a significant number of faculty share this sentiment.

In addition, after the shock of the economic meltdown of 2008, we've come to realize that some traditional American industries are gone forever and the American worker now competes with workers around the world. The result of course is a growing income disparity, since workers in the developing world can do the same job and provide the same services at a much lower cost. The consensus seems clear: to compete in the new global economy, we have to emphasize STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, math) if we are to keep up. That's where the money is going, and that's where student interest lies. One recent survey put Stanford ahead of perennial leader Harvard in student desirability because of its engineering programs and proximity to Silicon Valley. As one who hangs his tattered biretta in a fine-arts department, I can't help but feel besieged, underappreciated, and marginalized by these developments. With my rapidly fading recollection of classical languages and my refusal to buy a smartphone, I'm clearly a cultural misfit, and the culture, now in obvious decline, is at fault. I'm a misunderstood guardian of a fading civilization. *O tempora! O mores!* Boo-hoo.

But this perception is wrong, or at best only partially correct. As I've mulled over these questions through the years, I've come to appreciate the fact that I occupy a very strange vantage point. We Jesuits have had the benefit of a highly privileged and atypical education. As the times changed, some of my contemporaries have sourly characterized their training as perfect preparation for a renaissance prince. I'm not one of them. I'm grateful beyond expression for my years of Latin and Greek, of philosophy and theology, and the freedom to pursue studies in English literature and film history. But the fact is I never had to worry about tuition bills, never had to bus tables in the school cafeteria to meet expenses, and did not graduate with a staggering debt. There was nev-

er a question of having to "get a job" after graduation; the provincial simply assigned me. I may or may not have been happy with his decision (or, for recent graduates these days, with the faculty position they are able to secure after a rigorous interview process), but there was never a question of needing to make money for a place to live or to support a family. With this skewed experience, it takes a bit of effort to appreciate the value of preparing students for a "job." It's easy to become elitist, snobbish, and a bit condescending. Let's face it. Preparing students for a job is an important part of what we do, but not the only part.

And it's an important facet of the Jesuit ministry. This exercise of the imagination has proved helpful. Suppose I left the comfortable surroundings of a quality Jesuit university or high school, with their highly gifted and privileged students. Suppose further that, motivated by generosity or guilt, I went to an inner-city high school, or to a community college to teach English to recent immigrants, or to a fledgling school somewhere in the developing world. Clearly, my key motivating factor would be to help these students acquire job skills that would lift them from poverty, and success could be readily perceived by any improvement in the lives of the individuals or the community as a whole. In such circumstances, simply helping people to learn to make and manage money is a ministry rooted deeply in the very Jesuit dedication to social justice. As such students become better able to provide for their families and raise living standards in their communities, they are truly becoming "men and women for others." Isn't that what congregation documents say we're all about?

In a context of affluence, such as we experience in our American environment, the schools' mission of teaching students to get a job and achieve financial security is a very dangerous business that calls for a careful balancing act. In this current issue, John O'Malley brings his formidable scholarship to the issues that continually confront Jesuits in academic work. It's reassuring to realize that we've been wrestling with the notion of practical education for centuries. The conversation goes back beyond our present college students' complaints about wasting time with the core, or high-school students of a bygone age complaining about the burden of Latin. It goes back beyond those first Jesuit colleges that sprung up while Ignatius and his frat brothers from the University of Paris were still trying to figure out whether the brethren should get into the education business at all. In Sicily, no less! It was an issue in the Middle Ages and even in classical times. For centuries, it seems, a lot of people have been asking, "what am I doing here?" and the answers were as varied then as now. The age of Internet may have introduced new complexi-

ties into the conversation, but the issue remains the same: education to have a good life, or education to understand what a good life is; information or wisdom; skills or reflection.

The duration of the question leads to the obvious conclusion that it has no simple solution, and we should not be disappointed or frustrated if we can't agree on one. Any educational institution is a community business. It has many scholars from different disciplines who espouse different value systems. Many, probably most, students search for ideas and skills to expand their horizons. That's the delight in teaching. Some few may be content to inherit the family business, values, and membership in the country club, thus living the rest of their lives in a gated community of the mind. For centuries teachers have searched for the magic formula, like a *ratio studiorum* or the perfect curriculum, only to discover that one size doesn't fit everyone, and in fact probably doesn't fit anyone. And probably never did.

One of John's observations struck close to home as a worthy examination of conscience for all teachers at every level. No doubt with the explosion of information, scholarship has become more specialized, even in the humanities. It follows, then, that today more than ever teachers and professors must bring more specialized professional training to their classrooms. All to the good. Yet without even being aware of it, we can reproduce the compartmentalized approach to learning and neglect the more basic, generalized humanistic approach to learning, as though we were preparing students to publish articles in *PMLA* rather than enjoy a good story or laugh with Falstaff and weep with Lear, exciting but admittedly useless endeavors in the world of jobs and paychecks. In other words, have English classes become just as preprofessional as accounting and, if they have, have we compromised the humane element of education, which traditionally helps young people to become more human regardless of their career trajectory? John doesn't really provide an answer, simply because one simple formulation will not work. It's something all educators, from Nativity schools to the university have to discover in practice, and be forewarned it's harder work that we might have imagined.

The majority of our readers, especially in the United States, have appreciated John O'Malley's work for many years. The historical context he provides is a help, of course, but his personal experience as a scholar and teacher adds a particular credibility to his essay. It's good to know we have someone of John's stature helping us figure out "what we are doing here."

Since the question has been around for several hundred years, I'll stop trying to answer it just now. It's time to head off to class to take a group of undergraduates through *Citizen Kane* (Welles, 1941) yet one more time to try to have them consider the destructive effects of narcissism and *hubris*, the value of loyalty and altruism, the limits of wealth and power, and the unfathomable mystery of the human person. The process is absolutely useless in landing their dream job at the Bank of America, and they know it. But someday, perhaps, when they sit on the board of directors, having gotten inside Kane's soul at one point in their lives, this process may lead them to think a bit more carefully about agreeing to a business strategy that may affect the lives of millions. Aha moment! Maybe that's what I'm doing here.

Richard A. Blake, S.J.
Editor

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John W. O'Malley, S. J., noted historian and author, is currently University Professor in the Theology Department of Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. In 1979 he published Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome, *a study of the impact of Humanism on Italian Culture. He then shifted his focus to the Society of Jesus, which resulted in his best-known book,* The First Jesuits *(1993), now available in thirteen languages. He combines these interests in this present essay. The American Catholic Historical Association recently honored him with the John Gilmary Shea Prize for* Trent: What Happened at the Council, *judged the best book on Catholic history published in the past year.*

Jesuit Schools and the Humanities Yesterday and Today

From the founding of the universities in the Middle Ages all the way to the present, educators have struggled to balance their twin goals of preparing students for successful professional lives and pursuing knowledge for its own sake. When the Jesuits began their ministry of education, they joined in that traditional dialogue and made their own contribution to further the conversation.

I. The Rise of Two Traditions

In the Western world there have been, and are, two major and distinct traditions of formal schooling. I will use shorthand to call one of them scientific or professional and the other humanistic. They are based on two different sets of values. In the thirteenth century the scientific/professional tradition found definitive embodiment in the institution we call a university. Several centuries later, in the Renaissance, the humanistic tradition found embodiment in a correlative institution, which for the moment we can call the humanistic school.

Although the two traditions are partners in many regards, they are rivals in others, to the point that some educators have thought, and today think, they cannot operate within the same institution. In the university, for example, some maintain there is no room for the aims and values of the humanistic tradition. Nonetheless, the two have in many instances operated as partners, sometimes easily, sometimes un-

easily. The Jesuit system has in the past and in the present assumed they were partners, which does not mean that even in our schools the partners have always got along well together, as the heated discussions today about core curriculum make manifest.

These discussions echo discussions and debates that have gone on for at least four centuries, beginning just about the time the Society of Jesus came into being. In our contemporary version of such discussions, "the humanities" generally end up being on the defensive. Yet both historically and theoretically those subjects have been the core of "Jesuit education." Where can we turn for light on how to handle this issue?

I believe that if we turn to the history of the two traditions and their interaction with the Jesuit charism, we can begin to find our way. At least we will know how we got to be where we are. Studies by Jesuits about "Jesuit education" generally base themselves on principles found in the *Spiritual Exercises,* on other writings by Ignatius and his contemporaries, and on later in-house documents, such as, the *Ratio Studiorum* and pronouncements of our fathers general. Such studies are not merely fundamental but indispensable. However, they need to be placed in the larger context of the two larger traditions. That is what I will try to do here. I ask you to bear with me as I do so before arriving at Jesuit schools themselves. It should be no surprise that from the beginning Jesuit schools, despite their many innovations, almost perforce modeled themselves on the two institutions already in existence—the university and its rival/partner, the humanistic school.

The remote origins of both institutions are to be found, not surprisingly, in Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E., that remarkable city in that remarkable epoch with that remarkable outburst of genius in almost every conceivable expression of the human spirit.[1] Let Aristotle stand as the emblematic figure for one of the traditions, and Isocrates for the other. Aristotle codified knowledge of the physical world, of the operations of human intelligence, as well as of other

[1] The best treatment remains H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity,* trans. George Lamb (New York: The New American Library, 1964). See also John W. O'Malley, *Four Cultures of the West* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), especially pp. 78–125; and Bruce A. Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (New York. N.Y.: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1986), especially pp. 17–42.

phenomena. His efforts constituted an organized and coherent system of knowledge, fully justifiable on rational grounds. The system's goal was to *understand* the objects in question.

Isocrates, an older contemporary of Aristotle and a younger contemporary of Plato, had different goals in mind. He worked at constructing a system for training young men for active life in Athenian democracy, where ability to speak in public and persuade one's fellows of the right course of action was essential for ensuring the common good. For such a career, not knowledge and understanding of the physical world and other subjects analyzed by Aristotle, but the ability to move effectively in the *polis* was the goal. In order so to move, cultivation of the art of the word was crucial. Therefore, the program of education he proposed and promoted was based on works of literature, which embodied and exemplified effective use of language. His was therefore a tradition quite different from those promoted by both Plato and Aristotle. Despite his crucial importance for the history of education, intellectual historians have consistently overlooked him in favor of the two great philosophers.

Even more startling and fundamental than the university's precocious sophistication is how, at its inception in the thirteenth century, the university already embodied and promoted a set of values that still undergirds universities today.

From Athens the traditions migrated into the wider Mediterranean world, where the Roman Empire eventually functioned as a nurturing matrix for both, but especially for Isocrates's tradition, which dominated the schools in the ancient world. The Fathers of the Church received their training in schools in Isocrates's tradition, even though later they may have enhanced it with study of Aristotle or, more likely, Plato. That was the pattern followed, for instance, by Augustine.

The traditions migrated into the medieval world, sometimes in radically transmogrified but still identifiable profiles. Until the thirteenth century the tradition of Isocrates continued to predominate. Although Plato's influence was pervasive, largely due to Augustine, his works were unavailable except for a partial Latin translation of the *Timæus.* Aristotle fared slightly better. His works on logic, the *Orga-*

non, were known through Boethius's translations. But a large, though certainly incomplete, corpus of Latin literary texts, such as, Virgil and Ovid, was relatively widely available and fed the literate culture of the Middle Ages. As late as the twelfth century, St. Bernard of Clairvaux emerged as one of that tradition's luminaries, an elegant and persuasive writer who by his eloquence made hearts burn with love of God and the desire for virtue.

The University

But in the thirteenth century everything changed—and changed radically. The other tradition, the scientific/professional tradition seemingly all at once emerged from the shadows and achieved tough and enduring institutional form in the university, perhaps the greatest single achievement of the Middle Ages.[2] What I find especially startling about that institution in its medieval origins is how rapidly—within one or two generations—it attained mature form and established the basic structures and procedures that have, in their fundamental functions, purpose, and organizational strategies, changed so little over the eight hundred years that have intervened down to today. I mean things such as set curricula, set textbooks, examinations, differentiated faculties ("departments" or "schools"), deans, presidents ("rectors"), faculty privileges and duties, special faculty gowns, faculty meetings, and, most especially, the creation of formal degrees, such as, Master of Arts, Doctor of Law, and Doctor of Medicine—that is, public certification of professional competence.

Nothing like this, on this scale and with this measure of sophistication and institutional grounding, had ever been known before. We cannot discount the influence that correlative institutions from the Islamic world might have had on this phenomenon, yet the Western institution was a distinct and original creation. It was remarkably sophisticated from its earliest years.

Even more startling and fundamental than the university's precocious sophistication is how, at its inception in the thirteenth century, the university already embodied and promoted a set of values that still undergirds universities today—such as, the value and supreme importance of dispassionate analysis and critical thinking, of restless ques-

[2]See Hilda de Ridder-Symoens, ed., *Universities in the Middle Ages,* vol. 1 of *A History of Universities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

tioning of received wisdom, and of the necessity of exploring every aspect of the physical world.

What are the factors that helped create this new institution? As always with questions about such a large historical phenomenon, it is difficult to provide a fully satisfactory answer, but this does not mean no answer whatsoever can be given. Cities, for instance, were experiencing a rebirth and growth after their decline as the Roman Empire declined. This coincided with easier and safer travel, with an increase in commerce, and with a consequent increase in the need for careful record keeping and other skills needed to make a living. Crucially important, the full corpus of Aristotle's writings began to appear in accessible Latin translations.

Crucial though Aristotle was, his were certainly not the only Greek (and Arabic) texts that transformed the high culture of the Middle Ages. A rather obscure figure, Constantinus Africanus, translated into Latin a number of Greek and Arabic medical writings, which became standard textbooks. In Italy compilations of Roman law were long known, but only at the beginning of the twelfth century did Irnerius begin at Bologna to lecture on Roman civil law, the *Corpus iuris civilis*, and produce a detailed and well-regarded commentary on it. Such texts jolted the minds of twelfth- and thirteenth-century scholars like an electric charge.

There were most probably students who went to the university motivated by the pure desire to know, but with rare exceptions even those students' desire was propelled by a desire to make a career in a newly challenging world. They were willing to travel long distances, sometimes across Europe, to study under the best teachers in the best institutions. In Bologna in the late-twelfth century, for instance, wealthy young men from different parts of Europe hired experts to teach them law, thus giving rise to the university in that city.

By the early years of the thirteenth century, universities had developed four "faculties"—Law, Medicine, Theology, and Arts. Of these the first three were clearly professional. Not all universities had all three of them and, at even those that did, one or the other tended to be more fully developed. For instance, at the University of Paris, which along with Bologna, claims to be the first university, the Faculty of Theology had the most prestige, whereas at Bologna it was the Faculty of Law.

As was true into the early-twentieth century, a person could practice law or medicine without a university degree, but a degree commanded greater prestige and higher fees. Students keen on such success came to the universities, and they in turn made the universities successful. Success begets success, and universities began to multiply. They tended in a general way to model themselves on either Paris or Bologna. In the former case, theology remained an important faculty, whereas in the latter it was smaller, sometimes to the point of being almost negligible. In the latter, law and eventually natural philosophy attracted the most and the best students.

Every university had a Faculty of Arts. It was the entrance faculty and usually took students at about ten to thirteen years of age. Although a degree in this faculty was not absolutely a prerequisite for entering the more obviously professional faculties, candidates for those faculties had to have a grounding in the subjects taught in the Arts Faculty. A degree in Arts, esteemed in its own right, thus also served as a preparation for law, medicine, and theology.

That faculty was known as Arts because the original core of its curriculum was the seven so-called Liberal Arts, codified as such in late antiquity, namely, the trivium of grammar, rhetoric, and logic, and the quadrivium of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. As the university developed, logic came to be the overriding discipline in the trivium, which conditioned the study of rhetoric and grammar. Logic was therefore the grounding for discourse in the Arts faculty but, by osmosis, also for discourse in the three professional faculties. The quadrivium, you must note, was strongly mathematical in nature and even music was taught in an unmitigatedly theoretical way, almost as a branch of mathematics, without performance. Thus, clear, orderly, logical, left-brain (mathematical, numbers-crunching) thinking was the order of the day for a university.

For all its sophistication, however, the medieval university produced no explicit philosophy of education to explain and justify to itself and others what it was about, but of course it operated out of one.

Admirable though this program may have been in itself, it was hardly "liberal" in the sense we generally mean today when we speak

of "the liberal arts" or a "liberal education." You will note, moreover, that neither history nor literature had a place in the curriculum. But we have inherited the term and use it to designate our undergraduate division.

For the Arts Faculty nothing was more determinative of its future than that by the thirteenth century Aristotle's full corpus had become available and then was incorporated into the curriculum of the Arts Faculty. It soon overwhelmed the trivium and quadrivium, even though it did not utterly displace them.

These philosophical works of Aristotle came to be subdivided into works on the so-called "three philosophies"—metaphysics, ethics, and natural philosophy. Of these the most attractive to many students was natural philosophy, that is, the works in which Aristotle codified and analyzed phenomena of the natural world—his treatises on physics, on animals, on the heavens, and so forth.

In Italy, unlike in northern Europe, the professors of natural philosophy soon emerged as the most prestigious and best paid in universities such as Padua. Natural philosophy correlated with the already strongly mathematical proclivities of the Arts Faculty and turned out to be in the course of time the launching pad for the development of modern science. It would be a terrible anachronism to call the Arts Faculty a school of the sciences, but there is more than a grain of truth in it, at least for some universities

As philosophy in its three manifestations in metaphysics, ethics, and natural philosophy came more and more to dominate the curriculum of the Arts Faculty, that faculty too took on more and more the character of a fully professional faculty, comparable to law, medicine, and theology. The Arts Faculty too wanted to produce publicly certified professionals who possessed a set of technical skills and spoke a technical jargon that set them off from the rest of humanity. It issued Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees.

For all its sophistication, however, the medieval university produced no explicit philosophy of education to explain and justify to itself and others what it was about, but of course it operated out of one. Despite what we are sometimes led to believe, that philosophy of edu-

cation was secular.[3] By secular I mean that, even though a university might hold a papal charter *qua university* it did not concern itself with anybody's eternal salvation, did not professedly concern itself with playing a constructive role in church or society, and did not concern itself with the students' personal development, religious or otherwise. It concerned itself in all four of its faculties with intellectual problem solving and the honing of professional, highly technical skills.

It was secular, moreover, in that attendance at a university, especially if one earned a degree, spelled upward socioeconomic mobility whether in church or in society at large. Universities then as now were institutions for "getting ahead." Then as now they came to enjoy enormous prestige. By the sixteenth century there were some eighty institutions that called themselves universities spread across the face of Europe. Even so, the percentage of the population that attended them, even for a few years, was almost minuscule.

Please note that I am speaking of universities *qua universities.* But universities, their professors, and their students did not live in a vacuum, but were an integral part of medieval society, which was a Catholic society. Thus, in most residence halls, for instance, religious ideals were promoted and religious practices often imposed. Moreover, there is no doubt that producing better-trained professionals contributed to the well-being of society. We can assume, further, that at least some professors tried to inculcate a sense of service in their students. My point, however, is that the universities never articulated in either word or deed that that was what they were about.

This generalization holds even for the Faculty of Theology. True, the theologians saw themselves as engaging in three tasks—lecturing *(legere),* engaging in academic debate with peers *(disputare),* and preaching *(prædicare),* yet that last goal was not officially professed by the university. It was a more or less self-assigned task. The same could be said for the theologians' understanding of themselves as agents of a *magisterium* distinct from the *magisterium* of the bishops. On the basis of that *magisterium,* the theological faculties exercised a powerful control over the orthodoxy of their members and thus contributed, it could be argued, to the good of society at large. In fact, their censures were effec-

[3] See John W. O'Malley, "Were Medieval Universities Catholic?" *America,* September 24, 2012, 27–29.

tive and much feared. But that was the result of a historical evolution, not the result of official university policy.

To summarize: The university *qua university* acquired its impetus from the pursuit of two secular goals: first, intellectual problem solving (or, from a slightly different perspective, the production of knowledge); second, career advancement through the acquisition of professional skills. Individual professors or even groups of professors might have further goals, but that is a different issue altogether. Students came to the university in order to prepare themselves "to get a good job." In so doing, some students certainly had altruistic and religious motives, but the university *qua university* provided no systemic encouragement for them in this regard. This was the situation the humanists set out to remedy!

The Humanistic Alternative

Although ever since ancient Athens the humanistic tradition had been much more pervasively operative in Western culture than what came to be the university tradition, it did not receive mature institutional form until two centuries after the founding of the universities, that is, not until the Renaissance of the late-fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. It did so largely as an alternative to the university and even as a reaction to it. Unlike the university, that institution has been known by a variety of names—the humanistic school, the Latin school, the Grammar school, the lycée, the liceo, the Young Ladies' Academy, and, in the Jesuit system and elsewhere, simply "the college." That we today refer to our entrance school as "the college" is directly related to this phenomenon. Our "college" still professes some of the aims and bears some of the characteristics of its origins in the Renaissance.

Erstwhile rival to the university, at its origin and, especially in the Jesuit system, it borrowed from the university certain structures, such as, set curricula, advancement through examinations, and so forth. It also shared with the university the trivium and quadrivium, but interpreted them quite differently. In the trivium rhetoric, the art of the word, the art of saying what one meant in an intelligible and persuasive way, took precedence over logic, though it, of course, included it. The quadrivium, which we might call the mathematical component, played a role secondary to other elements in the curriculum.

The big news, however, is this: although even historians of Renaissance humanism pay relatively little attention to it, the rhetorical tradition founded a powerful engine to propel its values by the creation of an institution correlative to the university. The stunning success and force of that institution reaches to the present. The universities had early come to be known simply as "the schools" and their teachers as "the schoolmen." But now a second school bounded onto the scene, a school based on a different set of assumptions about what a school was meant to accomplish.

Even on the surface this new school—this new engine of values—clearly diverged from its alternative. Set textbooks, yes, but of authors and subjects that found no place in the university curriculum. Let me commit another anachronism and call those authors and texts "the humanities."[4] It would be more accurate to use the original Renaissance term, the *studia humanitatis* (perhaps best translated as "humane letters," but literally "the study of our humanity"), that is, the subjects that are about our human strivings, failings, passions, and ideals—about wonder, as expressed especially in poetry, drama, oratory, and history.[5]

It was no accident that the person most responsible for reasserting this tradition in the face of the overwhelming dominance of the university was a literary figure, a poet, Francesco Petrarca—Petrarch. By the middle of the fourteenth century, he had already articulated the many grievances against the university that soon became standard in this tradition. Among them two were central. First, the universities did not teach literature and history, which, in the viewpoint of these educators, were the subjects that illuminated the great questions of human life as it is lived and that thus helped students to deal with them.

The second, related to the first, was that the university had no interest in the ethical, spiritual, religious, emotional, and physical development of the students. In fact, it often, in their opinion, deformed the students by its neglect of such formation and by the self-referential values it implicitly inculcated. Its training encouraged the students' worst

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[4]See, e.g., Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989).

[5] See Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanistic Strains* (New York, N.Y.: Harper & Brothers, 1961), 8–12.

rather than their best instincts. "Getting ahead" seemed to be the university's core value.

Most fundamentally, therefore, the values that undergirded this humanistic tradition were different. Rather than placing first importance on the development of professional and technical skills, it put in first place the human development of the student—physical, moral, religious, and cultural. Its ultimate aim was to help students develop skills and motivations that would later enable them to lead satisfying lives and be responsible and constructive agents in their towns, cities, countries—in the Church and in the world at large.

Unlike the universities, this tradition of schooling had a fully articulated philosophy of education. Isocrates himself provided the first building blocks for this philosophy, which was later developed by Roman theorists such as Cicero and Quintilian.[6] As mentioned, that philosophy dominated education in classical antiquity and, though sometimes heavily disguised, simmered with effect beneath the surface throughout the Middle Ages.

The center of the curriculum was literature, broadly conceived, known, as mentioned, as the* studia humanitatis *("humane letters" or "the study of what it means to be human."

Two centuries after the founding of the universities, therefore, that philosophy was resurrected, brought up to date, elaborated upon, and given a Christian cast in Renaissance humanistic authors and thinkers, a phenomenon that reached a peak with Erasmus in the first two decades of the sixteenth century.[7] The Jesuits of the later-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries carried it further. My point: despite adaptation to different eras and cultures, the principles of this philosophy and the basic goals of this type of schooling remained constant from ancient times through the centuries into the present—or at least almost into the present.

[6]See Marrou, *Education in Antiquity,* especially pp. 119–36; Takis Poulakos and David Depew, eds., Isocrates and Civic Education *(Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2004); and Ekaterina Haskins, Logos and Power in Isocrates and Aristotle* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2004).

[7]See Craig W. Kallendorf, ed. and trans., *Humanist Educational Treatises* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Here are some of the most fundamental of those principles. First, while the acquisition of technical and professional skills is, of course, important, the first aim of education—at least up to a certain point in the students' lives—is to further their personal development. This tradition is thus radically student centered or, to use the current Jesuit expression, imbued with *cura personalis*—care for the well-being of the person. For that reason, second, the center of the curriculum was literature, broadly conceived, known, as mentioned, as the *studia humanitatis* ("humane letters") or "the study of what it means to be human."

Humane letters treated questions pertinent to human life—questions of life and death, of virtue and vice, of greed and redemption, of the ambivalence in human decision making. It treated them in a human way not through abstract principles, as found for instance in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, but through stories, poetry, plays, and so forth, which embodied ethical issues within the emotions and the conflict of principles we experience in life as it is lived. It thereby illuminated, inspired, challenged, and made clear moral alternatives.

As Petrarch said,

> It is one thing to know, another to love, one thing to understand another to will. Aristotle teaches what virtue is—I do not deny it—but his lesson lacks the words that sting, that set afire, and that urge toward love of virtue and hatred of vice.[8]

Humane letters were a new formulation and massive filling out of the Liberal Arts, but now taught with a new ideal of what they were supposed to accomplish.

Humane letters by definition consisted not in Christian authors but in the classics of Greek and Roman antiquity—Demosthenes, Sophocles, Virgil, Livy, Cicero, and many others. These authors were studied because they were assumed to be the "best" authors whose style set the standard for all time, an assumption we certainly do not share today. But what such authors in fact did was stretch the students' minds and imaginations by introducing them to cultures not their own—in this

[8] Petrarch, "On His Own Ignorance and That of Many Others," trans. Hans Nachod, in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man,* edited by Ernst Cassirer et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 103–4.

case, a *pagan* culture—and by giving them a sense of the wider possibilities of the human spirit.

Renaissance humanists believed, in fact, that the "good pagans" provided Christians with models of probity and virtue, models worthy of admiration and imitation. If noble Romans could be so virtuous, how much more the Christian! "Saint Socrates, pray for us," was how Erasmus, the most widely read author of the era, dramatically expressed the idea through a speaker in his most sublime dialog, *Convivium religiosum (The Godly Feast)*.[9] The Jesuits accepted this premise without question, as is clear from what Cornelius à Lapide (1567–1637), professor at the Roman College, said about a passage from Epictetus, "O wonder! These words ring of the Gospel, not just moral philosophy."[10] This sense of the breadth of human experience, especially experience of the good, is a third principle of this type of schooling.

Fourth principle: from its origin in fifth-century Athens through its Roman adaptation and into its powerful revival in the Renaissance, the development of the student was geared to the public weal. The ideal graduates, in other words, were responsible participants in the community in which they lived, concerned for the common good and ready to make sacrifices for it. Those graduates were ready, in fact, to assume a leadership role as circumstances indicated. They were to be "men for others." No one in antiquity articulated this fourth principle more eloquently than Cicero, who was without doubt the Jesuits' favorite classical author.

In this tradition not logic but grammar and rhetoric were the dominant disciplines. Grammar included what we today mean by the term but also vocabulary building, at least rudimentary philology, and the cultivation of interpretative skills. Rhetoric was the culminating discipline, here understood as the art of the speech-act, the art of persuasion, the art of winning consensus—in sum, *the art of the word*. It taught how to communicate effectively to one's peers and to ordinary people and win their backing. Eloquence, a word sadly out of fashion today, is what we call proficiency in that art—the art of saying with

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[9]See, e.g., *The Collected Works of Erasmus,* vols. 23–29 of the series Literary and Educational Writings, various editors (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978–89).

[10]As quoted in François de Dainville, *La naissance de I'humanisme moderne* (Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1940), 223.

grace and clarity what one means and meaning what one says. Cultivation of it was a fifth principle.

It implied—sixth principle—that cultivating expression through the written and spoken word was an essential part of the process of thinking itself. The theorists of this philosophy of education realized, at least implicitly, that having a thought and finding the right word to express it were not two acts but one—without the right word one did not have the thought, the eureka experience of insight, but rather a musing, a rumination, a grappling. No room, therefore, for "yu know what I mean" because "yu know what I mean" makes clear you do not know what you mean. As Mark Twain allegedly said, "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between a lightning bolt and a lightning bug." But, at the very headwaters of the rhetorical tradition, Isocrates himself said, "The proper use of language is the surest index of sound understanding."[11]

As early as the late-fifteenth century, for instance, some universities, especially in Italy, admitted the* studia humanitatis *in modest measures into the curriculum of the Arts Faculty.

Finally, seventh, the humanists were concerned with the body as well as the mind and the soul. *Mens sana in corpore sano* (Sound mind in sound body), as the ancient Romans put it.[12] Thus, sports, playing fields, and, yes, even coaches. The fact that American universities have sports teams and dedicate so much of their resources to fostering them resulted in many cases from their distant origins as humanistic colleges.

The aim of this humanistic education, therefore, was to produce the well-rounded and socially aware person, a person "out there," engaged in the affairs of the community, not a private practitioner sequestered in the cloisters known as libraries, classrooms, laboratories, or even surgeries, not somebody intent on using his (or, eventually, her) professional education exclusively for climbing the corporate ladder or even for advancing his or her profession. In this education the ethi-

[11] As quoted in Marrou, *Education in Antiquity,* 134.

[12] Juvenal, *Satires,* 14.47.

cal element was crucial. Quintilian put its aim succinctly—*vir bonus, dicendi peritus* (a *good* person, skilled in speech)—or, better put, skilled in communicating worthy ideals and goals. That person was to be free of vice, a lover of wisdom, and committed to the welfare of his family, his colleagues, his hometown, his country and its people. Rhetoric was known as "the civic discipline."

Renaissance educators like Erasmus launched one of the most successful propaganda campaigns in all history and convinced Europe that this humanistic education was the absolute prerequisite for any young man (and, eventually, young woman) who wanted to lead a humanly satisfying life and play a role, modest or great, in the affairs of the day. To be educated was to be educated in the humanistic mode.

The program was, therefore, complete in itself. It was not a "prep" for another school, even though students normally completed the program when they were only about eighteen or nineteen. Of course, if students wanted to go on to become doctors, lawyers, or theologians, they could supplement their education by entering one of those professional faculties. But otherwise those students were ready for life in society. We need to remind ourselves that great figures, such as, Descartes, Molière, and Voltaire, had no formal education beyond what they received in a Jesuit college. We also need to remind ourselves that students at a Jesuit *collegio* and students in the Arts Faculty of a university were drawn from the same age group, boys around ten to thirteen years old.

In the Renaissance the humanistic program was intended for students in the upper social and economic strata of society, for those who had the leisure to enter public life in one form or another. In time, it was adapted, especially by the Jesuits, to appeal to a much wider class of students. Central to its aims was cultivation of correct and effective skills in communication, oral and written. Then as now few skills are more "practical" than that or more likely to help young men and women "get ahead." When we recall that during the Old Society the majority of Jesuit schools in Europe were in moderate-size towns or sometimes even in hamlets, we realize that the schools could not by definition be called elitist. Even parents in the lower socioeconomic strata saw value in humanistic schools.

Those schools, for all their smashing success in the late Renaissance and subsequent eras, did not put the universities out of business. Nor, despite humanist propaganda, were these two institutions hermetically sealed off from each other. They interacted in various ways and were reciprocally influential. As early as the late-fifteenth century, for instance, some universities, especially in Italy, admitted the *studia humanitatis* in modest measures into the curriculum of the Arts Faculty. By the seventeenth century, at Cambridge and Oxford those *studia* refashioned the Arts curriculum. Even so, each tradition retained through the centuries its basic difference in orientation, in core values, and especially in different views of what schools were supposed to do.

In that regard the universities of the United States today present a special case because, unlike their counterparts in Europe, many of them, especially the older ones, began not as universities but as colleges, as humanistic schools. Usually known as the College of Arts and Sciences, the college was quite different from the medieval Faculty of Arts because it grew directly out of the humanistic tradition. Although the "secular universities" of the United States only rarely, if ever, officially profess to be in business for the betterment of society, some do in fact support and foster programs that do just that, which is at least in some instances a vestige of their humanistic origins.

As time went on, onto the top of "the college" were fastened in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries not only a number of professional schools, such as, law, business, medicine, and nursing, but a Graduate School of Arts and Sciences as well—which was a new professionalization of the *studia humanitatis*.

The Graduate School's single aim was to train professional academics, whose badge of honor was proficiency in research or, perhaps more tellingly put, proficiency in publication. Just as Jesuit high schools have become "prep schools" for college, the "college" itself has to a certain extent became a kind of prep school for all intent upon pursuing a professional career in a professionalized way—in law, medicine, business, and other professions, even in "the humanities."

Every one of the Jesuit universities in the United States began as a college, and every one of them retains elements of that origin, some of which are physically palpable, such as, theaters, student-life personnel, and coaches. Some elements are less physically palpable but still

prominent, such as "school spirit," *cura personalis*, and a claim to educate "men and women for others." These elements are virtually unknown in European universities because those institutions did not grow out of a humanistic base. The University of Paris does not hire coaches for a soccer team, nor does it award scholarships for prowess on the playing fields.

In contrast to virtually every other American university that grew out of a humanistic base, Jesuit schools have continued, not simply to promote some of the basic aims of the humanistic system, but *officially to profess* such aims as to train men and women for others and to contribute to the "promotion of justice" in society at large. Harvard University can stand as a case in point. Although its original motto was "Truth for Christ and the church," it is now simply "Truth," *Veritas.*

II. The Jesuits and Their Humanistic Schools

That brings me, finally, to the Jesuits. The Society of Jesus, founded in 1540, just eight years later opened its first school in Messina in Sicily. By that time the humanist educators had been successfully at their propaganda for over a century. By that time, moreover, some of the Jesuits of the first generation had had a humanistic education before they entered the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits did not create humanistic education. They inherited it.

I suppose I should not be surprised, but I do find it striking that the first generation and especially succeeding generations of Jesuits bought the humanists' propaganda without question. The school at Messina was a humanistic school, implementing the same curriculum humanists like Erasmus had laid out and doing so with the same goals in mind. The Jesuits had to see a compelling compatibility between their Christian mission and what these schools, whose ancient inspiration was pagan, professed to do.

Not until much later did the Jesuits ever attempt to explain the compatibility, but we can easily infer some of its essential elements. The quintessence of the Spiritual Exercises is, to use an old-fashioned expression, the development of the inner-directed person, a human being who acts not from superficial conformity to ethical standards but out of a sincere, heartfelt, and discerning appropriation of them. In other

words, like the humanistic educational program, the Exercises wants to produce a certain kind of *person.*

Although the Exercises have proved themselves helpful to people in all walks of life, they are geared more directly toward persons engaged in an active life in church or society, as suggested by the meditations on "The Kingdom of Christ" and "The Two Standards." The person the Exercises wanted to help was, in the first instance, a person engaged in the affairs of the day. With its base in the Exercises, the spirituality of the Jesuit order itself has traditionally and correctly been described as an *active* spirituality.[13]

Good judgment ("prudence") was the virtue the humanists wanted especially to inculcate in students, the virtue that correlates with the process of spiritual discernment central to the Exercises. By means of spiritual discernment through attention to one's inner journey, the Exercises hoped to help the person to good decision making. Of course, the humanist ideal and that of the Exercises are far from being the same thing but, as I suggested, there is a correlation between them

One of the most striking features of the 1550 version of the *Formula of the Institute* is that its list of ministries ends by commending anything that contributes to "the common good." Up to that point the list has been directly or indirectly derived from the Bible or from traditional Christian usage. "Common good" does not derive from those sources but from philosophy. It appears in the *Formula* in 1550, after ten years of experience. The expression implies an openness regarding our ministries and, at the same time, a concern for this world and its betterment, a step beyond exclusively evangelical goals. The older orders doubtless had this concern to some degree, as their histories make clear, but the upfront commitment to it in the *Formula* imbues it with a dignity and importance that was strikingly new for a religious order.

It was correlations like these that seemed to have induced the first Jesuits to believe that they had found a worthy helpmate in the *studia humanitatis.* Be that as it may, after the founding of the school at Messina, which, despite many trials and failures, turned out to be a

[13]See, e.g., the still classic study, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformaion,* by H. Outram Evennett, ed. John Bossy (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1968), especially pp. 43–66; and Joseph F. Conwell, *Walking in the Spirit: A Reflection on Jerónimo Nadal's Phrase "Contemplative Likewise in Action"* (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2003).

smashing success, the Jesuits, including St. Ignatius, undertook the enterprise of formal schooling in such an enthusiastic and comprehensive way as soon to make it the primary and premier undertaking of the order, which profoundly influenced their more directly pastoral ministries, such as, preaching and missionary evangelization.

Within a generation Jesuit commitment to the schools can only be described as massive, and by the middle of the seventeenth century almost overwhelmingly so. To take a typical example, by 1640, a century after the founding, the Jesuits operated thirty-four schools in the area of present-day Belgium, an area roughly the size of the state of Maryland. This engagement was not confined to Europe, because the Jesuits by that date had, for instance, ten schools in Mexico, eleven in the Viceroy of Peru, nine in Goa in India. A few decades later they had close to forty schools and other major institutions in Mexico, Guatemala, and Cuba alone. By the time the Society of Jesus was suppressed worldwide by papal edict in 1773, the Jesuits operated over seven hundred schools of various kinds almost around the globe. No such network of schools under a single aegis had ever been known before and has never been known since.

Although the humanists did not profess to teach professional skills, that does not mean they thought their program was impractical or did not equip students to get high-paying positions

In the Jesuit "colleges" the curriculum was structured upon the *studia.* But even when the Jesuit schools developed into universities, they had a base in the humanistic tradition. Indeed, special about the Jesuit universities was that from the beginning the *studia humanitatis* formed an integral part of the system. They were not add-ons. They did not enter from the back door. On principle they constituted a foundation for the rest. To that extent the Jesuit universities, which were few in number compared with the colleges, also professed to produce a certain kind of person.

I call special attention to the list of fifteen goals for the schools that Juan Alfonso de Polanco, St. Ignatius's brilliant secretary, produced for members of the Society as early as 1551, just a few years after the opening of Messina. (See the appendix.) The list could have been

written by Erasmus himself. Although composed by a leading member of a religious order sometimes known in history as the shock troops of the Counter Reformation, none of the goals are polemical against Protestants or suggest that Catholic apologetics were to play a role in the curriculum. The last of the fifteen goals sums up the ethos of the others: "Those who are now only students will grow up to be pastors, civic officials, administrators of justice, and will fill other important posts to everybody's profit and advantage."

As that goal makes clear, the schools had a *civic* purpose. They were for the good of the locality. Indeed, the early Jesuits insisted on that point. For instance, when they opened a school in Tivoli in 1550, they did so *ad civitatis utilitatem* (for the benefit of the city).[14] When Polanco indicated in 1552 for Valencia that the schools were powerful instruments "for the reform of the cities," he was repeating a humanistic article of faith.[15] Thus, with the schools the Jesuits expanded the scope of their concerns to a concern for this world, to which they devoted immense time, energy, and resources. If their schools had a civic mission, then the Jesuit order itself had a civic mission.[16]

Although the humanists did not profess to teach professional skills, that does not mean they thought their program was impractical or did not equip students to get high-paying positions, as Polanco makes clear in his list of offices graduates might fill. Some few Jesuit schools in Europe catered to the socially elite, the so-called Colleges of Nobles, but the vast majority had students from a range of socioeconomic strata. They, like the universities, also served as instruments for upward socioeconomic mobility and enabled graduates "to get a good job" and provide for their families.

Our Way of Proceeding in the Schools

Did the Jesuits, therefore, add nothing to the ancient and now revived tradition of schooling according to the *studia humanitatis*–humanistic studies? Yes, they did. In the first place, they brought to it a simple, coherent program of religious development for the students suggested

[14] Juan Alfonso de Polanco, *Vita Ignatii Loiolæ et rerum Societatis Iesu historia* (known as the *Chronicon*), 6 vols. (Madrid, 1894–98), 2:19. Henceforth, *Chronicon.*

[15] Ibid, 651.

[16] See, e.g., John W. O'Malley, "Five Missions of the Jesuit Charism: Content and Method," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 38, no. 4 (2006).

by the Spiritual Exercises. As mentioned, the Exercises look to the development in the individual of deep, heartfelt commitment, that is to say, they do not primarily try to inculcate simple behavior modification. The Jesuit schools included a chapel where a variety of religious services took place. Especially important were the voluntary student associations the Jesuits fostered that were geared to the students' religious growth and that often included performing works of social assistance outside the school.

Important, though impossible to calculate, was the "teaching under the teaching," that is, what happened beyond fulfillment of the syllabus. The Jesuits were, on the whole, better educated and motivated than most pre-university schoolmasters almost anywhere in Europe. Further, they tried to influence their students as much by their example as by their words. They repeatedly inculcated in one another the importance of loving their students, fully aware of Juvenal's axiom that had become a humanistic commonplace— *Maxima debetur puero reverentia* (Students deserve the greatest respect).[17] They were encouraged, moreover, to cultivate a respectful *familiaritas* with them.[18]

Furthermore, the Jesuit network of communication between periphery and center meant that missionaries sent back to their confreres in Europe information about the exotic lands and cultures in which they were active. They also sent maps and specimens of plants and trees unknown in Europe. Jesuit teachers made excellent use of this resource and in so doing imparted to students the realization that they were part of a big world, which implied that Europe was not the measure of all things.[19]

The Jesuits promoted in a significant way moving humanistic education from what had been a one-room, one-teacher operation to full-fledged institutions that engaged a full faculty. Early on, therefore, the Jesuits built large buildings to provide the many classrooms such a faculty required, but also, to a degree much more extensive than other

[17] Juvenal, Satires, 4.10.

[18] See, e.g., *Chronicon*, 4:507, 5:563.

[19] See, e.g., Steven J. Harris, "Mapping Jesuit Science: The Role of Travel in the Geography of Knowledge," in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, edited by John W. O'Malley et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 212–40; and Roberto Ribeiro with John O'Malley, *Jesuit Mapmaking in China: D'Anville's "Nouvelle atlas de la Chine, 1737"* (Philadelphia, Penn.: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2014).

such schools, to provide theaters, playing fields, assembly halls, and chapels where various activities could take place outside the classroom setting—as part of training "the whole person."

By making use of the pedagogical techniques of the so-called *modus parisiensis* (Parisian style), the Jesuits transformed teaching in most places where they opened schools.[20] Especially important was the introduction in a comprehensive way the principle that learning was not a passive activity but required active engagement. It was not enough, therefore, to read a speech by Cicero. Students had to deliver it or, better, to deliver a speech of their own modeled on Cicero or some other fine stylist. It was not enough to read a play by Terence. That play had to be produced, and the students had to play the parts before an audience—an exercise that promoted poise and self-confidence and was another form of the cultivation of the art of the word.[21]

Fully produced, the play required sets, sound effects, music, and even dance. Jesuit schools became famous for their theater, which became one of their distinguishing marks, a mark that Jesuit normative documents either ignore or minimize. The College Louis-le-Grande in Paris became noted for its elaborate ballets, to which in the seventeenth century King Louis XIV himself occasionally came.[22] All the schools promoted sports, and a few taught fencing and horsemanship.

It was aspects like these that distinguished the Jesuit schools from their counterparts. It was such aspects that brought the Jesuits into conflict with Catholic moralizers, especially the Jansenists, who considered the Jesuit schools all too worldly. The Jansenists' relentless attacks on the Jesuits contributed greatly to bringing about the suppression of the Society in 1773.

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[20] See John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 215–53.

[21] See, e.g., Giovanna Zanlonghi, *Teatri di formazione: Actio, parola e immagine nella scena gesuitica del Sei-Settecento a Milano* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2001).

[22] See, e.g., Judith Rock, *Terpsichore at Louis-le-Grand: Baroque Dance on the Jesuit Stage in Paris* (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996); and Alessandro Arcangeli, "The Ballroom and the Stage: The Dance Repertoire of the Society of Jesus," in *I Gesuiti e la "Ratio studiorum,"* edited by Manfred Hinz et al. (Rome: Bulzoni, 2004), 67–73.

Jesuit Universities

Finally, the Jesuits were among the educators who did not see an unbridgeable gap between professional and humanistic training. Remember, the ten founders of the Society of Jesus headed by Ignatius all held prestigious Master of Arts degrees from the University of Paris, of which they were justifiably proud. They knew firsthand what a university was, and they were determined that recruits to the order know the same.

Their degrees, moreover, were not from the Faculty of Theology but from the Faculty of Arts, with its fully developed program of the "three philosophies." Jesuits who in the early years joined the Society in Italy with a university background had studied at places that gave a prominence to natural philosophy. Although the program the Jesuits prescribed for their younger members began with the humanistic base, which was a striking innovation for a religious order, it then moved on to the professional, university subjects of philosophy and theology.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the larger Jesuit colleges began to teach some of the university disciplines, principally natural philosophy, a subject that especially interested the young laymen in the schools. In some cities this development brought them into rivalry with the city's university and led to bitter conflicts.

The Jesuits also operated a relatively small number of universities as such. The first of these was the Collegio Romano, the Roman College, which opened its doors in 1552 as a humanistic school, but rapidly developed into a prestigious university with the two faculties of philosophy (or Arts) and theology. The Roman College almost from the beginning became the premier Jesuit school, to which talented young Jesuits from the wider Society of Jesus began to be sent for their training. By 1555 it already had Jesuit students from Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Flanders, Germany, Bohemia, Dalmatia, Greece, and elsewhere. Even so, it soon attracted young laymen from all of Italy and well beyond, who constituted by far the majority of the student body.

Within twenty years of the Roman College's founding, the philosophy faculty had achieved wide recognition for its program in mathematics, which included subjects like optics, acoustics, and astronomy, all under the leadership of Fr. Christoph Clavius (1538–1612). Clavius, it may be recalled, worked on the papal commission that re-

vised the calendar, known as the Gregorian Calendar, upon which we operate today. He and his important but lesser-known successor, Christopher Grienberger, trained the first generations of those remarkable Jesuits, led by Matteo Ricci, who made their way into Beijing in the late-sixteenth century and won entrance into the imperial milieu especially in virtue of their skill in mathematics and astronomy

But it was not simply at the Roman College that the Jesuits moved beyond the humanities. A French scholar, Antonella Romano, some years ago published a remarkable book on the history of mathematics (and therefore science) in the story of the Jesuit schools from their inception, through the Scientific Revolution, all the way to 1773.[23] She showed how pervasive that study was in the Jesuit system and showed that, contrary to older historiography, the Jesuits were fully in touch with scientific developments of the day and contributed to them. In recent years, similar studies have proliferated.

What Cicero and the early Jesuits had in mind is very different from our modern concepts of injustice as systemic in certain institutions of society. Nonetheless, we again see a correlation.

With some qualification it can be said that Jesuit schools did not include faculties of medicine or law—for several reasons, but most pointedly because Jesuits, who formed the bulk of the faculty generally had no training in these disciplines.[24] The vast majority of colleges, moreover, did not teach theology, regarded as a professional discipline. They rested content with an hour or so of catechism per week, supplemented by sermons and similar services. The religious and moral for-

[23]See Antonella Romano, *La Contre-Réforme mathématique: Constitution et diffusion d'une culture mathématique jésuite à la Renaissance* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1999). See also, e.g., Marcus Hellyer, *Catholic Physics in Early Modern Germany* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 2005); and Mordechai Feingold, ed., *Jesuit Science and the Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003).

[24]Three recent studies of early Jesuit universities are Fiiippo Lapelli and Ulderico Parente, eds. *Alle origini de Università dell'Aquila: Cultura, università, collegi gesuitici all'inizio dell'età moderna in Italia merdionale* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2000); Paul F. Grendler, *The University of Mantua, the Gonzaga and the Jesuits, 1584–1630* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); and Cristiano Casalini, *Aristotele a Coimbra . . .*

mation took place, supposedly, both across the curriculum and outside it in what we today call "extra curricula." What was important for the students was not so much intellectual problem solving about the Christian faith, which was what formal theology did, but a lived appreciation of it and its values.

The so-called Magna Carta of Jesuit education is the *Plan of Studies (Ratio studiorum)* of 1599. It is an important but a deceptive document. The *Plan,* which includes a full course in both philosophy and theology was intended in the first place for the training of Jesuits themselves. It was a plan that was therefore never fully operative in more than a relatively few Jesuit schools. Second, it has the basic problem of all such normative documents, namely, the gap between norms and the lived reality. Especially as the years passed the *Plan* grew more out of touch with what was actually happening in the schools.

Finally, if you are looking for the Jesuit philosophy of education, you will not find it explicitly articulated in that document. The *Plan* assumed that the strictly intellectual goals of the universities was a good worth pursuing. More important, it took for granted the humanists' philosophy as undergirding the whole program, and therefore felt no need to repeat it or to elaborate a philosophy of its own. It here and there drops hints as to what was supposed to happen in the colleges, as, for instance, when it privileged the works of Cicero dealing with moral issues. A text the Jesuits taught year after year was Cicero's *De officiis*, usually literally translated as *On Duties,* but which I translate as "On Public Responsibility."

Let me quote for you two short passages from it that capture the sense of public responsibility the Jesuits tried to instill in their students and that suggest the correlation the Jesuits in this instance surely saw between the Christian message of service and Cicero's eloquent plea for men and women for others:

> 1. We are not born for ourselves alone. . . . We as human beings are born for the sake of other human beings, that we might be able mutually to help one another. We ought therefore to contribute to the common good of humankind by reciprocal acts of kindness, by giving and receiving from one another, and thus by our skill, our industry, and our talents work to bind human society together in peace and harmony. (1.7.22, in my translation)

> 2. The duties prescribed by justice must be given precedence over everything else, including the pursuit of knowledge, for such duties concern the welfare of other human beings, and nothing ought to be more sacred in our eyes than that. There are some people who either through absorption with their own self-advancement or through some other more basic coldness to others, claim that all they need to do is tend to their own business, and thus they seem to themselves not to be doing any harm. But this means that while they avoid any active injustice, they fall into another: they become traitors to the life we must all live together in human society, for they contribute to it none of their interest, none of their effort, none of their means. (1.9.29)

With texts like these, we can see that "the promotion of justice" was not as alien to the Jesuit tradition of schooling as some have argued. Of course, once again, what Cicero and the early Jesuits had in mind is very different from our modern concepts of injustice as systemic in certain institutions of society. Nonetheless, we again see a correlation.

III. After the Restoration of the Society

The Society of Jesus was suppressed in 1773, and its network of schools brutally dismantled. It was restored by another papal decree in 1814 in an entirely different cultural scene. The humanistic schools, by this time simply a fact of life in Western culture, had continued to evolve and change under changing circumstances, most obviously by vernacular literatures gradually taking the privileged place once enjoyed by the Greek and Roman classics. In English, Shakespeare, Milton, Austen, and eventually Mark Twain found a welcome.

The universities had changed perhaps even more radically with the abandonment of Aristotle and other normative authors from antiquity in favor of experiments in the sciences and the cultivation of modern philosophical schools. But they never swerved from the two basic aims that had animated them from the beginning, even as the new emphasis on research specified what "intellectual problem solving" would henceforth mean.

The Jesuits set to work trying to rebuild their network of schools, perhaps nowhere more notably than in the United States. Here they were faced with a largely immigrant population that needed basic skills to make a living and to rise above the poverty level. Adjustments were made. Moreover, the schools had to fit to a large degree into the ongoing development in America of both secondary and tertiary education. Adjustments were made. The *Ratio Studiorum* of 1599 was hopelessly out of date and impracticable, and all efforts to revise it failed utterly. The world had changed. As time went on, the Jesuit schools became ever more complex and sophisticated to keep pace with the ever more complex and sophisticated developments in the world at large. They added not only a Graduate School of Arts and Sciences but other professional schools as well, including the traditional law and medicine, but also business, nursing, architecture, and so forth.

But what about the humanities in this new situation? Although they are under siege in virtually every university and today have to fight for turf even in Jesuit institutions, the Jesuit schools still profess to do for the student what the original humanist philosophy of education promised to do, and they try, with greater and lesser success, with greater and lesser zeal, to provide a good space in the curriculum for the humanities. In the meantime, what we mean by the humanities has itself expanded to include most notably philosophy and theology, taught now in the undergraduate curriculum, supposedly not as professional disciplines but as subjects pertinent to the students' lives.

Ah, there's the sticking point! If the subjects we know as "the humanities" are taught as professional disciplines, as if they were introductory courses for somebody contemplating a professional career in them, they hardly deserve the designation humanistic. They lose their humanistic value and become—well, a form of professional or pre-professional training. Unfortunately, that is the pattern into which all of us teachers trained in graduate school tend unthinkingly to fall. We teach as we have been taught. "Liberal Arts"—no subject is in itself liberating. It depends on how it is taught. This is a verity all too often forgotten!

So What for Today?

That's been a whirlwind tour of where we came from and how we got to be where we are. I would now like to focus on the humanities and distill elements from this venerable tradition of schooling that

I believe still have relevance for what we are trying to do today. What I have to say is of special relevance to our traditional high schools and the undergraduate colleges of our universities. Nonetheless, the basic assumption is that, even in the professional and graduate schools we are trying to do something more for our students than promote their professional success.

I have created five hooks or pegs or slogans or bullet points on which to hang the basic goals that I believe capture aspects of the tradition that are as valid now as they ever were and that express what the tradition wants to accomplish, especially in its incarnation in Jesuit schools. We can look upon them as constituting a profile of the "ideal graduate" according to the humanistic tradition. The five hooks are: (1) The Fly in the Bottle, (2) Heritage and Perspectives, (3) Not Born for Ourselves Alone, (4) *Eloquentia perfecta*, or The Art of the Word," and (5) The Spirit of Finesse.

1. "The Fly in the Bottle." I adopt the well-known metaphor of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. What the tradition is meant to do is help the fly to fly out of the bottle, that is, to allow students to escape from the confines of their experience up to the present, to expand their awareness beyond the comfort zones of thinking in which they have grown up, to expose them to other cultures and to other modes of thought, to lift them beyond the quotidian. To help them escape from the bondage of unexamined assumptions and prejudices. To help them expand their consciousness and the areas in which they can dare to ask questions, not only in the areas in which their trade, discipline, or profession moves, but about life itself. This, of course, is an ongoing life task for all of us, but in this tradition of schooling, high-school students and undergraduates find themselves in a situation that is particularly propitious for it to happen in a somewhat systematic and gently supervised way.

What we mean by the humanities has itself expanded to include most notably philosophy and theology, taught now in the undergraduate curriculum, supposedly not as professional disciplines but as subjects pertinent to the students' lives.

Inventiveness and innovation require intelligence, but beyond intelligence they entail imagination, that is, the metal agility to make a

leap beyond the accepted paradigm to another and to see the relationship between them that has escaped others. Training in the humanities is a training, if all goes well, in exploring "the other" and seeing how it relates to the known—an exercise in imagination. The cultivation of this skill is certainly not exclusive to the humanities, but they are especially apt for it.

2. "Heritage and Perspective." This goal or value is closely related to the first. It is based on the truth that we are the product of the past, and that we cannot understand ourselves and the situations in which we find ourselves unless we have some idea of how we got to be where we are—as individuals and as a society. We do not know who we are unless we know where we came from and have not fallen victim to cultural amnesia. Students need to know that 9/11 did not just happen out of the blue but fitted into a long historical trajectory.

This value also looks to the cultural enrichment of the students, to goad them, for instance, beyond considering texting as the highest form of literary expression. Inculcating this value does not mean forcing upon students a smattering of every great work of literature and art, but it does mean study of at least a few classics of art and literature—another aspect of getting the fly out of the bottle and being introduced to "the other."

3. "We Are Not Born for Ourselves Alone." Beginning with Isocrates in the fifth century, the imperative of directing one's skills and talents to the benefit of one's country and fellow citizens has been a central and consistent element in the tradition. As I indicated, it was eloquently articulated by Cicero but also by many others. It means fostering in students a sense of agency.

When in the 1970s Father General Pedro Arrupe pronounced that turning out graduates who would be, in his expression, "men and women for others," I am sure he realized how profoundly his words resonated with the Jesuit tradition of Christian spirituality, but I very much doubt he realized how it resonated with the broader humanistic tradition. The moral imperative has been at the heart of the humanistic tradition from the very beginning. It correlates well with the mission of the Society of Jesus.

In this regard I think of what Eleanor Roosevelt, that tireless advocate for the underprivileged and for social justice, said of Allenwood

in England, where she was educated and which she remembered with great affection. She said that whatever she had become since then had its seeds planted in those years. It was such training that inspired her, for instance, to chair with such patience and courage the extraordinarily difficult committee that in 1948 produced the landmark United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

4. *"Eloquentia perfecta"* (Perfect Eloquence). This expression took hold in the Jesuit tradition as capturing the goal of the rhetorical aspect of the tradition. Beginning with Isocrates, rhetoric, the art of the word, the art of *logos*, was the culmination of the training and the goal towards which it was aimed. This was achieved through the study of great literature in one's own language and in the languages of other cultures. Eloquence—the skill to say precisely what one means with grace, clarity, and conviction—is an art that requires a vocabulary and a style of speaking that, again, goes beyond the quotidian by being nurtured by the study of a wide variety of authors and sources.

Further, the quintessence of eloquence is fitting word to thought—no eureka insight without the word to express it! Generating the thought and the word to go with it is, as mentioned, one process, not two. We do not say what we mean if we do not know what we mean, and only when we have the right word do we know what we mean. Until that time we have approximation as we struggle for insight. Cultivation of the art of the word is a sure path to acquisition of the art of precise thinking and effective communication. It is at the very heart of the humanistic tradition of schooling. It is, moreover, the get-ahead skill par excellence.

5. "The Spirit of Finesse." Many decades ago Henri Marrou borrowed this term from Pascal to describe an aspect of what the humanist tradition in education tried to accomplish for the individual, and he distinguished it from the "geometric spirit."[25] The spirit of finesse realizes, unlike the geometric spirit, that in the murky darkness of human interaction and motivation two plus two does not equal four. Humane letters, when properly taught, sharpen students' aesthetic sensibilities, but, more to the point, in their authentic depictions of characters and situations, they mirror the ambiguities of our own life-experiences and invite reflection upon them. They weave webs with words that reflect

[25] See Marrou, *Education in Antiquity,* 134–35.

the webs we weave with our own lives, which are webs that are not neat geometrical patterns but are broken in places and often filled with knots and tangles.

Again, the virtue the humanists especially wanted to inculcate was prudence, that is, good judgment, which expressed the wisdom that characterized their ideal leader. They believed that a sense of history, of moral and political philosophy, of drama, poetry, novels, and, yes, foreign languages widened students' perspectives, excited their imaginations, and made them sensitive in the weighing of options and in assessing the relative merits of competing probabilities and competing values in the conflict of human situations. They hoped to make them into adults who made humane decisions for themselves, their families, and for any group of which they might be a part, decisions as appropriate as possible to all aspects of a given situation—a wise person, somebody, that is, whose judgment you respected and to whom you would go for personal advice, the polar opposite of the nerd, the technocrat, the bureaucrat, and the zealot. They tried to instill a secular version of what we in the tradition of the Exercises of St. Ignatius call discernment.

IV. Conclusion

In this contribution to *Studies,* I promised to do only two things. I promised to provide the larger context for "the Jesuit tradition of education." In so doing I tried to answer the question of how we got to be the way we are by showing where we came from and by providing a quick glimpse of the journey from there to here. I realize that with all the questions in the air today about "Jesuit education," this is a quite limited objective, but, even so, I believe it can be helpful and at least eliminate some misconceptions.

I also promised to make an argument for the humanistic tradition. I briefly traced the history of that tradition and of its rival/partner, the university. From that history I distilled five goals that I think express a vision of one aspect of what a Jesuit school, whether secondary or tertiary, tries to do. While the goals of that vision are in accord with the traditions of the Society, they are also goals to which non-Catholic faculty and students can easily subscribe. They thus have the advan-

tage of being non-confessional, yet at the same time open to enhancement by the Jesuit traditions.

I did not promise to enter into just how these goals might be feasible in today's culture, nor to attempt to answer how they might be implemented. I had a limited objective, which I hope I have in some measure accomplished. I will further comment, however, that for the goals I have described to have the slightest chance of success, the institution in question must at least officially profess them and then provide means for their accomplishment.

Yet, even under the best of circumstances, the goals are and will always remain ideals. They constitute the profile of an ideal graduate. Ideals often go no place as institutional goals and often end up as little more than self-serving propaganda and bombast. Even when they are more than that, they are by definition destined to be only imperfectly and approximately fulfilled. That is no reason not to strive to fulfill them. It is no reason for throwing in the towel because we are disappointed with the imperfection of the human situation.

Although Jesuits should not try to persuade anybody to enter the Society, especially not young boys, their good example and other factors will, nonetheless, help gain "laborers in the vineyard."

For me two things are certain. First, even if the institution subscribes to the ideal, it will be meaningless unless faculty strive for it in their own persons. Second, I think many of us, in both secondary and tertiary education, do strive, but I will speak for myself. I spend my hours, days, weeks, months, and years trying to be a good university citizen. That is, I spend them doing what universities have always done. I spend them in intellectual problem solving, which today means doing research and publishing learned books, creating knowledge. I spend them helping students acquire the professional skills that will enable them to achieve success in their chosen careers—or, put in less exalted terms, that will enable them to get the so-called good job, a job that will provide them with income sufficient for their needs.

But I do not want to stop there. I want to go further. Inside the classroom as well as outside, I want to help students have satisfying

lives. I want to help them fly out of the bottle, have a sense of their heritage and cultural location, see their lives as meant for something more than self-promotion, be able to express themselves properly and thus to think straight, and in their thinking develop a spirit of finesse. Whatever else is to be said on the theoretical level about the compatibility or incompatibility of the two great traditions of schooling, there is no doubt in my mind that they can be reconciled in ourselves. If they are reconciled in ourselves, they have a chance of being reconciled in our students and of affecting the ethos of the institution with which we are affiliated.

APPENDIX

From the letter of Juan Alfonsode Polanco, on commission from Ignatius, to Antonio de Araoz, provincial of Spain, December 1, 1551.[26] Reasons why the Society has undertaken formal schooling for laymen as a formal ministry (my translation and paraphrase).

Benefits for the Society

1. Jesuits learn best by teaching others.
2. They profit from the discipline, perseverance, and diligence that teaching requires.
3. They improve their preaching and other skills needed in ministry.
4. Although Jesuits should not try to persuade anybody to enter the Society, especially not young boys, their good example and other factors will, nonetheless, help gain "laborers in the vineyard."

Benefits for the Students

5. They will make progress in learning.
6. The poor, who could not possibly pay for teachers, much less for private tutors, will be able to do the same.
7. Students will be helped in spiritual matters by learning Christian Doctrine [catechism] and hearing sermons and exhortations.
8. They will make progress in purity of conscience and every virtue through monthly confessions and the instilling of good habits.
9. They will draw much merit and profit from their studies by learning to direct them to the service of God.

Benefits for the Locality

10. Parents will be relieved of the financial burden of educating their sons.
11. They will be able to satisfy their conscience soft heir obligation to educate their children.
12. The people of the area will be helped by the Jesuits' preaching and administration of the sacraments.
13. Parents will be influenced by the positive example of their children to live as good Christians.
14. Jesuits will encourage and help in the establishment of hospitals, houses of Convertidas [prostitutes desiring to change course], and similar institutions.
15. Those who are now only students will grow up to be pastors, civic officials, administrators of justice, and will fill other important posts to everybody's profit and advantage.

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[26]Sancti Ignatii de Loyola Societatis Iesu fundatoris epistolæ et instructiones, 12 vols. (Madrid, 1903–11), 4:7–9, my translation/paraphrase.

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