

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*.²¹ 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."²²

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."²³ 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.*



News and World Report(November 10, 1980), p. 57.

2.[back] From the ancient prayer, *Deus qui humanae substantiae* found initially as a Nativity Oration in the Leonine Sacramentary, a compilation dating from about 540 A.D., and transferred to the prayer over the water being mixed with wine during the Carolingian period as indicated in the Ordo of Seez. It remained in this position in the Roman Mass until 1969. The reform of 1969 continued to employ this prayer at this place in the Roman liturgy, but condensed it. Cf. Joseph A. Jungmann. S.J. *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, translated by Francis A. Brunner. (New York: Benzinger Brothers, Inc., 1950). Vol. I. pp. 62 and 94; Vol. II. pp. 62ff. Also. A. G. Martimort. *The Church at Prayer: The Eucharist*. (New York: Herder and Herder. 1973). pp. 124-125. The actual prayer used over those centuries ran: "Deus, qui humanae substantiae dignitatem mirabiliter condidisti, et mirabilius reformasti: da nobis per hujus aquae et vini mysterium, ejus divinitatis esse consortes, qui humanitatis nostrae fieri dignatus est particeps, Jesus Christus, Filius tuus Dominus noster: Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus: per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen." For its employment as a question directed at economic exploitation and social oppression, cf. John Baptist Janssens. S.J. "Instructio de apostolatu sociali," October 10, 1949. *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*. XI:5 (1949). pp. 712-713; "An ideo humanae substantiae dignitatem mirabiliter condidit Deus et mirabilius reformavit ut pauci ditiores opes opibus addentes, plurimos fratres suos in Christo egestati addicant?"

3.[back] Paul VI, "On the Development of Peoples." paragraph 1 (Washington. D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1967), p. 3. (Italics added).

4.[back] "Justice in the World," Introduction. *Synod of Bishops: The Ministerial Priesthood and Justice in the World*. (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of Catholic Bishops. 1972), p. 34.

5.[back] "Jesuits Today." #9 as in *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, Prepared and edited by John W, Padberg. S.J, (St, Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources 1977) [Hereafter cited as *Documents*]. p. 403: cf, "Our Mission Today." #2. #51 #76 as in *Documents*. pp 411,429, 437.



- 6.[back] "Our Mission Today" #60. *Documents*. p, 432; *Ibid.*, #8 and #9, *Documents*. p, 413.
- 7.[back] "Our Mission Today" #47-48. *Documents*, pp, 427-428.
- 8.[back] Michael J. Buckley. S.J. "The Catholic University as Pluralistic Forum." *Thought* XLVI:181 (June 1971). p. 205.
- 9.[back] H.I. Marrou. *A History of Education in Antiquity*. Translated by George Lamb. A Mentor Book. (New York: The New American Library. 1964). pp. 142-143.
- 10.[back] Aulus Gellus, *Attic Nights*. xiii.16.I. Gellius defined *paideia* as "eruditionem institutio nemque in bonas artes," or, as R. S. Crane translated it, "education and training in the good arts. Those who desire and seek after these are the most highly humanized (*maximi humanissimi*)." Cf. R S. Crane. *The Idea of the Humanities*(Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.1967), pp. 23-24.
- 11.[back] Cf. Richard P. McKeon "Character and the Arts and Disciplines," *Ethics*. 78:2 (January 1968). p.118.
- 12.[back] John of Salisbury. *The Metalogicon*. BK.I.ch.12. translated by Daniel D. McGarry .(Berkeley: University of California Press. 1955). pp. 36-37. (Translation slightly modified).
- 13.[back] Richard P. McKeon. "The Transformation of the Liberal Arts in the Renaissance." in *Developments in the Early Renaissance*. Edited by Bernard Levi. (Albany: State University of New York Press. 1972). pp. 161-169.
- 14.[back] *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, Part IV chapter 12 #448. Translated and edited by George E. Ganss. S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources. 1970) p. 214. The Spanish which is being translated reads: "Debaxo de letras de Humanidad sin la Gramatica se entiende lo que toca a Retorica, Poesia, y Historia," The official Latin version reads: "Sub litteris Humanioribus, praeter Grammaticam, intellegatur quod ad Rhetoricam, Poesim, et Historiam peninet." *Consitutiones Societatis Iesu, Latinae at Hispanicae cum earum declarationaibus*. (Romae: Apud Curiam Praepositi Generalis. 1937). p. 152
- 15.[back] Pater Joannes de Planco Patri Jacobo Iainio. May 21. 1547. *Monumenta Historica Socielalis Iesu, Monumenta Ignatiana*. Series Prima. Tomus I. (Madrid: Gabriel Lopez del



Homo. 1903). pp 522-523, For the English Translation (slightly modified here). cf, *Letters of Ignatius Loyola*, Selected and Translated by William J. Young, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola University Press. 1959). pp 133-134.

16.[back] Cf. Pedro Leturia, SJ "Why the Society of Jesus Became a Teaching Order." Translated by Victor R. Yanitelli. S.J. *Jesuit Educational Quarterly*, June 1941). p.44n. 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.

18.[back] McKeon. "Character and the Arts and Disciplines" p 112.

19.[back] Fyodor Dostoevsky. *Notes from Underground*. Edited by Robert G. Durgy. Translated by Serge Shishkoff. The Crowell Critical Library. (New York: Thomas and Crowell Company. 1969), pp. 22-23.

20.[back] Paul VI. *op.cit.* 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"

21.[back] Cf. James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*. (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1974), pp. 72, 137-140.

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.[back] 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.

24.[back] Alfred North Whitehead. *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*. A Mentor Book. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949). pp. 40ff.

25.[back] Cf. Footnote 23

26.[back] Juan Luis Vives, *De disciplinis libri xx*, as cited in R. S. Crane, *op. cit.* pp. 5, 31-32.

