“The University and the Concern for Justice: The Search for a New Humanism”

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The Issue

Those who give or receive instruction within a university are continually faced with the problem—whether they choose to pursue it or to ignore it—of determining the nature and the value of what they are doing. A university is often only a composite of vastly divergent departments, multiple perspectives, and even insulating specialties, but it can be drawn beyond these separations into that continual interchange which would constitute it an academic community by a common question so native to its life: What are we doing together?

The question only appears to simplify if one locates it within a single discipline or, more comfortably, within a single research project or an individual course. One can state the purpose of the course, the requirements it entails, the books which are to be read or the problems which are to be solved or the skills that are to be fostered, and finally calibrate a scale by which successful performance is to be gauged. This simplification of what constitutes the central issue for a university, however, is no solution at all. It does not raise the question even for the single course whose final significance results from its reciprocal commerce with those other courses by which it is developed. The isolation of individual instructors or of individual departments or of individual courses does not handle the question; it represses it. This does not mean that the great issue will go unanswered; it means that the answer will not come from the faculty and the students. It will be answered by drift and by default, by economic pressures and the unchallenged attitudes of minds formed by advertisement, social mobility, and television. When faculty and students fail to sustain a continual conversation...
about the nature and value of education, when they abdicate their collective responsibilities, university education degenerates under alien influences into premature specialization, into the destruction of the college of the liberal arts, into an undergraduate instruction that is really not much more than a vocational honing, and into a paradoxically pervasive anti-intellectualism of unawakened minds, restless with any discussion of the aims and contents of the academic institution itself. Without serious academic damage, a university cannot escape the question, the continuous question, of what it is about—even if one concludes with the pessimistic reading of Professor Steven Muller, the President of Johns Hopkins University, "that universities are turning out potentially highly skilled barbarians."1

For a Jesuit university, this persistent call for continual discussion of its collective meaning and of the worth of its common achievements, has been heightened by two significant recent developments: one within the Church and the other within the Society of Jesus. Renewed realization is emerging within the Church that the suffering of the vast majority of humankind stands in judgment upon its life, upon the vitality of its proclamation of the gospel and the authenticity with which this gospel is embodied in the practice of those who are educated within it and who confess it as the meaning of their lives. The issue for the Church is not just that a civilization or an economic system which destroys or exploits other human beings is a constant provocation for war. Everyone can understand that if human beings are not given a chance for a human life, they will become savages, and the revolutions of those who have been dehumanized have always been terrible. The Christian point, however, is that the lot of the oppressed and of the poor in the world is in itself, prescinding from any consequential argumentation, a sinful destruction of human life and a denial of the destiny which God has willed for those whom He has made and whom He cherishes. The millions of hungry who face starvation in East Africa, the crowded hopeless urban proletariat who lie over the streets of Calcutta, the refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam—yes, but also the migrant workers who follow the crops in California and see their children uneducated for any future that can be different, the black youth which now endures forty percent unemployment in Detroit, the seventy percent Hispanic young people who cannot
find work in San Diego or those who prey on one another in East Los Angeles, the poor who live off of food stamps and the millions of old people hidden way in cheap rooms in our cities, waiting to die...Was it for this, asks the Church, that "God so wondrously established human nature and so much more wonderfully established it anew?" 2 In the Easter of 1967, Paul VI opened one of the greatest documents of his pontificate with the following words: The development of peoples has the Church’s close attention, particularly the development of those peoples who are striving to escape from hunger, misery, endemic diseases and ignorance, of those who are looking for a wider share in the benefits of civilization and a more active improvement of their human qualities; of those who are aiming purposefully at their complete fulfillment. Following on the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, a renewed consciousness of the demands of the Gospel makes it her duty to put herself at the service of all, to help them grasp their serious problem in all its dimensions, and to convince them that solidarity in action at this turning point in human history is a matter of urgency. In this context of a "renewed consciousness", 3 the Synod of Bishops of 1971 asserted that "action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension in the preaching of the gospel." 4 They have taught that the ministry of the gospel and the word of the Church must include a serious concern for human misery, that the structures of society must respond to human needs, that a gospel or a Catholic institution without this care for the pain and despair of men and women is false in claiming to be Catholic.

For this reason, the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus which met in Rome over the winter of 1974-1975 (only the seventh such congregation in the four hundred years of the Order, one summoned not to elect a general but to deal with the crises in the contemporary world) demanded that every Jesuit enterprise be evaluated and finally judged by these two criteria: its service to the faith and its promotion of social justice, 5 -- every Jesuit engagement, even the university:

Greater emphasis should be placed on the conscientization according to the Gospel of those who have the power to bring about social change, and a special place to the poor and
oppressed. We should pursue and intensify the work of formation in every sphere of education, while subjecting it at the same time to continual scrutiny. We must help to prepare both young people and adults to live and labor for others and with others to build a more just World.

So seriously does the Congregation intend this, so urgent is this focus of Jesuit efforts, that the Order is to withdraw from those institutions whose orientation is indifferent to the revelation of God in Christ or impervious to the cries, for justice and humanity all over the world.

A decision in this direction will inevitably bring us to ask ourselves with whom are we identified and what our apostolic preferences are. For us the promotion of justice is not one apostolic area among others, the 'social apostolate'; rather, it should be the concern of our whole life and a dimension of all our apostolic endeavors. Similarly, solidarity with men and women who live a life of hardship and who are victims of oppression cannot be the choice of a few Jesuits only. It should be the characteristic of the life of all of us individually and a characteristic of our communities and institutions as well. Alterations are called for in our manner and style of living so that the poverty to which we are vowed may identify us with the poor Christ who identified Himself with the deprived. The same questions need to be asked in a review of our institutions and apostolic works and for the same reasons.

The attack is made that this focus upon justice perverts the nature of the university. The university is a place where one raises questions and conducts an inquiry. It is not a place for indoctrination, social or political or economic. The universities of South America have been crippled by making them centers of political activism and social revolt. The new universities of France were almost destroyed in 1968 when Maoist students brought them to a halt and physically threatened and even assaulted such major thinkers as Paul Ricoeur. In Europe, it is very difficult for a political moderate to find a position in many institutions of higher learning: in the communist world, freedom of inquiry has given way to iron political controls and constant indoctrination.
This objection has much validity and it must be weighed carefully. The university always suffers when the doctrinaire curtail its freedom, when its conclusions are already in and the function of its faculty becomes persuasion. If student agitations obstruct free speech or if a political system makes honest discussion impossible, then the university suffers mortally. Its life and its discourse are inhibited.

So the question which one can level at the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, and at the Church and the needs of the world which lie behind it, is this: Can you orient the university whose very life is open question and inquiry, can you orient this institution so that it deals with human misery, with the wants of the vast majority of human beings and not destroy it?

This question ranges much further than over those institutions only which bespeak a Jesuit tradition or even those which carry a Catholic character in their organization of questions and curricula. The contemporary university is a very complicated mixture of schools and of faculties of general education, higher education, and professional education, with the accent falling now on one of these and now on another. Such an institution is "consecrated to--and even constituted by--the unhindered movement of inquiry." Can it, then, without internal and fatal contradiction respond intensely to the need for social justice within this cruel century of unparalleled slaughters, massive totalitarianisms, continuous economic exploitation and seemingly endless sorrow? What is at stake is more than the Jesuit or even the Catholic university, though the question has been occasioned by events within the Society of Jesus and within the Church. What is at stake is the relationship between the university and the exploited throughout the world, between the students and the hopelessly poor. Should there be some bond between them?

**Humanistic Education**

I should argue that the university as such can possess and foster in its faculties and in its students a profound concern for the social order, that this engagement or care for "the development of peoples who are striving to escape from hunger, misery, endemic disease, and ignorance" emanates from the very nature of the university itself. This attention to the
human condition and this corresponding care to develop a disciplined sensitivity to human misery and exploitation, is not a single political doctrine or a system of economics. It is a humanism, a humane sensibility to be achieved anew within the demands of our own times and as a product of an education whose ideal continues to be that of the Western humanitas.

In the Hellenistic period, paideia no longer meant simply the processes or techniques by which children were formally educated into their maturity. The word was extended to cover the product of all this education, the humane culture itself "pursued beyond the years of schooling and lasting throughout the whole of life to realize ever more perfectly the human ideal...: a mind fully developed, the mind of a man who has become fully a man." When the Romans sought to transpose this idea and to translate paideia into Latin, the term which Cicero and Varro brought forward was humanitas. Their choice was a significant one. Aulus Gellius notes that those whose education was effective "in the good arts," were those who had become most human (maximi humanissimi). This vocabulary survives in the colleges of humanities, in a series of fields united under this designation, and in degrees given or honors conferred "in more humane letters." In one form or another, humanitas indicated a value around which the university clusters.

Formal education is always determined by the values towards which its content, processes and structures conspire. Indeed, one may distinguish professional education, higher education, and general education by the central aim which gives the component elements unity and internal consistency. The values of one will not be absent from the purposes of another, but the central values of each will give a unique constellation and a proportional importance to the presence of the others. Professional education almost by title intends to shape a human being to a career or to a task by which he may earn his living. It inculcates knowledge and insists upon the mastery of skills so that engineering or medicine or business will be well done. Higher education proposes a training in specialized research. It promotes in a human being those capacities and habits of reflection by which discovery may be advanced and the scientific or technical extension of knowledge promoted. General education, liberal or humanistic education, is oriented directly neither to the promotion of a
career nor to the advancement of a collective body of knowledge. It proposes the humane
development of the students as such. Whether that humane development be framed in terms
of a freedom which emerges from the liberal arts, both literary and scientific, or in terms of a
humanism which comes from a disciplined and profound acquaintance with the works
which bespeak human excellence.

It is not that the courses of one form of formal education will be absent from the curriculum
of another. Literature and history, science and ethics, mathematics and composition have
their place in professional and higher and general education. But the governing aim, the
reason given for its location and the extension accorded its pursuit will differ in each.

General education is foundational for either higher or professional education. The general
development of a human being will promote certain skills whose further enlargement or
specialization will be directed towards a profession or towards the advancement of
knowledge. It has become fashionable to oppose the general knowledge given by the
humanities college with the particularized expertise of higher education or the concrete
mastery demanded by a profession. Actually all three forms of education are coordinate, and
their interdependence has been indicated by the halting efforts of undergraduate professional
schools to introduce a basic curriculum in the humanities or, conversely, by the profound
effect which higher or professional education can exercise upon the undergraduate
program.\footnote{What they share in common, when their aims are unconfused and their
 sequencing coherent, is a common commitment to human development, whether that
development is into general excellence or into a sensitive engagement in a human profession
or into a life given over to the advancement of knowledge. The university insists upon a
profound commitment to the human.}

The university has always been a place where persons ask questions, all questions, any
questions which are seriously and humanly significant. The universities began with the
disputed questions of the Middle Ages and continue with the free inquiry and instruction of
our own. To erect such an institution is already to be involved in common assumptions
about the reality and evolution of a human being: first, that to be human is to be able to
question seriously and to derive answers and to grow in an atmosphere of progressive
description and analysis; secondly, that there is a profound value in the progressive
assimilation of skills and the mastery of subjects, that one grows as a human being in this
way; thirdly, that the human race benefits enormously when inquiry and discussion are freed
from alien pressures and integral with their evidence and unimpeded in their progress. In
these three statements alone, among the hundred which any university community would
insist upon, there is already a humanism, a general view of what it means to be a human
being, a lived and accepted experience which can be articulated and examined in such
disciplines as psychology, literature, philosophy, history, sociology, education, and theology,
and whose content, whether examined or unexamined, will always lie at the foundation of
such professional schools as those of business, law, and medicine.

From its inception, the university has proposed to educate human beings because it believed
that they could be developed, and the Church began and fostered these institutions because
this was to collaborate with the "power" of God, a divine presence which was effective when
human beings progressed to become what they essentially are. Any discussion of the
promotion of justice as a commitment of the contemporary university must be grounded on
the basic understanding that the university exists for the human growth of its students. It is
to foster the cultivation of mind through the refinement and enlargement of awareness,
sympathies, disciplines, and judgments, and its finality is attained in that soundness and
harmony of skills, affectivity, and knowledge which indicates personal culture. This does not
exhaust the purposes of the university but it is included as central within them. If the
university is to foster a passion for justice, it is because this has its place in the sensibility and
understanding, the discriminating concerns and disciplined sensitivities that make
for humanitas.

The Transformations in Humanistic Education

When John of Salisbury in the middle of the twelfth century opened his great defense of the
liberal arts, he argued that every student must possess these before entering a profession
because these were the skills which would liberate a human being. "They are called 'liberal' either because the ancients took care to have their children (liberos) instructed in them or because their object is to effect the human person's liberation (libertarem)." Grammar, dialectic and rhetoric were methods, universal skills which could be brought to bear upon any subject-matter embodied in discourse to yield creative new insights and to reveal problems unresolved. Arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music were also universal skills which could be applied similarly to things in order to discover the "secrets of all nature". The trivium treated what was given in language and the quadrivium what was given in nature. The effect of an education which comprised this circle of the arts was to free the students in two ways: they no longer needed the help of a teacher "to understand the meaning of books and to find the solutions of questions"; they possessed a developed sensibility so that freed from the ambitions or cares which dominate the lives of others, they "might devote themselves to wisdom." The liberal arts have achieved the human character which they alone can impart when "'they liberate us from the care incompatible with wisdom." What John of Salisbury understood by liberal education was not so much a command of a particular subject-matter as an assimilation of certain intellectual skills and sensibilities, and his Metalogicon articulated for the high Middle Ages an educational program which could be traced back to the Christian ideal presented in Augustine's De doctrina Christiana and to the coordination of the liberal arts initially elaborated by Martianus Capella's De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii and standardized by Cassiodorus, Isidore, Alcuin, and Rabanus Maurus. The very universality of these disciplines, however, their abstraction from the concreteness of any particular field or subject matter, provoked their later criticism. They evolved through the formulations of centuries to suffer a harsh evaluation by the early humanists of the Renaissance. These disciplines were considered too abstract, too lacking in content and facts, too open to verbalisms, formal distinctions, and paper logic. Their very generality bespoke their perceived inadequacies.
So the sixteenth century reformed the liberal arts by changing them from the universal *disciplinae*, each of them applicable to any subject matter, to the liberal arts of the Renaissance, which were particular subject matters or fields of knowledge and fact. The liberal arts became the content-oriented humanities, of literature (philology), history and philosophy.\(^1\) In this transformation of general education, the liberal arts of words became the "more humane letters," and the liberal arts of things became the sciences and various "philosophies of nature." This left a disjunction between the arts and the sciences or of the methods and skills which dealt with the texts, the documents and the thoughts of others and those which dealt with things, while history was introduced to study "true narration of the deeds of human beings."

The Jesuits' entrance into education takes up at this point, and the *Constitutions* of Ignatius indicates the transitional period in which it was written (1540-1556). The liberal arts are "the more humane letters," and they comprise the grammar and the rhetoric from the Middle Ages and the poetry and history of the Renaissance, to be followed by the natural sciences and the study of philosophy.\(^2\) The great scholastic theologian, James Lainez, protested to Ignatius that this attention *en cosas de humanidad* would debilitate the intellects of the young scholastics, educating them to be so attentive to style and form that they could not engage studies which were more profound such as scholastic theology. Ignatius directed Palanco, his secretary, to respond, reminding Lainez that "from times long ago until our own, it has been the common practice to begin with *letras humanas*, with the exception of those periods when barbarism reigned in the place of studies, not just in *letras* but also in human society. With the exception of those years, we gather that this method of beginning with a good foundation in *letras humanas* before going on to other studies prevailed in Greece and Italy and I think in other places as well." The placing of humanistic studies at the beginning of an extended education was critical: "Such subjects open the mind gradually and prepare it to take subjects of greater consequence."\(^3\) So influenced by the Renaissance humanists was Jesuit education that it was a serious point of discussion in the 1920’s whether
the *Ratio Studiorum* of 1599 was simply an adaptation of the educational methods of Juan Luis Vives.16

This Renaissance orientation towards the mastery of subject matter contained its own inherent and historically realized liabilities. As the centuries spelled out the curriculum, these subjects became endlessly particularized and sub-divided. Literature became ancient and modern. Ancient became Greek and Roman. Greek became Hellenic and Hellenistic. The division of our fields has become so extensive that it is difficult for a scholar in one area to understand a scholar in another, and the courses themselves even on the undergraduate level can degenerate into a pedantic mastery of information. The contemporary universities live with the problems that issued from the Renaissance reform, with the fragmentation of knowledge as the concentrations upon subject matters became increasingly specialized. But the beginnings and original genius was a noble one: the university was to humanize the student through content, through bringing students into contact with the great accomplishments of human beings. The student would become more profoundly human by learning appreciation and criticism of the poetry of Homer and the history of Tacitus and the political rhetoric of Cicero and the music of Palestrina and the physics of Newton. Each was an extraordinary human achievement, and the student was humanized by assimilating it, by a developed sensitivity and the concrete knowledge which changed them profoundly as they became like what they loved. 17

It is almost universally agreed that a radical reform is again needed in the liberal or humanistic education of our time, whether that education be seen as the content of general education or a necessary element within or before professional or higher education. This agreement allows for a further advance in this education which has human development rather than simple vocational training as its governing purpose. If students are to be humanized in a world of massive manipulation, of technological sophistication, of increasing isolation and narrowness produced by progressive specializations, and of developing responsibilities to an international community, the university cannot simply return to the solutions of the Middle Ages or of the Renaissance, however much it can learn from their
genius and incorporate their achievements. We are faced with problems whose special
character demands their own response and whose continued presence inhibits the humanistic
aim of the university in any of its forms.
The first of these has already been mentioned: the fragmentation consequent upon the
progression of the liberal arts as subject-matters or fields. The concentration upon these fields
has left the practices of each increasingly isolated. It has fostered the divorce between
"science" and "the humanities" as if it were inevitable that Western intelligence would live in
two different worlds. The recognition of this disparity led to the search for methodological
disciplines or skills, "universal arts," such as language, history, and method, which were
common to all of these fields and whose mastery would allow for communication and
mutual influence among them. Much of this labor effected the reformation in general
education at the University of Chicago during the middle of the century under the influence
of one of the major figures in American philosophy of education, Richard P. McKeon:
"Interdisciplinary education and research cannot be achieved simply by juxtaposing, adding,
or uniting disciplines conceived as fields...We need new disciplines to identify and transmit
the arts by which men act and integrate their purposes and knowledge."\(^{18}\)
The second deficiency of humanistic education has only gradually emerged into
contemporary consciousness: the alienation of the student or the institution from the
ordinary life of the desperate, the poor and the exploited. Something of this sense of
alienation lay behind the shrill demands for "relevance" from the students of the past decade
or occasions the sense of uneasiness about student apathy which has been repeatedly voiced
by concerned faculty over more recent years. It lies behind the charges from the third world
that American universities do not educate their students to any understanding of their
impact upon the world or develop in them a sense of an international human solidarity. It
has found another voice in the Maoist contention that such institutions estrange the students
as a privileged caste from their fellow human beings and participate in continuance of a
system built upon indifference and exploitation. This alienation between educated taste and
compassionate sensibility stunned Dorothy Thompson as she visited Dachau to find in the
SS quarters the poetry of Goethe and the music of Beethoven with the windows opening to the rows of prisoner barracks and to the avenues through them which led to the execution ranges and the ovens. In all of those disparate voices and experiences can be heard the common charge: the humanities as they are currently studied do not adequately humanize the student. Not infrequently, even the best general education produced students with cultivated skills, interests and tastes, but alienated from their own humanity, human beings with very little sense of human solidarity or with little educated sensitivity to what is the burden of great numbers of human beings. It is a terrible paradox that within ten years of Newman’s *Idea of a University*, Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote descriptively of his century of Napoleonic struggles, of Irish starvations and the American civil war and even more tellingly of the world that would be ours: "Have you noticed that the most refined blood-letters were almost without exception the most civilized gentlemen?...because of civilization, man has become if not more bloodthirsty, then surely bloodthirsty in a worse, more repulsive way than before." 19

If the university is to meet this charge, which is far more telling than a paragraph can detail, it must focus not only upon liberating skills to be mastered as in the Middle Ages or upon human achievements to be known and appreciated as in the Renaissance. It must move to the developed appreciation of the human person and to the human community precisely as such, to a disciplined sensitivity to the human life in its very ordinary or even wretched forms. The expansion and innovation in the humanities must be into a sense of human solidarity: a love for what is of human beings, human complexity and human experience precisely as it exists—not the human being as skilled or as idealized only, but the lived human life and the actual human situation as something to cherish and to care about. As the student once gave himself to the grammar of Donatus and learned to love the sixth book of the *Iliad*, so he must become more human by growing in wonder before the individual human person, the mystery that is inherent both in every human person and in the world community, and by assimilating an educated sensibility that includes a profound sense of human solidarity and a spontaneous sympathy for human pain. As the student was once freed, liberated
through a command of dialectics and a discerning taste for Shakespeare, now her academic maturity must comprise a human affectivity and a sensibility to the problems of humankind, what is the lot and what constitutes the problems with which other people struggle. As we would never say that an indifference to beautiful poetry, to sound history, to a well-reasoned argument, to the advances of science are consonant with a liberal education, so must insensitivity to human pain and isolation from the international community with its pluralistic experiences and indifference to the great questions of economic justice and of pervasive exploitation mark a human being a savage, whatever the technical conquests in terms of literary skills and refined taste.

To bring the students to such a developed sensitivity that human pain and social injustice speak to their lives, that these pose problems for them which demand further specialized studies and consequent actions, is neither indoctrination nor partisan pleading. It is a humanistic education whose product is a sensibility, a set of skills, and a knowledge which is profoundly humane. It is part of what Paul VI has called the "search for a new humanism which will enable human beings to find themselves again." Such a search on the part of the academic institution is a reformulation of the liberal ideal proper to our own times and essential to an integral humanism whether in general, professional or higher education. This concern that human beings live lives of human decency and possibility is the contemporary embodiment of what has been so long a slogan within the humanities, a slogan now rearticulated against a consumer society and an indifferent power structure: Res sacra homo--a human being is a sacred thing. A responsiveness to human sorrow and to exploitation and a consequent passion for social justice are simply part of what it means to be a human being. This attention to justice is a progressive embodiment of a humanism.

There are many ways in which such a development could take place within a humanistic curriculum. Perhaps just as grammar and rhetoric or arithmetic and geometry became the liberal arts of the Middle Ages, universal discipline brought to bear upon any subject-matter, so now political science and sociology, economics and anthropology must be transformed into such similarly general disciplines finding their place within the arts of words and the arts
of things. In this transformation, the social sciences would be taught not so much for the professional expansion of their subject-matter, but as "arts", essential for developing humane sensibilities through understanding the human condition. These social disciplines could take the works of Shakespeare and Heisenberg as well as Durkheim and Smith as the literature which they would consider.

Perhaps an example: when Priscian wished to teach in extreme detail the nature of Latin case, number and gender he composed his influential grammatical work, *Partitiones duodecim versuum Aeneidos principalium*, an extensive analysis of the first twelve lines of the *Aeneid*. This was literature at the service of grammar, one of whose parts was the *enarratio poetarum*. But it is quite another thing to read precisely the same masterpiece for what it says of war and family, of human striving and failure, to bring the students to recognize with John Henry Newman Virgil’s "single words and phrases, his pathetic half lines, giving utterance, as the voice of Nature herself, to that pain and weariness yet hope of better things, which is the experience of her children in every time."  

It is this awareness which could found a curriculum whose concerns would include social sensitivity, one which would fulfill the goals of Robert M. Hutchins: "He may even derive from his liberal education some conception of the difference between a bad world and a good one and some notion of the ways in which one might be turned into the other." The transformation of the social sciences into the social "arts" might be one way such a humanistic curriculum could be expanded to educate the student in the concerns for justice in the world. Perhaps this humanistic program would follow the rhythmic unity of development which Alfred North Whitehead has outlined as romance, precision, and generalization. Most humanistic education, either formal or informal, moves through these three successive levels of involvement and understanding. First, there is a cultivation of sensitivity and interest, of wonder and the heady excitement which wonder attends, of experience and the growing appreciation which experience, evokes. From this "romance" with the subject matter, another desire grows: to explore it more in detail, to master its internal structures and particular facts, to analyze what has been the object of immediate
experience and appreciation. Finally, from this stage of precision, one moves to that of generalization, such a grasp of the fundamental ideas and of the basic premises that one can apply them to many more fields and to subjects other than that whose original excitement and subsequent analysis have brought the student to this point. Romance, precision, and generalization are a single cycle of human evolution; they are the dialectical moments inherent in any and all human development: they are cycles within cycles within cycles. "All mental development is composed of such cycles, and of cycles of such cycles." 24

In education there is an initial and crucial awakening of interest when one learns to read or to attend to nature. One is caught up in novels or in histories or in biology or in astronomy, and an introductory course could have no finer product than this awakened enthusiasm. But it is not enough for the student to develop this first appreciation for literature or for physics; appreciation develops into literary criticism or into an understanding of the methodology of the science. The second stage of educational growth inquires why this novel is well written or why this physics or history is sound. Finally just as appreciation develops into criticism, so criticism gives way to foundational studies, to the principles of mathematics, the metaphysical basis of the sciences, and the aesthetics of the art object.

There is a line of natural organic development which any early enthusiasm takes in an educational program, an evolutionary relationship among the arts and sciences as they move into wisdom, towards the generalization of causal influences or foundational studies in what has been the initial subject of wonder and analysis. English studies have a consecrated terminology to designate this progression: appreciation, literary criticism, and aesthetics; but it is a pattern common to all the arts and sciences if they are allowed to develop under their own intrinsic dynamism.

It could be the same for a humanistic education whose focus would include a concern "to distinguish between a bad world and a good one, and some notion of the ways in which one might be turned into the other." 25 There would be the initial stage of a developing interest and sensibility, of awareness and a feel for the human condition, of a sense of human solidarity and the density of human life, of the complexity of this life in its joys and pains.
and its multiple and layered involvements. The classic subject-fields of the humanities all conspire to make such a sensitivity possible, and they should be augmented by the introductory social sciences which expand the area of facts and introduce the students to international experiences which lie beyond their immediate world.

This developed sensitivity for the lot of the poor and the endless misery of the oppressed and exploited will lead naturally to those life-and-social sciences which are both descriptive of the human environment and critically analytic of the economic, social, historical and ideological structures which have brought them about. Appreciation for the human situation leads inevitably to questions about the influences which have made such a life actual for so many.

Thirdly, just as appreciation gives way to criticism, criticism gives way to those more general studies which involve the foundations of human life, its value and its direction: social ethics, jurisprudence, and moral theology, by which an evaluation of the situation once experienced and analyzed can be obtained and the imperatives for action discerned. One of these stages cannot substitute for another. A social ethics with little knowledge of economics or political science is empty, but economics or political science without any social ethics is blind. The humanistic development within the students of a passion for justice must have all three stages of its internal evolution: a sensibility to the human condition moving into the social and life science by which this condition is described and analyzed and finally into the ethical and moral wisdoms by which it is finally weighed and acted upon.

This, then, is my basic argument: that the university precisely as such should possess this orientation towards social justice both in the sensitivities and skills which it imparts to its students and in the order of the curriculum by which this finality is attained; that this orientation is consequent upon its very commitment to disciplined humanistic education whether in the undergraduate or the graduate schools or in the schools of professional education; that this orientation is original in its urgency with our century, but native to the single continuous purpose of the university in light of which it has periodically reformed its basic education radically, whether in the Middle Ages or in the Renaissance.
I should argue as a corollary of this conclusion that not only should the university be so concerned about social justice, but that there is a unique place which only the university can occupy in this more general care for justice; that the university offers, as no other institution can offer, the reflective atmosphere and the broad range of studies which can awaken and refine humane sensibilities; that it possesses an organization of scientific courses by which the issues in social justice can be carefully considered; and that finally, a Catholic university demands from its students those foundational studies, theological and philosophic ethics, by which sensibility and knowledge are grounded in their presuppositions and brought into an integration with Christian life and the commitments of holiness.

It is here that the solemn teaching of the Church meets the humane concerns of the university. What Christ preaches and embodies is the Kingdom of God--that God might permeate and direct the understanding and the affectivity of human beings. From the time of the great Hebrew prophets, the Kingdom of God embodies a just social order, while the influence of sin lives in its negation. The university moves against injustice as it does against the inhumane. The Church moves against injustice as it does against sin and the denial of God. In the conjunction of both, is found that purpose which the great Spanish humanist, Juan Luis Vives used as a definition of the "arts of humanity" and with which he shaped the Renaissance's reform of Christian liberal education: the humanities are, he wrote, "those branches of learning (disciplinae) by means of which we separate ourselves from the way of life and customs of brutes and are restored to our humanity and are raised towards God Himself."26 That is not a bad statement for the humane concerns and skills, for the sensitivities, the critical powers and the theological orientation--in a word, for the meaning and the value of what is to be done in a Catholic university.

Notes

1.[back] Steven Muller. "Universities are Turning Out Highly Skilled Barbarians," U.S.


6. "Our Mission Today" #60. Documents. p, 432; Ibid., #8 and #9, Documents. p, 413.


Leturia makes the very apposite point: "We propose to examine this question in the field of humanitas: a theme which albeit more restricted still remains peculiar in the history of the religious orders. For in truth, the novelty was not that religious should teach scholastic philosophy and theology, but that they [the Jesuits] should found colleges of humane letters and dedicate themselves with apostolic zeal and thoroughness to the teaching of them." *Ibid.* p33.

17.[back] For the contemporary embodiment of this idea. cf, R. S. Crane. *op.cit.* , pp. 8ff.


20.[back] Paul VI. *opcit.* paragraph 20. p 16. Cf. paragraph 42. p 29: "What must be aimed at is a complete humanism. And what is that if not the fully-rounded development of the whole man of all men"


22.[back] John Henry Cardinal Newman. *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*. Part I, Chapter 4, Number 2. An Image Book. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company. Inc., 1955), p. 79. James Joyce had Stephen Deadalus catch the pain of life, first in his own family and then in the generation after generation of children. in these words of Newman: "He heard the choir of voices in the kitchen echoed and multiplied through an endless reverberation of the choirs of endless generations of children: and heard in all the echoes an echo also of the recurring note of weariness and pain. All seemed weary of life even before
entering upon it. And he remembered that Newman had heard this note also in the broken lines of Virgil 'giving utterance, like the voice of Nature herself, to that pain and weariness yet hope of better things which has been the experience of her children in every time.'" James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, chapter 4. Text, Criticism, and Notes edited by Chester G. Anderson. (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), p. 164.  

23. Robert M. Hutchins, "The Great Conversation," as in *Great Books of the Western World*, edited by Mortimer Adler as General Editor. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), 1., pp. 3-5. The critically important issue of praxis within such an education is not being directly treated here, not because it is a consideration of secondary importance. It is of crucial importance. But the relationship between humanistic education and *praxis* is so complicated that it would necessitate another essay of similar size.  


25. Cf. Footnote 23  