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# Toward a Place for Study in a World of Instruction

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“Preserve measure, observe the limit, and follow nature.” This line from Lucian was one of fifty-seven favored phrases that Montaigne inscribed upon his study wall.<sup>1</sup> All offer terse advice, one man to another, on the discipline of life: resist illusion, aspire to humility, beware vanity, judge cautiously, love mankind but be not its dupe. A series of sayings from sources both familiar and obscure: they are a key to our past, a sign of its character, frailty, and future.

Fifty-seven sayings upon the wall, upon the *study* wall. A skeptical, ironical egoist, Montaigne was but one vital vector in the myriad of human lives. Still, he stands out as a significant person, advantaged to be sure, but accomplished as well; and both his advantages and his accomplishments were what they became because he sustained himself in a life of continuous self-education. The sobering sentences that surrounded Montaigne as he worked helped direct and sustain his formation of self; they reinforced a regimen of self-culture, speaking to him sagely as he cut his quill, shelved a book, stoked his stove, or gazed in silent introspection. Such sayings were the stuff of pedagogical philosophy, classically conceived. Such sayings set forth the ends and means of study, of meditation, inquiry, and self-formation.

Study, inward driven study, was no mere private matter for Montaigne: it is a theme that pervades his essays. For him, education was a continuous heightening of consciousness, an unceasing sharpening of judgment. When he spoke “Of Training,” it was not a training administered by some external teacher, but a self-imposed bringing of one’s mental powers to their full potential, as an athlete in training brings his physical powers to a peak. He admired Canius Julius, an unfortunate Roman noble wrongly condemned by Caligula. Canius spent his last moments bringing his attention to the full alert so that as the ax cut he could perceive the nature of dying. To celebrate this example, Montaigne quoted Lucan: “That mastery of mind he had in death.”<sup>2</sup>

1 “Les sentences peintes dans la ‘Librairie’ de Montaigne,” Montaigne. *Oeuvres complètes*. Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Editions Gallimard, 1962, pp. 1419-1427.

2 Montaigne, “Of Training,” in Montaigne. *Selected Essays*, trans. C. Cotton and W. Hazlitt. New York: The Modern Library, 1949, pp. 116-128, esp. 117.

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Like a number of the ancients, especially the stoical Seneca, Montaigne cautioned against reliance on teachers in the course of education. Passive knowing was less important than the work of finding out, and authoritative instruction simply put the youthful mind to rest. Teaching and learning might impart knowledge, whereas study led to understanding, whereby things known were made one's own and became a part of one's judgment, and "education, labor, and study aim only at forming that." Yes, Montaigne went to school, to the Collège de Guienne, the best in France, at a precocious six. "At thirteen. . . I had completed my course (as they call it), and, in truth, without any benefit that I can now take into account." Like many students of today and yore, Montaigne shirked his assignments, instead reading avidly Virgil, Terence, Plautus, and other authors that struck his, not his teachers', fancy. When mature, Montaigne remembered the wisdom of one instructor, "who knew enough to connive cleverly at this escapade of mine. . . . Pretending to see nothing, he whetted my appetite, allowing me to devour these books only on the sly and holding me gently at my job on the regular studies."<sup>3</sup> Whether in or out of school, education for Montaigne was a process of self-set study, not of learning the lessons that others prescribed.

Montaigne, moreover, was not alone in preferring a theory of study to a theory of teaching. In his taste for improving mottoes, he was of his time and of his tradition. Erasmus is a case in point. Not a few of Montaigne's fifty-seven sentences had appeared among the 4,251 that Erasmus collected and elucidated in his vast work, the *Adages*, a crescent compendium that he meant to "be neither unprofitable nor displeasing" for those who would study the ways and the wisdom of the ancients.<sup>4</sup>

Erasmus wrote for men studying. The bulk and the best of his work he designed to provide others in all manner of situations with matter worthy of study. "He whose single aim it is, not to exhibit himself, but to do some good to others, is not concerned so much with the splendour of the matters in which he is engaged, as with their utility; and I shall not refuse any task . . . , if I see that it will conduce to the promotion of honest study."<sup>5</sup>

With this sentiment, Erasmus turned himself into the great printer-pedagogue, the first tycoon of the text. His was a life well-timed; he had the fortune,

3 Montaigne, "Of the Education of Children," *Ibid.*, pp. 14-53, esp. pp. 20-22 and 50-51. For Seneca's skepticism about the importance of teachers, see Seneca. *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, trans. Richard M. Gummere. 3 volumes. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1917, Letters XXXIII, XL, LII, LXXXVIII, CXI, and especially LXXXIV, which is a source of Montaigne's essay, "Of the Education of Children."

4 The best source on the *Adages* is Margaret Mann Phillips. *The 'Adages' of Erasmus: A Study with Translations*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1964; Erasmus' description of them is from his dedicatory epistle to Lord Mountjoy for the first edition, June, 1500, in Francis Morgan Nichols, ed. and trans., *The Epistles of Erasmus from his Earliest Letters to his Fifty-First Year*. New York: Russell and Russell, 1962, Vol. I, p. 243.

5 Erasmus to Bude. Brussels, October 28, 1516, in *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 415.

the genius, to first put a heritage into print, magnificently facilitating the studies of others. Usually ensconced in one or another printing house, where the best libraries were then to be found, Erasmus proved himself the exemplary editor of all time. Little of his work was original, yet his spirit was strong all the same, for it turned the seeds of others into fruit: he transformed the oral medieval tradition, the newly dynamic classical literature, and even the consecrated works of the Church; he adapted all for publication, each as befitted the type, revising, translating, reorganizing, elucidating, collating, emending, correcting, perfecting—in sum, preparing the texts for profitable study by a growing reading public.

To begin, *de Copia* was a straightforward text on how to study, not only the teacher's lessons, but more essentially the rhetorical riches to be found in the school of life.<sup>6</sup> Then, second, Erasmus labored unceasingly as an editor of both pagan and Christian classics. As a result, in theology he won fame, not for doctrines duly devised and taught, but for his scholarly editions of the New Testament and the Church fathers, which enlivened history by much facilitating the independent studies of others.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, Erasmus' reputation as a learned humanist primarily rested, not on his own work, but on his editorial industry, for he put into print writings by Ausonius, Cicero, Quintus Curtius, Horace, Livy, Ovid, Persius, Plautus, Pliny, Seneca, Suetonius, Publius Syrus, and Terence; Aesop, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Euripides, Galen, Isocrates, Josephus, Libanius, Lucian, Plutarch, Ptolemy, and Xenophon.<sup>8</sup> To be sure, many of these works found their way into the classroom of the school, but their prime justification was to provide more readers with more literature worthy of personal study.

In writing, too, Erasmus showed clearly his commitment to study and self-formation. His first fame came from the *Enchiridion*, or *The Handbook of the Christian Knight*, which he wrote—with rather medieval moralizing about the war of virtues and vices—to help wayward courtiers win their self-possession. This dagger, as it could be called, he fashioned for a man who “was no one's enemy so much as his own, a man of dissolute life, but in other respects an agreeable companion”; the writer hoped that on some morning after the reader would resolve to “achieve a character acceptable of Christ,” and that in the

6 For a good discussion of the method of study embodied in *de Copia*, see R. R. Bolgar. *The Classical Tradition and Its Beneficiaries*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964, pp. 273-5. The text, *de Duplici Copia Verborum ad Rerum*, is in *Opera Omnia in Decem Tomus Distincta*. Hildesheim, W. Germany: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961, Vol. I, pp. 4-110. It was basically a work on Latin usage, designed to be used as we might use *Fowler's Modern English Usage*, except that it was meant to improve the user's spoken as well as his written rhetoric. It suggested that the user make and frequently study a personal commonplace book.

7 For Erasmus' work on the New Testament and the Church fathers, see Preserved Smith. *Erasmus: A Study of His Life, Ideals and Place in History*. New York: Dover Publications, 1962, Chapters VII and VIII.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 195.

pursuit of this resolve the writer's precepts might prove of use.<sup>9</sup> *The Praise of Folly* and *The Education of a Christian Prince* had similar aims but different methods. In the former, Erasmus used satire and negative models, not to point the way to a character acceptable to Christ, but to explode the manifold self-deceptions by which men smugly shirk the endless difficulties of mastering humble excellence.<sup>10</sup> In the latter, Erasmus built on the Platonic convention, putting before everyman a regimen of political self-formation through the literary artifice of describing an ideal education that might give rise to a perfect prince.<sup>11</sup>

Erasmus shows how an educator who dedicates his labor to the man studying can find variety and vitality within his unitary purpose. The active spirit can learn something from everything. The Erasmian ideal is not that of dead pedantry; it is antithetical to learning by rote. He who would get the most from study must be willing to give unceasing effort, a protean effort that is ever adapted to the matter at hand, savoring a joke with mirth, applying a precept with wisdom, proving a truth with learning. Thus, Erasmus' labor of leisure, the *Colloquies*, had an extraordinary duality of intent—simultaneously to provide adults with recreational reading and schoolboys with grammatical exercises. With the art of the satirical moralist, he recorded scenes from life around him, larding them with models of good Latin, proper manners, and a living wit. He composed these dialogues to repay his open art of study, which included both discipline and delight: "you must discipline your character in order to win self-control and to find delight in things productive of utility rather than [of] pleasure. . . . For my part, I know no other art of learning than hard work, devotion, and perseverance."<sup>12</sup>

Some may say that this passage admits a rather faint delight and so it might seem to those who torpidly find satisfaction in happenstance pleasures. But the artful hedonist, like most others, closely calculates utilities, and delight is most often found in things of use to an active spirit, not in things pleasurable to a voluptuous passivity. Men work hard at play, they persevere at sport, they are devoted to a laugh. Utility has many shapes and the effort to win self-control is exerted differently in different situations. The ways of study are as

9 First quotation: Erasmus to Botzheim, 1523, in *Epistles, op. cit.*, n. 4., Vol. I, p. 337. Second: Erasmus. *The Enchiridion of Erasmus*, trans. Raymond Himelick. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963, p. 37.

10 Erasmus. *The Praise of Folly*, trans. John Wilson, 1668. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1958. The satirical tone of *The Praise of Folly* provoked criticism from those who thought it was not sufficiently improving. Erasmus' defense of the work can be found in his letter to John of Louvain, January 2, 1518, *Epistles, op. cit.*, n. 4. Vol. III, pp. 208-210.

11 Erasmus. *The Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. Lester K. Born. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1968. Born's long introduction is a useful discussion of the "mirror of princes" tradition.

12 Erasmus, "The Art of Learning," trans. Craig R. Thompson. *The Colloquies of Erasmus*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965, pp. 460-1.

diverse as the ways of men, for both result, not from conformity to outward percept, but from the aspiration to assert inward control over the moving conjunction between one's self and one's circumstances.

Study—if all follow it to its highest end—may have a single goal, or so we Platonists believe; but the path, the course of study, that leads to the goal will differ for each: thus the study appropriate for the quiet cleric will not suit the proud prince, the worldly merchant, or the sturdy artisan. Study itself is neither a single path nor the final goal; it is the motivating power by which men form and impose their character upon their role in life. Through study each man reaches out to the resources of nature, faith, and reason, to select from them as best seems to suit his situation and to develop powers by which he can turn the accidents of time, place, and station into a work of achieved intention. In this art of study, each component of culture has a part to play, and every component of art, literature, science, and thought can be seen as educational in a rigorous sense. In one of these, which well illustrates my point, Erasmus was a giant.

From Theognis through Valerius Maximus right down to John Bartlett and his compendium of *Familiar Quotations*, there stretches a continuous tradition, a wisdom literature for the busy man of affairs. As the hurried man is a perennial type—one now encounters specimens bedecked in beard, long hair, and beads—he is not about to disappear, and hence he has his claim on culture. Therefore, we may perhaps object to the inelegance of Bartlett's work. Whereas its mechanical listing of sayings, with little concern for context or connection, reduces it to an efficient work of reference, and little more, its great predecessors encouraged haphazard reading, and thus they served both as works of reference and as regaling bedtime books, as improving recreation for any idle moment.<sup>13</sup> But still, in substance and function, Bartlett's *Quotations* is of a piece with Erasmus' *Adages* and *Apothegms*. And we, who are wont to sneer at rushed seers who mine their erudition from Bartlett's pages, might consider Erasmus' preface to his *Apothegms*, for there he offered the pedagogical justification for all such works.

Erasmus dedicated the *Apothegms* to the son of a friendly duke with the hope that the work would prove useful in the education of the duke-to-be. For the learned, Erasmus avowed, the moral writings of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero were the most instructive, but these repaid only careful, extended study, the kind of study for which busy men had neither the time nor the taste. Was all then lost? Must power be the province of the boor? He thought not. The ancients had another tradition of moral learning, the apothegem, "which in a few words does rather by a color signify than plainly express a sense . . . , and which the longer you do consider it in your mind, the more and more does it

13 John Bartlett. *Familiar Quotations*, 13th ed. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1955.

still delight you.”<sup>14</sup> Such apothegms were the studies suited to buoyant spirits who would learn best with a laugh, a frown, and a pouting smirk. From these studies, from these recreations taken up with ease in unexpected pauses, active people could acquire a vital wisdom with which to manage the affairs of life. The work was an educative treatise, a book to be lived with, mulled, and internalized; Erasmus offered it to the prince and the ubiquitous adolescent, “to all children and young striplings that labor and sue to attain the knowledge of good learning and honest studies.”<sup>15</sup>

Whenever education functions primarily as a process of study, adages, sentences, commonplaces, apothegms serve as a staple substance in popular education, in the education of busy people of every type. Here, however, a question may be raised whether in fact this education is a popular education or whether perhaps self-set study is an education designed to perpetuate privilege and to create elites. By its means, the rich may get richer, the powerful more powerful, the cultured more cultured, while the common man gets more common yet. For instance, during the period separating Hesiod’s *Works and Days* and Franklin’s Preface to *Poor Richard’s Almanac*, most collections of wise saws and modern instances were compiled for men in high places, in places at least as high as that of Shakespeare’s justice. Pithy wisdom easily catered to the powerful. Thus, during the twelfth-century Renaissance, William of Conches compiled a book of moral extracts for the future Henry II of England.<sup>16</sup> Thus too, Erasmus told how proud Caesar would copy down every wise riposte he heard, and when a specially barbed insult would be directed at him, he would react, not with anger, but with delight, noting down the phrase, eagerly awaiting the moment when he could return it with barb yet further sharpened.<sup>17</sup>

Even in its most open components, the tradition of self-culture has seemed allied to elitism. Hence, we shall have to return to the question whether self-education through personal study is intrinsically an education for the privileged, and incompatible with the democratic ethos of modern life, or whether it merely appeared to have been so because its more eminent exponents happened to have lived in times and places where none imagined that privilege would pass. This problem will be a proper concern while assessing the present-day state of study, but to dwell on it here, while considering the historic character of study, would project an anachronistic concern back into the past.

14 Erasmus, “Preface,” trans. Nicholas Udall. *The Apophthegms of Erasmus*, 1964. Boston, Lincolnshire: Robert Roberts, 1877, p. xxii. *The Apothegms* was based on Plutarch, but had so many additions and expansions that it was more than a translation.

15 *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

16 Lynn Thorndike. *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1944, p. 9, n. 4.

17 Erasmus, “Preface,” *Apophthegms, op. cit.* n. 14, pp. xxv-xxvi.

*Study as Education* Whether we like it or not, many former educators considered education to consist of neither teaching nor learning; instead, they found the diverse forms of study to be the driving force in education. We could considerably extend our sense for the diversity of forms that this study could take by dwelling further on the Renaissance. To begin we might read carefully the letter that Pantagruel received from his Rabelaisian father, Gargantua. Then we might assay *The Benefit of a Liberal Education* as Robert Pace perceived it; ascetics could also try *The Spiritual Exercises* suggested by Ignatius Loyola, and the aspiring could emulate the arts and ideals of the courtier, as well as his amusements, that Castiglione portrayed. Aesthetes might observe the profound blend of pagan and Christian iconography that Italian artists worked into scenes seemingly so realistic, while the responsible could practice the political pedagogy propounded by Sir Thomas Elyot's *Book Named the Governor*. Finally, summing it up, we might all savour the bitter-sweet wisdom that Cervantes hoped his readers would extract from his *Exemplary Novels* and the adventures of *Quixote*.<sup>18</sup> Such a survey, however, would simply display more and more of the innumerable uses to which study would be put; yet men relied on study not only because it suited many uses, but more importantly, because it seemed to them to be in accord with the intrinsic character of human life.

Many held that study was not only a convenient form of education, but that it was the essential basis of all education. This conviction developed as men dwelt on human individuality, autonomy, and creativity. Considering each man in his living particularity, he was more than the sum of the influences playing upon him; rather each made himself individual by responding freely and creatively to his mundane problems, great and small. In this self-formation each man appropriated ideas and skills, tastes and beliefs from the world around him, doing so with a certain selectivity, even on the part of the most humble: this selectivity was the great conundrum to be understood. Did the

18 See, François Rabelais. *The Five Books of Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. Jacques Le Clercq. New York: The Modern Library, 1944 pp. 190-4; Robert Pace. *De Fructu qui ex Doctrina Percipitur*, eds. and trans. Frank Manley and Richard S. Sylvester. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1967; Joseph Rickaby. *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola: Spanish and English with a Continuous Commentary*. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1923; Baldesar Castiglione. *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Charles S. Singleton. Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959; Sir Thomas Elyot. *The Book Named the Governor*. S.E. Lahmberg, ed. New York: Everyman's Library, 1962; Miguel de Cervantes, *Novelas ejemplares*, texto integro. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1962; and Miguel de Cervantes. *Don Quixote*, trans. Ozell and Motteux. New York: The Modern Library, 1930. For the iconography of the Italian Renaissance, see Erwin Panofsky. *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962; Jean Seznec. *The Survival of the Pagan Gods: The Mythological Tradition and Its Place in Renaissance Art*, trans. Barbara F. Sessions. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961; and Carroll W. Westfall, "Painting and the Liberal Arts: Albert's View," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, October-December, 1969, Vol. XXX, No. 4, pp. 487-506.

teacher make the choices that guide the learner? Sometimes, perhaps; but not always, and perhaps not usually: instead there seemed to be an inward, almost inborn power of judgment in every man—as it directed the man would attend. To those who thus recognized each person's autonomy of judgment, education could only incidentally be a process of teaching and learning; more essentially, it had to be a zig-zag process of trial and error, of studious, self-directed effort by which an inchoate, infantile power of judgment slowly gave itself form, character, perhaps even a transcendent purpose. This effort was study in its most general sense.

Socrates was the first educator, of those whose work we know, to have based his practice on the primacy of study, and Plato was the first theorist to have abstracted from that practice a complete theory of education through study. Here the historian meets a subtle problem, the problem inherent in all efforts to teach: he cannot by himself communicate an understanding of the importance of study; he can only remind others of the doctrines, which they must put to the test of their own judgment and experience. So too Plato cautioned his readers against believing in the adequacy of his words; words alone could not teach, although they might prompt recognition and help us discover what deep down we know, provided we are willing to study the matter, to question, inquire, weigh, conclude, and question anew. Plato, the poet, practiced his doctrine: within his writings, therefore, one encounters numerous contradictions that draw the thoughtful reader into the labor of dialectical study. For instance, with respect to the theme of education, Plato wrote striking passages that seem to counsel a most paternal instruction. At the same time, he hinted that these passages were not to be taken too literally, and his invitation still stands—for any who judge that they may profit from the effort—to give it trial and to study the problem themselves. In doing so, they will experience the heuristic pedagogy that is the mission of philosophy.<sup>19</sup>

Historically, what Plato hoped to achieve by prescribing a program of instruction for his guardians matters little. Plato had scant effect on programmatic practice, for practice was shaped instead by Isocrates and the Sophists. What Plato did accomplish, however, was to influence educational theory through a number of his most characteristic doctrines, which all coincided in suggesting that meaningful education could result only from personal study, from inwardly directed inquiry. In his theory, Plato preferred neither general education nor technical training; his doctrines were amenable to both, and to much else, too, provided that in all cases the condition of the student was recognized concretely, and not by means of thoughtless stereotype, and that the initiative of study was always left with the man studying. These stipulations rested on Plato's most important convictions.

19 See Günther Böhme. *Der pädagogische Beruf der Philosophie*. Munich: Ernest Reinhardt Verlag, 1968, for an interesting discussion of the philosopher's educational role.



First, the Socrates of historic influence, the hero of the early dialogues, depicted himself explicitly as the spiritual midwife, the teacher who could not teach but who could help another give birth to his soul; Plato immortalized this Socrates as the Delphic martyr, the inspiring questioner who provoked others to know that they did not know and thus to join the thoughtful search for self. Second, the doctrine of recollection asserted that words could teach only more words, that all comprehension of things, be they corporal or intelligible, derived not from words but from prior experience with the things and from inward reflection about them; this doctrine was an early, profound, yet unsatisfactory, effort to make sense of the unsolved mystery of creative thinking, thinking by which men really learn.

Third, the fervid god, Eros, denoted the expectant, fecund force that stimulates man's craving urge, drawing men towards all forms of perfection; thus ardent attraction and vaulting aspiration were unconditioned, they existed in the eager eyes of the beholder; this Platonic eroticism, this insatiable, polymorphous teleology, has not been bettered as an explanation of the student's essential power, his selective attention. Fourth, the theory of forms presented a reasoned idea of transcendent perfection; its metaphysical fruits and difficulties have been great, but its pedagogical implications were clear as they took hold in diverse systems: superficial opinion and commonplace discourse were estranged from reality and hence neither could teach; rather men learned from the ideas, from the logos, principle, reason, form, law—natural or divine—for in searching incessantly for the stable idea behind every appearance men would find form in the flux around and within them. Men in search of wisdom would study form in life, form in their lives, converting the chaos to a cosmos; all else was either preparation or slack evasion.

What these convictions implied for educational doctrine Plato best summed up in his allegory of the cave. Vital truths, he stipulated, could not be taught; they could be learned only through the pains of uncertain, unconditioned, open study, for which every man had the capacity but not necessarily the will. "We must conclude that education is not what it is said to be by some, who profess to put knowledge into a soul which does not possess it, as if they could put sight into blind eyes. On the contrary, our own account signifies that the soul of every man does possess the power of learning the truth and the organ to see it with; and that, just as one might have to turn the whole body round in order that the eye should see light instead of darkness, so the entire soul must be turned away from this changing world, until its eye can bear to contemplate reality and that supreme splendour which we have called the Good."<sup>20</sup> Teachers, Plato added, could not fruitfully instruct those who would not teach themselves, who would only respond passively to the most convenient appearance; the most

20 Plato. *Republic*, 518 c-d; from *The Republic of Plato*, trans. F. M. Cornford. New York: Oxford University Press, 1945, p. 232.

teachers could do was to convert such inert souls to active study. This theory of teaching has sunk deep into our philosophical heritage, but it has not fared well in practice.

*After Plato* Before charting the historic swings between Platonic pedagogy and didactic instruction, before, that is, observing the practical frailty of study, let us note two cautions: what follows is a point of view that should not be confused with the past itself, and what follows is meant to celebrate any form of schooling, even pedantic instruction, provided that it is energized by the aspiring student. A world of instruction does not include all efforts at schooling; rather, it includes those that do not believe that the students' active studying is the essential educative power. Schooling that respects the autonomy of study, even though it might deal with study in a quite formal, disciplinary way, should not be confused with a system of instruction, a system of injecting knowledge into inert and empty spirits. Schooling keyed to the self-active student is properly part of the world of study. For this reason the guiding principle in a world of instruction should be understood to be, not schooling, but the delusion that the teacher, on his own initiative, can shape plastic pupils and unilaterally fill their vacant slates with the wisdom of the ages.

Further, in opposing a world of study to a world of instruction, I write primarily as a critic, not as a Rankean historian who aspires to describe the past in all its details as it actually was. At any time, real life is infinitely complicated; it is all things imaginable and cannot be summed up under any single heading. Amidst this complexity, instruction and study at all times co-exist; they will always both be present in varying proportions in all educational phenomena. Consequently, to characterize a particular time and place as either a world of study or one of instruction is to make a defensible judgment about the dominant tone in its educational practice; it is not to make an exclusive description that must hold absolutely with respect to all particulars. And further, the purpose of making such a judgment is not to assert a real, implacable progression in history, as it were, for such progressions are but specters conjured up by scholars turned prophets in order to harry the probity of practice. The purpose of estimating the pedagogical character of various periods is critical; it is to provoke and evoke a sharpened awareness of past, present, and future. By putting the case for a particular characterization as compellingly as possible, one challenges the proponents of contrary views, which may have grown slack for want of opposition, to look at the past anew, to revise or revive their convictions as they then see fit. To put the case for study vis-à-vis an excess of instruction is not to deny categorically the value of instruction, but to try to save it from its own prodigality, for instruction will not suffice to the near exclusion of study.

Those who doubt this proposition might attend to the classical experience. As

small cities grew into giant empires, the reliance on instruction waxed. To be sure, here and there the post-Platonic theorists—whether Stoic or Epicurean, skeptic or cynic—preferred to stimulate and assist the inquisitive few, or at most to shock the stolid into self-sustaining doubt. But in far higher numbers, and with greater prestige and influence, the ancient practitioners took up Sophistic rhetoric with didactic diligence. Imperial expansion always creates a heavy demand for paternal schooling; dependably, the gracious government, the magnanimous military, and the many, well-regulated enterprises that sustain their noble efforts all send forth frequent calls for functionaries. Dutifully responding, educators in the Hellenistic and Roman empires created worlds of instruction in which the schoolmen flourished. As never before in the West, they became honored servants of a paternal state, disbursers of coveted skills, the Charons ferrying fated spirits over the Styx of success. “Hellenism,” an authority states, “has world-historical significance in the full sense only as an educational power. This was in great part the result of a new valuation and use of training.”<sup>21</sup>

In this world of instruction, this scribal culture as H. I. Marrou has termed it, paternal teachers flourished until . . . , until their profligate pedantries consumed the capital of the pagan spirit, a capital that had been slowly built up by the chancy, passionate labors of great men studying. Greek and Roman authors had movingly hallowed the aspiring spirit. But the imperial scale, especially in late Rome, overwhelmed creative effort; talent became degraded as the ersatz esteem of affluent crowds jumped from one empty idol to the next. With self-important caution, the schools won munificent patronage while they adroitly managed to transmit a sycophantic mediocrity from one generation to another. Among the well-instructed, deep thought earned suspicion; to speak truly was imprudent where so many could flatter with finesse. The house of intellect ceased to be a home; it became a whoring road to preferment or to ruin. The young would mock the endless hypocrisies of this righteous sham, until their turn would come to heed the Imperial call: then they too would don their mask according to their rank. Thus sorely used, the state schools became sites of tumult; scholars gave way to placemen who vied for the patronage of the powerful; sincere instruction gave way to entertainment, an aimless effort to gain and hold the fleet attention of the aimless.<sup>22</sup>

Instruction did not suffice; it left too little room for human doubt, inquiry,

21 Carl Schneider. *Kulturgeschichte des Hellenismus*. Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1961, Vol. I, p. 131.

22 For the world of instruction in the Roman empire, see Tom B. Jones. *The Silver-Plated Age*. Sandoval, N.M.: Coronado Press, 1962; G.W. Bowersock. *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969; and H. I. Marrou. *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. George Lamb. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956, pp. 306-7, 310-12. For the Hellenistic world, see M.P. Nilsson, *Die hellenistische Schule*. Munich: C.H. Beck Verlag, 1955, which puts excessive stress on the archaeological reconstruction of school buildings, rather than on their function in the culture; and Carl Schneider. *Kulturgeschichte des Hellenismus*, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-147.

uncertainty, the search for self. One by one, more and more, men gave up the sham in this way or that. Hollow figures filled each empty office, and thus the spirit rebelled against the sword. Classical paganism, equipped with an apparatus of self-propagation unmatched until modern times, could not command allegiance. With mounting frequency, in every order of the state, for good reasons and for bad, a miraculous series of personal conversions occurred: ineluctably the triumphant idea of Rome, the universal city, withered and gave way to love for the wretched victim, to belief in the martyred God and in his martyred followers with their subversive strength in weakness, and to hope for a personal salvation through the grace of an unfathomable father, son, and holy ghost.

From the start, Christianity was a religion of considerable complexity; it harbored diverse, divergent tendencies. Be that as it may, at least in that portion of Christianity that became dominant as Western Catholicism, there was considerable respect for the Platonic view of education, for no matter how much ritual might help, in the end—before one's end—the spirit had to move communicants from within. Mechanistic behaviorism could not suffice for teachings meant to redeem the soul. Consequently, the apostolic Church functioned strangely like an institutionalized Socrates: at its best it did remarkably little instructing and a great deal of reminding. Rome withered, and, together, chance and the Church turned the ancient world of instruction into the medieval and Renaissance world of study.

Augustine set the tone. His *Confessions* reveal the inward struggle of the honest student, the demanding search for a sense of significance, the ever-recurring need for *relevance*.<sup>23</sup> And in *De magistro*, he gave a rationally rigorous Christian statement of the Platonic theory of study. He began with an inquiry into the limits of speech, respect for which gave rise to his carefully limited conception of instruction. Formal teaching must occur through words and other signs; but words do not by themselves give an understanding of their referents, the physical and intellectual things they signify. Rather it is quite the reverse: only with a prior, personal comprehension of the thing can we make sense of the sign; hence people learn by judging what others say according to their inner sense of truth. "All those sciences which they profess to teach, and the science of virtue itself and wisdom, teachers explain through words. Then those who are called pupils consider within themselves whether what has been explained has been said truly; looking, of course, to that interior truth, according to the measure of which each is able. Thus they learn. . . ."<sup>24</sup>

And truly, thus they learned. In far off Ireland, in isolated monasteries, a heritage passed from student to student according to an intense, convoluted,

23 Augustine. *The Confessions*, trans. J. G. Pilkington, in Whitney J. Oates, ed. *Basic Writings of St. Augustine*. New York: Random House, 1948, Vol. 1, pp. 1-256.

24 Augustine. *Concerning the Teacher*, trans. George G. Leckie. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1938, p. 55.

runic measure. As monasteries multiplied, their scriptoria slowly enlarged the repertory of texts, which they so carefully *manufactured* so that the precious books might be studied over centuries. Devout artists learned to transmute words into pictures of paint and stone so that more people might measure their meaning according to the interior truth. The urge to study touched not only the devout; Charlemagne called Alcuin to his court so that the worldly might better discipline both their speech and their conduct. Despite setbacks, the urge to study spread to the Ottonian north, to the Norman south, and along the Romanesque routes of pilgrimage; and when the medieval world burst into the Gothic era of dynamic expansion, study flourished in that fast growing institution, the *studium generale*, or as we call it, the university. Here, students gathered from across Europe to listen to the doctors, the learned ones, and to test their wit and knowledge in the clash of disputation.

Make no mistake, this world of study harbored a significant but subordinate place for instruction, which instruction kept well through the Renaissance. Despite the limits that Augustine put on teaching, he did much to make room in the Christian system for the classical curriculum of rhetorical instruction, the circle of studies that was coming to be known as the seven liberal arts. Throughout the Middle Ages, these were celebrated in poetry, iconography, and learned treatises; these were the stuff of the young cleric's early education, his prelude to independent inquiry and self-sustained study. Unfortunately, the elementary arts were a drudge to study; they were at once difficult and dull. Therefore, regardless of the age at which students took up these studies, and it might be at any time from six to twenty-six, a teacher was an important aid, not because he could ease the students' ways with lucid explanations, but because he could pace and regulate their work and, with sermon and ferrule, stiffen their flagging wills to get done with the dreadful task. The teacher was the *magister*, the master, the director of the *ludus*, the place where the body or the mind was exercised. Thus the school, the *ludus literarius*, was a place for literary exercise, and that is precisely what early schooling involved, a set of exercises that helped students acquire command of the elementary arts.

*Trivial Teachers*      Bluntly put, in the world of study that existed until modern times, teaching was trivial; that is, teaching was trivial in the rigorous sense: it pertained primarily to the trivium, to regulating a student's elementary exercises in grammar, logic, and rhetoric.

Trivial teachers had the self-effacing mission of making themselves unnecessary. The young needed help and discipline in working their way through the first steps of study, in acquiring the basic tools without which all else would be arcane. The teacher, the master of exercises, gave indispensable aid in making that acquisition; but as soon as it was made the student would give up studying the elementary arts and go on to more important matters. Reliance on the brute

discipline doled out by the master of exercises was demeaning, and numerous sources show how men believed it to be important to get done with the arts, to end dependence on magisterial instruction so that one could begin to study freely, as curiosity dictated, and so that one could do it with dignity, without the humiliating discipline of the master of exercises.

For instance, Seneca derided those who took pride in being occupied with the liberal studies; one should work instead to be done with them, for no good came of them themselves; rather, they served simply as a preparation for the truly serious matter of self-formation.<sup>25</sup> The same valuation can be found in Augustine's remark that, even though he was able to master the liberal arts without the aid of a teacher, he found little value in them *per se*.<sup>26</sup> In the Middle Ages John of Salisbury explicitly stated the self-effacing mission of the teacher when he answered the question why some arts were called liberal by observing that "those to whom the system of the Trivium has disclosed the significance of all words, or the rules of the Quadrivium have unveiled the secrets of all nature, do not need the help of a teacher in order to understand the meaning of books and to find the solutions of questions."<sup>27</sup> This same desire to end one's dependence on one's teachers was implicit in the way the Renaissance educator, Battista Guarino, recommended his course of studies: "a master who should carry his scholars through the curriculum which I have now laid down may have confidence that he has given them a training which will enable them, not only to carry forward their own reading without assistance, but also to act efficiently as teachers in their turn."<sup>28</sup> To a remarkable degree the trivial teachers of the Middle Ages and Renaissance agreed with Plato that their job was not "to put knowledge into a soul which does not possess it"; rather, they simply directed, disciplined, and exercised the inborn organ of learning possessed by every man.

As a consequence of this view, educational theorists in the world of study had no difficulty denoting as potential or actual educators all sorts of people who made no claim to imparting knowledge, for these theorists saw that it was not only the schoolmaster who put a man's capacity for learning through a constructive or destructive sequence of exercise. If we were to pursue this observation to the full richness of its implications, we would have to witness the medieval morality plays, study the doctrines of virtues and vices, and follow how they were used to explain the degradation and the elevation of character in works such as Dante's *Divine Comedy*.<sup>29</sup>

25 Seneca, *Epistulae Morales, op. cit.*, n. 3, Letter LXXXVIII, Vol. II, pp. 349-377.

26 Augustine, *Confessions, op. cit.*, n. 23, pp. 55-6.

27 John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon: A Twelfth-Century Defense of the Verbal and Logical Arts of the Trivium*, trans. Daniel D. McGarry. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962, p. 36.

28 Battista Guarino, "De Ordine Docendi et Studenti," in William Harrison Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1963, p. 172.

29 See Sandro Sticca, *The Latin Passion Play: Its Origin and Development*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1970; Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval*

But by understanding the teacher as a master of exercises, and not as an imparter of knowledge, old-time theorists were also able to identify a most varied group of potential educators in a more narrow sense. Thus, a number of books called “the schoolmaster” were intended only in part to be used by masters of actual schools; in the other part, the authors were using the schoolmaster as a literary device for explaining the sequence of exercises for those who would oversee students who were to labor on the elementary matters at home or in the apprentice shop. For instance, Roger Ascham did not write *The Schoolmaster* only to improve classroom practices; his book was “specially purposed for the private bringing up of youth in gentlemen and noble men’s houses, and commodious also for all such, as have forgot the Latin tongue, and would by themselves, without a schoolmaster, in short time, and with small pains, recover a sufficient hability, to understand, write, and speak Latin.”<sup>30</sup> Edmund Coote soon extended this genre to a more popular audience with *The English Schoolmaster*, which was specially purposed for providing the hard-working artisan with a vernacular tool of self-instruction.<sup>31</sup>

As a result of this flexibility, which inhered in the triviality of teaching, schooling keyed to study—schooling based on a system of exercises, not on the impartation of knowledge—could be found occurring most anywhere, for most anyone could regulate the regimen. This fact made possible what Lawrence A. Cremin has found for the seventeenth-century American colonies, namely “that schooling went on anywhere and everywhere, not only in schoolrooms, but in kitchens, manses, churches, meetinghouses, sheds erected in fields, and shops erected in towns; that pupils were taught by anyone and everyone, not only by schoolmasters, but by parents, tutors, clergymen, lay readers, precentors, physicians, lawyers, artisans, and shopkeepers; and that most teaching proceeded on an individual basis, so that whatever lines there were in the metropolis between petty schooling and grammar schooling were virtually absent in the colonies: the content and sequence of learning [study] remained fairly well defined, and each student progressed from textbook to textbook at his own pace.”<sup>32</sup>

What was well defined, it is important to remember, was not learning, but

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*val Art*, trans. Alan J. P. Crick. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1964; Emile Mâle. *The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Dora Nussey. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958; Dante Alighiere. *The Divine Comedy*, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers. 3 volumes. Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1949 ff.; and for a coming together of many of these strands, see Peter Brieger, Millard Meiss, and Charles S. Singleton. *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy*. 2 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969. A fascinating book could be written on character formation in the Middle Ages.

30 Roger Ascham, from the full title of *The Schoolmaster*, in Ascham. *English Works*. W.A. Wright, ed. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1903, p. 171.

31 See the brief analysis of *The English Schoolmaster* in Philippe Ariès. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldick. New York: Vintage Books, 1962, pp. 298-9.

32 Lawrence A. Cremin. *American Education: The Colonial Experience, 1607-1783*. New York: Harper and Row, 1970, pp. 192-3.

"learnynge," getting one's basic linguistic skills through a regulated process of study. Old-time books that addressed the schoolmaster concerned the art of "keeping school," and they show how deeply "teachynge" designed to regulate "learnynge" was pervaded by respect for study. Such a work is the *Ratio Studiorum* of the Jesuits, which set forth a detailed regimen for conducting schools, higher and lower. Its precepts had been derived from a careful study of successful practices as these had developed in the Renaissance, the Middle Ages, and back even to Quintilian and before; and its precepts were to guide the conduct, not only of the many schools the Jesuits founded, but numerous others, Catholic, Protestant, and even secular.<sup>33</sup> Precocious self-starters like Montaigne would repeatedly find these schools to be confining, a check on their power to study; but despite the occasional operative shortcoming, clearly their rationale was the conviction that the students' business was to study: thus Montaigne's teacher could connive with the boy's independent tastes.

Few innovations are to be found in the *Ratio*; it described conventional practice with simplicity and clarity; it specified the duties of all without demeaning the intelligence of any. The system of education that the *Ratio* laid down did not function through a process of teaching and learning; its motive force was study, a word that recurs over and over in the text. The duty of students was to "resolve to apply their minds seriously and constantly to their studies. . .," and the function of the faculty, from the rector through the professors down to the lowly beadle, was to regulate, modulate, sustain, correct, and stimulate the students' studies.<sup>34</sup> Consequently, although the *Ratio* said almost nothing about methods of classroom instruction, of imparting knowledge, it precisely described the programs of disputations, declamations, and other exercises by means of which the faculty could oversee the pupils' progress.

Only the professors of the lower classes were explicitly charged with a responsibility to instruct their students: here again one encounters the old-time triviality of teaching.<sup>35</sup> For the most part, however, regardless of level, the professor's purpose was hortatory and heuristic, rather than didactic: "to move his hearers, both within class and out, as opportunity offers, to a reverence and love of God and of the virtues which are pleasing in His sight, and to pursue all their studies to that end."<sup>36</sup> In the Jesuit system, and in most systems of education well into the Enlightenment, the moving force was the student, and the teacher's

33 For a good discussion of pedagogical method in the various seventeenth-century colleges, see George Snyders. *La Pédagogie en France aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965.

34 Edward A. Fitzpatrick, ed. *St. Ignatius and the Ratio Studiorum*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933, includes a translation of the 1599 version of the *Ratio* by A. R. Ball. For the quotation, see p. 234, for the duties of the faculty, pp. 137-234 *passim*.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 195: "Let the master so instruct the boys who are entrusted to the discipline of our Society, that they will thoroughly learn, along with their letters, the habits worthy of Christians." Aside from this brief mention of instruction, the incessant theme is study.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 150.



function was not to instruct, but to incite, discipline, and modulate that youthful energy.

Here, however, we begin to touch on the historic frailty of equating education with a process of study. As passionate causes wracked human affairs, as they have done from the Reformation onward, men found it hard to maintain restraint; they ceased to be willing merely to help in the self-development of their fellows; they discovered themselves burdened, alas, with paternal responsibility for ensuring that their wards would not falter and miss the mark. Thus the methodological restraint, the respect for study, that characterized the Jesuit *Ratio* did not fully accord with the historic mission of that order, and in practice, over a period of time, its educational methods became less heuristic, more didactic, some would even say rather jesuitical.<sup>37</sup> Pressures—religious, political, social, economic, humanitarian pressures—began to mount upon the schools, and it soon became a mere matter of time before schools would be held accountable for the people they produced.

Signs of transition were frequent during the seventeenth century. An educational lodestone such as Samuel Hartlib drew to himself traditional theorists of the process of study and visionary proponents of our present-day process of teaching and learning. In “Of Education,” a letter solicited by Hartlib, John Milton suggested a few innovations in the traditional scholastic program, but those notwithstanding, his views conventionally concerned the ends and methods of study. He prescribed a taxing but familiar circle of studies, and he explained, not how these should be taught, but how the student should work his way through them. Like the Jesuits, the great Puritan assigned the teacher a hortatory, not a didactic task: to incite the students with a passion for study, “to temper them [with] such lectures and explanations, upon every opportunity, as may lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning and the admiration of virtue; stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men and worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages.”<sup>38</sup> The pressures mounting on the educator to produce stellar students are here reflected in Milton’s rhetoric; but his system still assigned initiative, not to the teacher, but to the student: “these are the studies wherein our noble and gentle youth ought to bestow their time, in a disciplinary way, from twelve to one and twenty.”<sup>39</sup>

37 For an unsympathetic depiction of later Jesuit education by an excellent Spanish novelist, see Ramón Pérez de Ayala. *A.M.D.G.: La vida en un colegio de Jesuitas* in *Obras completas*. Vol. 4. Madrid: Editorial Pueyo, 1931. For an example of the moralizing that penetrated the colleges, albeit not a Jesuit example, read the little book, specially printed for the winners of school-boy prizes by M. l’Abbe Proyard. *L’Écolier Vertueux ou vie édifiante d’un écolier de l’université de Paris*. 6th ed. Paris: Audot et Compagnie, 1810.

38 Milton, “Of Education,” F. A. Patterson, ed. *The Student’s Milton*. New York: F. S. Crofts and Co., 1930, p. 728.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 729.

Hartlib must have winced at Milton's derisive reference to Comenius—"to search what many modern *Januas* and *Didactics*, more than ever I shall read, have projected, my inclination leads me not"—for Comenius had first fired Hartlib's pedagogical interest and was then the fashionable fascination of the educational avant-garde.<sup>40</sup> And Comenius—curious Comenius!—best represents the other tendency of the time, the new tendency to create a world of instruction, to respond to the growing pressures with a visionary program, a still visionary program, in which universal schooling would be the cause of universal peace. Ah! To the lecterns, heroic pedagogues! Your hour is come. The future is yours to make. Hear and heed the noble call: *The Great Didactic Setting forth the whole Art of Teaching all Things to all Men, or A certain Inducement to found such Schools in all the Parishes, Towns, and Villages of every Christian Kingdom, that the entire Youth of both Sexes, none being excepted, shall Quickly, Pleasantly, and Thoroughly Become learned in the Sciences, pure in Morals, trained to Piety, and in this manner instructed in all things necessary for the present and for the future life. . . .*<sup>41</sup>

Comenius cared nought for study; teaching and learning were his thing. He said little about the sequence of exercises to be performed by students in acquiring the elementary arts, but instead set forth the techniques and principles by means of which teachers were to impart knowledge, virtue, and faith to empty minds "with such certainty that the desired result must of necessity follow."<sup>42</sup> Teaching ceased to be trivial; it became essential, it became the desideratum, the arbiter of worth, the very source of man's humanity. "He gave no bad definition who said that man was a 'teachable animal.' And indeed it is only by proper education that he can become a man. . . . We see then that all who are born to man's estate have need of instruction, since it is necessary that, being men, they should not be wild beasts, savage brutes, or inert logs. It follows also that one man excels another in exact proportion as he has received more instruction."<sup>43</sup> Here is the basis for our cult of the degree; and Comenius' faith in the power of the school had no bounds: he even suggested that had there been a better school in Paradise, Eve would not have made her sore mistake, for she "would have known that the serpent is unable to speak, and that there must therefore be some deceit."<sup>44</sup>

In his time, Comenius was a futile visionary. There is much in his thought that his later disciples would not care to follow. In lieu of reasoned argument,

40 *Ibid.*, p. 724.

41 From the title, *The Great Didactic*, trans. M. W. Keating. New York: Russell and Russell, 1967.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 111. In the whole book, a bit over 300 pages long, there is one brief mention of study, per se, with respect to the university, which was to operate on a very high level with only very selected students; *Ibid.*, pp. 281-4. With this exception, instruction, teaching, and learning was Comenius' incessant theme.

43 *Ibid.*, pp. 52 and 56.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 54.

Comenius frequently relied on rather forced renderings of Biblical precedent. He was a spokesman for neither classical humanism nor the budding tradition of inductive and deductive science; he was content to reason by analogy, no matter how strained, and his thought was influenced by the hermetic tradition and by exotic Renaissance memory systems.<sup>45</sup> Yet sharp judgments are often garbed with bizarre accouterments, and Comenius shrewdly perceived the pedagogical future. All the basic concerns of modern Western education were adumbrated in *The Great Didactic*: there was to be universal, compulsory, extended instruction for both boys and girls in efficient, well-run schools in which teachers, who had been duly trained in a “Didactic College,” were to be responsible for teaching sciences, arts, languages, morals, and piety by following an exact order derived from nature and by using tested, efficacious principles. This outline has been given fleshly substance; initiative has everywhere been thoroughly shifted from the student to the teacher; a world of instruction has completely displaced the bygone world of study.

Signs abound of how teaching has won precedence from study. Rarely does one hear that study is the *raison d'être* of an educational institution; teaching and learning is now what it is all about, and with this change, has come a change in the meaning of the venerable word “learning.” Once it described what a man acquired as a result of serious study, but now it signifies what one receives as a result of good teaching. The psychology of learning is an important topic in educational research, not because it will help students improve their habits of study, but because it enables instructors to devise better strategies of teaching. Recall how the *Ratio Studiorum*, a teacher’s handbook, was all about the regimen of study, and then compare it to *The Teacher’s Handbook*, edited by Dwight W. Allen and Eli Seifman. Of its seventy-five chapters, none deal with study, although dependably, the section on “The Instructional Process” opens with chapters on “The Teaching Process” and its responsive correlate “The Learning Process.”<sup>46</sup>

Interest in study has largely disappeared. Consult the profile of current educational research: whereas the 1969 ERIC catalogue lists a meager thirty-eight entries for all topics concerning study, it has 277 entries for Teaching Methods alone, and hundreds and hundreds more for other aspects of that sacred oc-

45 Frances A. Yates in *The Art of Memory*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966, pp. 377-8, draws this connection. It is developed more fully by Maria Teresa Gentile in her fascinating book *Immagine e parola nella formazione dell'uomo*. Rome: Armando Editore, 1965, pp. 286-319. Comenius' place in the pansophic and encyclopedic movement is examined well by Eugenio Garin. *L'educazione in Europa, 1400-1600*, 2nd ed. Bari: Editori Laterza, 1966.

46 See the table of contents, Dwight W. Allen and Eli Seifman, eds. *The Teacher's Handbook*. Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1971. On the change in the meaning of “learning” see the *Oxford English Dictionary* where the first meaning of to learn, generally meaning to acquire knowledge, emphasizes acquisition through study and experience more than through teaching and has generally older examples. The second meaning, emphasizing to receive instruction, is newer and has particularly clear examples from the late 1700s on.

cupation.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, in the same way that the meaning of “learning” has changed, so has that of “study.” It has ceased to be a self-directed motivating force, which to be sure, may have needed a master of exercises to help sustain it through the dull preliminaries. No longer the source, study itself has become a consequence of instruction, or such is the premise of those inevitable treatises that expertly explain how to teach pupils how to study. In these, study no longer depends on the student’s initiative; no—study, according to a dissertation on *The Problem of Teaching High School Pupils How to Study*, “is a pupil activity of the type required to satisfy the philosophy of education held by the teacher.”<sup>48</sup> Ah yes; man is a teachable animal—*animal docilis*.

*A World of Instruction*

Since the mid-eighteenth century, the Comenian vision has been progressively actualized. A complicated constellation of causes, many of which began working in the Renaissance or before, helped to create the present world of paternal instruction. A hasty rehearsal of the more salient of these will show how our reliance on teaching has behind it a powerful impetus.

During the late seventeenth century, European population, especially in the north, declined as the result of the recurrent demographic pressures, which were caused by the ineluctable positive checks that Malthus described—poor climate, epidemic, war, and famine. Around 1700, demographic advance again got underway, and despite occasional halts and minor regressions, it is still going on.<sup>49</sup> The population of Europe is estimated to have been about 110 million in 1720, 210 million in 1820, 500 million in 1930, and 614 million in 1968.<sup>50</sup> A general rise in per capita wealth accompanied the increase in population; and since the demand for formal education is partly a function of the wealth people command, a growing percentage of the growing population in Europe has been seeking formal education. This fast acceleration in the demand for education fostered increased reliance on the pedagogical agency of mass production, the instructional program of the school.

At the same time that the demographic expansion increased the demand for

47 The sub-headings under “study” show that a good part of the 38 do not really concern study in its traditional senses: Study Abroad-2, Study Centers-6, Study Facilities-1, Study Guides-15, Study Habits-5, Study Skills-9.

48 Joseph Seibert Butterweck. *The Problem of Teaching High School Pupils How to Study*. New York: Teachers College Bureau of Publications, 1926, p. 2; C.A. Mace. *The Psychology of Study*. Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1968, is somewhat of an exception in that it is written directly for the student, and it only in part, the lesser part, advises on how to learn simply what the teacher tries to teach; the better part concerns how to study on one’s own motivation.

49 For a good, brief discussion of this turning point, see K. F. Helleiner, “The Vital Revolution Reconsidered,” in D. V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley, eds. *Population in History: Essays in Historical Demography*. London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1965, pp. 79-86.

50 W. Gordon East, “The Historical Background,” in George W. Hoffman, ed. *A Geography of Europe*, 3rd ed. New York: The Ronald Press, 1969, p. 83.

education, it made the school a more convenient educational agency and weakened the effectiveness of certain long-standing alternatives to the school. Europeans had long before cleared their meager complement of the world's land, and consequently the growth of population meant an increase in its density: larger cities, more towns, fewer areas of rural isolation. Population per square mile in Western Europe in 1720 was 92, in 1820, 150, in 1930, 247, and in 1968, 306. The figures for those years for the British Isles were 66, 173, 406, and 488. In the Netherlands, population density was 231 in 1840, 480 in 1914, and almost one thousand in 1966.<sup>51</sup> With this growth in density, the day school became a more feasible, efficient, and convenient institution, for even most rural areas were sufficiently well populated to sustain schools without grave problems of transportation. The same increase in population density and growing ease of travel that made the school more feasible had the opposite effect on the school's major competitor, apprenticeship, for young people, having put in a year or two learning the skills of their trade, found it increasingly easy to then jump their contracts, à la Rousseau, and to melt into the sea of people, ready to earn a living without having to work off their debts to their teachers.<sup>52</sup>

Over time, these demographic causes greatly increased the reliance on schools as the main agency of education. Other causes contributed to transforming the school from a place of study into a means of instruction. Such was the effect of diverse philosophical and psychological developments. Lockean empiricism, especially as it was developed in France by the sensationalists and ideologues, gave rigor to the view that man was a teachable animal, for it held that ideas and intellectual qualities were not inborn, but that these were etched into the receptive human slate by the hand of experience. With packaged experiences, the school could etch fine minds and upstanding characters.<sup>53</sup> Nor was empiricism the only metaphysic to hold such a view; similar results came from quite different tendencies in German thought. On the one hand, Herbartian realism postulated the conditioned formation of mind as a person's subjective phenomenal awareness was continually disrupted by the interventions of objective realities; the claim that experimental psychology should be the scientific base for instructional technique rests primarily on Herbart's philosophy.<sup>54</sup> On the other

51 Figures for Western Europe (France, Low Countries, and Luxembourg) and for the British Isles are from *Ibid.*, p. 83; for the Netherlands, from Guido G. Weigand, "Western Europe," in *Ibid.*, p. 250. For comparison, population density in the United States was 5.5 in 1820, 41.2 in 1930, and 56 in 1968. Colonial population in 1720 is estimated to have been about 466,000 in comparison to the 110,000,000 for Europe.

52 For Rousseau's apprenticeship, see *Les Confessions*, in *Oeuvres complètes*. Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1959, Vol. 1, pp. 30-44.

53 For an excellent study of the ideologues, see Sergio Moravia. *Il tramonto dell'illuminismo: Filosofia e politica nella società francese, 1770-1810*. Bari: Editori Laterza, 1968, esp. pp. 315-444.

54 On Herbart, see Fritz Seidenfaden. *Die Pädagogik des Jungen Herbart*. Weinheim: Verlag Julius Beltz, 1967; Arthur Bruckmann. *Pädagogik und philosophisches Denken bei J. Fr. Herbart*.

hand, absolute idealists such as Fichte avoided postulating the perfect solipsism, towards which they tended, by pointing to the practical effect of language conditioning, observing how each ego became locked into a definite community by the inevitable acquisition of one or another mother tongue, its concomitant culture, its characteristic style of life and thinking; this theory of language conditioning provided the theoretical basis for developing national systems of education, that is, education for and through a nationality.<sup>55</sup>

As these divergent theories of man all coincided in depicting him as highly teachable, a number of divergent historic visions all concurred in requiring that men be taught paternally. In the mid-eighteenth century, spokesmen for the state and its prerogatives began to see that investment in the training of the population was a good way to increase the power of the state. Whatever its result, the intent behind the *Landschulreglement* that Frederick the Great instituted in Prussia in 1763 was to increase the power of the state by improving the productive skills of the people and sharpening the acumen of prospective officers and civil servants. Likewise, *raison d'état* was the rationale for the educational reforms imposed by Joseph II in Austria in the 1780s. In his attempt to institute compulsory, secular education, he stressed an elementary and secondary training that would improve the productivity of the population and carefully limited higher education so as not to produce a flock of underemployed, meddlesome intellectuals.<sup>56</sup>

Others, who advocated pedagogical programs not much different from those of Frederick the Great or Joseph II, did so with quite different motives, yet despite these differences, the motives all led to a paternal pedagogy. One rationale came from the spreading fascination with the possibility of progress: day by day, so it seemed, men were discovering ever better ways to order their affairs, and if some agency such as the school could systematically disseminate this knowledge, men could look forward to steady, unlimited improvement in the quality of life on earth. Such was the vision inspiring educational planners like Condorcet. Another view, closely related to the progressive, might be called the philanthropic; here men like Robert Owen and Johann Pestalozzi looked to schooling, not only as a means of ensuring continuous future improvement, but, further, as a means of correcting the human degradation that presently resulted

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Zurich: Morgarten Verlag, 1961; and Alfredo Saloni. *G. F. Herbart: La vita—Lo svolgimento della dottrina pedagogica*, 2 vols. Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1937.

55 See for the basic conception, Johann Gottlieb Fichte. *Addresses to the German Nation*, trans. R. F. Jones and G. H. Turnbull. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1922. Fichte was not the originator of inquiry into the relation between language and the idealistic ego; the history of the subject is dealt with in great detail by Brune Liebrucks. *Sprache und Bewusstsein*, 5 vols. Frankfurt: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1964 ff.

56 See A. V. Judges, "Educational Ideas, Practice and Institutions," in A. Goodwin, ed. *The American and French Revolutions, 1763-1793 (The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VIII)*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1965, esp. pp. 167-9.

from economic exploitation and social dislocation. Still another view, which could partake of both the progressive and the philanthropic, was that of the political idealists; thus one found both French revolutionaries and German patriots who resisted Napoleonic domination arguing that the educator must train the perfect citizen of the perfect polity.<sup>57</sup> In these ways, statist, progressives, philanthropists, and political idealists all looked to a system of compulsory instruction and state influence in higher education as an important, positive means of implementing their historic visions. Add to this the fact that most everywhere those who controlled dynamic industrial wealth were easily convinced that educational reform would be to their economic interest, and one should not be surprised that universal, compulsory schooling has indeed become universal.

Once these systems of schooling were set up, secondary causes began to work, making the schools increasingly places for instruction, rather than for study. Whatever the rationale behind it, the principle of compulsory schooling automatically put the student in a subservient relation to his teachers, and it became most difficult to maintain the conviction that the student provides the motive force of the whole process. The principle of compulsion proclaimed to each and every person that there was something essential that he must allow one or another school to do to him between the ages of six and sixteen. Such a proclamation did not encourage initiative on the part of the student, but it did give the professional educator a very strong mandate and considerable responsibility to shape his wards according to one favored pattern or another. Thus, a large teacher corps has come into being in every Western country; it is accorded professional status and is charged with a clear-cut mission: it must produce, and in order to produce, it must assert initiative. Student servility is an integral function of professional accountability in compulsory systems of schooling.

As the principle of compulsion and the drive towards professionalism both decreased the student's initiative and increased the reliance on instruction, so too did the ancillary functions that were added on to the instructional system once it came into being. One such function was the practice of making school attendance and performance the basic means of certifying the competence of people in every Western society. With this practice the student has not only be-

57 For Condorcet and other French examples, see Frank E. Manuel. *The Prophets of Paris*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965; H. C. Barnard. *Education and the French Revolution*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1969; E. Allain. *L'Oeuvre scolaire de la Revolution, 1789-1902*. New York: Burt Franklin, 1969; and Paul Arbourse-Bastide. *La doctrine de l'éducation universelle dans la philosophie d'Auguste Comte*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957. For the Owenites and other English figures, see John F.C. Harrison, ed. *Utopianism and Education: Robert Owen and the Owenites*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1968; and W.A.C. Stewart and W.P. McCann. *The Educational Innovators, 1750-1880*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967. For political idealism in Germany, see the excellent study by Andreas Flitner. *Die politische Erziehung in Deutschland: Geschichte und Problem, 1750-1880*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1957.

come legally subservient to his teachers for the better part of his early years, he has also become socially and economically dependent on them, and on his ability to perform as they command, for the general outline of his life prospects. As communities come to rely on schools to certify the competencies of their people, they project onto those schools a productive mission to mold mechanically the populace; and students, who have increasingly seen schooling as a huge machine for stamping them with success or failure, have acquiesced, eagerly or hopelessly according to their prospects, and have been content to be taught. Consequently, the social uses to which an apparatus of instruction could be put reinforced the single-minded reliance on instruction within that apparatus. From this stemmed the following paradox: at no time in the West have there been greater resources for self-education available to all than in the twentieth century, yet at no time has there been more extensive reliance on formal instruction for the education of all.

*Dropouts* Here, however, we may touch on premonitions of yet another great historic change, for many—some silently and some with a show—are making use of their actual opportunities. Affluence and social security are greatly diminishing the urge to make the competitive climb up the scholastic ladder. Many of the young find themselves sent to school for reasons they do not accept, and they soon realize that the didactic machine in which they are caught harnesses culture to purposes that they disdain. A number react; they reject the system; they drop out, emotionally if not physically. In response, the aging pundits pontificate, bitter that their parental love is not requited: the young of the day scorn culture, despise reason, and subvert the highest values of tradition. Perhaps, perhaps for a few, but the blanket judgment is too quick. At their most chaotic, modern universities are still quite staid in comparison to those medieval colleges where rules stipulating that students must check their weapons on entering academic buildings usually could not be enforced.<sup>58</sup>

To find the place of study within our current world of instruction, look first at those who do not succeed within the system. The ubiquitous dropouts and the non-students who seem to hang around every center of learning are officially perceived as educational losses simply by virtue of their non-presence in the all-important process of instruction. Little is known about the way that the particular people who insist on not being present in scholastic circles are actually developing intellectually over a significant period, and what generalizations there are, positive and negative, about their intellectual attitudes are based most often on public positions that they have asserted at one or another strained moment, not on a sense of their inner intellectual trajectory as it unfolds over time. Too

<sup>58</sup> See Aries' interesting chapter on "The Roughness of Schoolchildren," in *Centuries of Childhood, op. cit.*, n. 30, pp. 315-328.



often, the youth who stomps out of school, trashing windows while shouting obscene, anti-intellectual slogans, is immediately stigmatized as uneducable; the inane violence of his adolescent acts and the vacuous character of his passing imprecations are taken as indicative of the inevitable, irrevocable character of his life. For some, this may be the case, but for many, disequilibrium, rebellion, and breakdown may be essential steps on the way to mature, sustained self-development.

That, at any rate, is a suspicion we might infer for our cultural history, which abounds with redeemed rebels. Take, for instance, Goethe, the great Goethe. He was sent from his home at Frankfurt to study jurisprudence at Leipzig at the tender age of sixteen, affluent, emotionally unprepared, and intellectually unwilling. Cocky, talented, adventurous, he quickly found his way into Leipzig's bohemia; he took to dressing rebelliously, like Werter, in high boots, bright blue pants, and open shirt, to indulging in affairs shocking to good society, and to muttering valuations that outraged the guardians of culture. At nineteen he gave up his pretense to academic study, and as a sympathetic biographer described it, "he returned home a boy in years, in experience a man. Broken in health, unhappy in mind, with no strong impulses in any one direction, uncertain of himself and of his aims, he felt, as he approached his native city, much like a repentant prodigal, who had no vision of the fatted calf awaiting him. His father, unable to perceive the real progress he had made, was very much alive to the slender prospect of his becoming a distinguished jurist."<sup>59</sup> Yet, through such disasters the young make real progress towards developing powers of self-direction.

In recognition of this fact, Goethe's biographer reflected profoundly, "The fathers of poets are seldom gratified with the progress in education visible to them; and the reason is that they do not know their sons to be poets, nor understand that the poet's orbit is not the same as their own. They tread the common highway on which the milestones accurately mark distances; and seeing that their sons have trudged but little way according to this measurement, their minds are filled with misgivings. Of that silent progress, which consists less in travelling on the broad highway, than in the development of the limbs which will make a sturdy traveller, parents cannot judge."<sup>60</sup> Thus, after years of seemingly aimless experiment, the young man may suddenly take hold of himself, his imagination fired by some demanding goal towards which he will make astounding progress. Yet even that will not be the end of the saga, for the very quality that first held him back, the power to reject the given, is precisely the quality that will enable him repeatedly to reassess and renew his purposes as each approaches fulfillment. Thus it is a grave error to believe that those who

59 George Henry Lewes. *The Life of Goethe*. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1965, p. 8.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

leave the system are uneducable or irrelevant to a substantive assessment of education in our time. On the contrary, we are likely to find among these the most educable representatives of the young, provided we recognize that, for better or for worse, *study* is the operative principle functioning in the education, curiously, of the so-called non-student.

Furthermore, this fact that study may be functioning fruitfully among the dropouts and non-students of our time leads to the decisive refutation of any stigma of elitism that may be attached to the tradition of self-directed study. The *Bildungsroman* has become the literary genre natural to spokesmen for the dispossessed. The theme is incessant: one cannot break the bonds of degrading dependence by depending on the gracious aid of others; turn within and there one will find an unconditioned energy that can be brought to fruition in spite of obstacles if one will but will it. In this world of instruction, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* is our sequel to *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* and George Jackson's Soledad Prison cell was our doomed equivalent to Montaigne's study. And because study is the great unconditioned force in human development, it is the truly democratic agency of education. Moreover, although unconditioned and open to any man, rich or poor, study is a drive that draws on a certain dissatisfaction and critical unease; hence it can function as a great leveling up force, for it will most passionately move those who chafe at exploitation, who rancor at injustice, not those who complacently believe that they and their's have surely arrived.<sup>61</sup>

It is not enough, however, to observe that the place for study in our world of instruction is outside of the system among dropouts, non-students, and those subjected to a heritage of discrimination and exploitation. If the levelling up potential of study is to be allowed to do its work, a place for study must be created within our world of instruction; the system must be opened up so that the self-directing student can achieve the unexpected, so that those who are going to erase centuries of dependence are not absurdly expected to do so by being servilely dependent on their paternal teachers or by being forced to adopt a resentful, separatist program of self-help.

But the goal of finding a place for study in a world of instruction is too easily proclaimed; the basic character of any system is not changed by calling merely for an altered goal. To change a system significantly men need a coherent vision of possibilities, like that propounded by Comenius; and they need, too, a set of real historic forces, like the political, economic, and demographic drives that gave rise to the industrial nation-states, from which they can derive suffi-

61 This point is put very well by Alice Walker, a young Black writer, in "The Civil Rights Movement: What Good Was It?," *The American Scholar*, Vol. 36, No. 4, Autumn 1967, pp. 550-54. See also, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Grove Press, 1966; George Jackson. *Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson*. New York: Bantam Books, 1970; and Goethe. *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*. trans. Thomas Carlyle. New York: Collier Books, 1962.

cient energy to actualize their vision. On this realistic basis, what chance is there of finding a place for study in our world of instruction?

To begin, recall that Comenius developed his vision of universal compulsory instruction by ignoring study as a motive force of education and by instead locating the educative drive in the process of teaching and learning. As soon as one accepts that teaching and learning is what makes education happen, most features of the great didactic follow smoothly. Then instruction becomes the key; the great question becomes that of deciding what should be taught and choosing the means that will effectively teach it. By assuming that learning is indeed what pupils do in response to teaching, one naturally concludes that whatever is in the curriculum, manifest or latent, will eventually find its way into the child. Thus, in present-day discussions of the curriculum, one often hears assertions that by determining what the instructional program will be, one is determining what a people will learn. What the schools will teach, the citizens shall learn. But this is not the case. Each student always exercises a final modulation, which can be thorough and complete; and as long as curriculum planners base their labors on the question of what ought to be taught and learned, they are doomed to frustration, for it is not in their power to answer this question effectually.

Comenius was only half correct: teaching *is* the teacher's function. But learning, in passive response to the teacher, is not the job of the student. Study is his business; and the motive force of education is not teaching and learning, but teaching and study. In designing a curriculum, men should not pose the impossible question of what ought to be learned; rather they should put to themselves the more productive, restrained question of what opportunities for study should they offer to the young. What opportunities for study ought to be offered? What agencies should be used? What helps should be given? These are among the important questions that educators would pose if they saw the motive force of education to be a process of teaching and study. This conception leads logically to a vision of universal, comprehensive, *voluntary* study drawing sustenance from diverse educational agencies. This vision might be described in a book with the Comenian title—*The Perfect Paideia, Setting forth the Complete circle of Studies Opening all Things to all Men, or a certain Inducement to provide Opportunities for Studying all Subjects on all Levels through all Agencies of Communication, so that every Person, regardless of Creed, Color, or Class, will at all Times find Open to him a Multiplicity of meaningful Means for mastering the Sciences, refining his Purposes, and partaking in Culture and Art, and in this manner to have the occasion to realize his full human possibilities as he should see fit. . . .*

A vision is a vision; it is not practical, right now, that is; the means to its implementation cannot be specified in actionable detail. Nor does a vision become real through a single policy; rather it takes many different steps, here and there, big and small, direct and oblique. Hence, as a practical measure of trying to

implement such a vision, it would be imprudent to stake everything, as some proponents of de-schooling society seem to do, on imposing an involuntary volunteerism.<sup>62</sup> A future cannot be built by blank opposition to the present, no matter how imperfect that present may be. Rather, a future is built by making innumerable, diverse trials at living according to new principles; by many positive attempts rather than by a single grand negation. As manifold efforts are made to create various places for study in our world of instruction, the basis of a new system will grow within the interstices of the old.

Historically, the path from the Comenian vision to the modern reality was by no means straight, and it is strewn with the wreckage of numerous, delightfully bizarre experiments; so too the way to the future will be a crooked path marked by fascinating failures. To traverse it, we need a superabundance of possibilities so that on the foundation of each failure we can make our next attempt, perhaps with slightly more success. Hence, halting, diverse development can best be encouraged by the playful imagination setting forth all manner of quasi-practical, quasi-utopian possibilities. In this spirit I present the suggestions that follow, knowing full well that some are more practical than others, that with each serious difficulties might block implementation, and that at best all are quite limited measures. These difficulties do not seriously bother me, however, for I suggest the ideas, not as an immediate basis for a program of practical reform, but as a speculative beginning that may engender more and more speculation, out of which there may eventually come sufficient ideas and energy to recreate a world of study. Thus, the exercise that follows should be entered with speculative glee, with a boyish enthusiasm for pure possibilities, with the inclination to preface everything with Why not? and I wonder if. . . .

*Study Schools for Children*     I wonder if it would be possible to turn the elementary school into a place offering the child genuine opportunities to study, in a disciplinary way, the basic means that men have devised for communicating and manipulating the forms that give rise to culture. In

62 See Ivan Illich, "Why We Must Abolish Schooling," *The New York Review of Books*, Vol. XV, No. 1, July 2, 1971, pp. 9-15; Ivan Illich, "Education Without School: How It Can Be Done," *Ibid.*, Vol. XV, No. 12, January 7, 1971, pp. 25-31; and his remarks in "Toward A Society Without Schools," *Center Report*, Vol. IV, No. 1, February 1971, pp. 3-6. In some ways, my analysis parallels Illich's position. There are some important differences, however. Illich, it seems to me, does not break out of the trap of equating education with a process of teaching and learning. Like that other wandering East European priest, Comenius, Illich speaks continually about teaching and learning, objecting rightly to the Comenian agencies through which these activities now obsessively occur. Illich does not dwell on the importance of study, and I think that as a result of this omission, he falls into an excessively negative position in which the success of that which he favors, an open system of teaching and learning, entails the failure, the rejection, of that which he opposes, the closed, scholastic system of teaching and learning. If, however, that which we favor is conceived of as an opportunity for study, not as an alternative system of teaching and learning, the negative endeavor of "de-schooling" becomes unnecessary and one can go about the positive task of making diverse places for study in the world of instruction.

thinking about elementary education, one has difficulty not considering education as a process of teaching and learning. The child seems so ignorant, so plastic, that one is drawn to typing the child as a passive learner, as someone whose business it is to absorb responsively whatever the kind, experienced teacher should choose to teach. Yet observe a child working to get the hang of a new game, tinkering with the innards of an old clock, or exploring the sea life trapped in rocky pools when the tide is low. Here is the child studying. And if here, why not in the school?

In actuality, this question is not new. Many others have been struck with the intensity of concentration displayed by the child studying, and many reformers have often tried to make room for this quality in the school through what is often called the child-centered curriculum. Begin with the child's interests, let him get involved, and then subtly teach in response to his curious questions. The problem with this curriculum, aside from its subterfuge instruction, is that the sobriety of the child's interests is not taken into account. One makes the child childish by thinking that to appeal to his interests one must begin with something like a boat or some other thing from the grown-up world that the child knows primarily as a toy.<sup>63</sup> The child's real interests concern the mysteries of language, basic categories of classification, techniques of calculation and transformation, skills of gesture, of forming material, of depicting thoughts and images, of sensing the sense of his senses. Given the opportunity to study, not to learn mind you, but to study reading, writing, and arithmetic, in a disciplinary way, from the ages of six to thirteen or fourteen, many children would seriously respond. These studies, qua studies, would be the truly child-centered curriculum.

All these studies have one thing in common: they pertain to real, vital problems that all people continually experience, those of communicating their thoughts and feelings, of ascertaining fact and fiction. All, no matter how accomplished, endlessly encounter frustrating limitations on the powers of communication over which they have command. Life is a litany: I meant to say; it seemed that; so sorry you misunderstood. The child, too, feels this frustration; and to deal with the basic studies, qua studies, teachers might heighten the child's awareness of this frustration and then assist the child's effort to overcome his difficulties. Thus, to deal with these matters as studies, not as topics for teaching and learning, it is essential for the teacher to think first not of the corpus of communicative techniques that people have devised, but of the real problems of communication that the children before him are having. In a study school, the teacher's job would not be to instruct, but to provoke and oversee the incessant exercise of each student's powers of communication and calculation.

63 See the example of the Lincoln School unit of study based on boats for third graders given by Lawrence A. Cremin. *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961, pp. 283-6.

This is not the place to lay out a course of study for such schools in detail. Many variations might be tried, but in choosing what studies to offer, it should be assumed that the student, although a child, is nevertheless no slouch: he will want to get down to the fundamentals of his real intellectual difficulties. Hence, given the opportunity, he will concentrate on the basics. Beyond this, suffice it to note one caution: the effectiveness of opportunities for basic elementary study will depend considerably on the responsiveness of both the students and their teacher to the day-to-day actualities of their situations, and the teacher will have a heavy responsibility to refrain from turning the exercises he oversees into an ersatz system of instruction through which he imposes a disembodied "right way" upon depersonalized pupils. Instead of prescribing the right way, the teacher's business is to help students explore and master the various ways that may work for the particular purposes they have at hand. And should this be done, the elementary school might well become a place of study in which the young would have the opportunity to begin asserting personal control over the diverse means of communication, on the use of which all of culture depends.

*Apprentice Schools*     I wonder if it would be possible to break down the unnatural separation that adolescents experience between the world of work and the world of study. As places of study, schools, especially the secondary schools, are vitiated by a pervasive unreality. The child's sphere of awareness is generally still quite circumscribed, centering on the home and locality: beyond that there is little difference between the world of make-believe and the world of distant actuality, for both must be conceived by an imagination that does not yet know the subtle difference between myth and abstraction. But with puberty, an awareness of the other, of complexity, of the world beyond one's immediate experience begins to dawn. Study schools might be designed to suit this curiosity.

Historians of education still have much to learn about apprenticeship; for instance, we do not know how fully "vocational" the system really was. It may have been that many boys were apprenticed to a trade, not primarily to learn the trade, but simply to pay for their elementary studies.<sup>64</sup> Be that as it may, let us at least see that education through work, study while in close contact to the world of work, has many strictly educational, non-vocational values. Most important, it allows the young student to see the real human uses to which men put the ideas and skills that he is beginning to study. Is it possible to set up in the world of work a system of apprentice schools? This term, let us recognize, has its dangers, for apprentice schools are *not* "vocational" in that on the completion of their program students would have been stamped with a set of marketable skills. Rather, apprentice schools would place opportunities to study

64 For suggestive remarks concerning nonvocational apprenticeship, see Aries, *op.cit.*, n. 31, pp. 365-69.

“academic” subjects in situations where the practical, worldly uses of those subjects could be directly experienced by curious students.

As a prelude to putting the case for the possibility of such schools, let us ponder briefly the subject of school finance. The state took over responsibility for providing education for “its” children primarily as a substitute for the family. The reasoning went that since most families could not afford to support their children in school, the state should do so for them. There was a certain misunderstanding, here, on the part of the legislating elites, for historically only upper-class families had had prime responsibility for educating their children. The responsibility for educating the children of the lower and middle classes had been largely corporate, not familial. Most children grew up as dependent participants in units that were more economic than conjugal. Because the educational responsibilities of economic groups were taken for granted, in sixteenth-century England when schooling began to displace apprenticeship in the larger cities, a number of the guilds quite naturally financed schools.<sup>65</sup> And this historical precedent also seems to be in accord with the natural order of things. All organized human enterprises derive great benefits from public provisions for education. All corporate organizations—labor, business, government, philanthropy—therefore have a concomitant responsibility to help house, finance, and staff those educational undertakings. Were this principle recognized, it would easily become possible to create apprentice schools within all these organizations.

These schools would not be a means of teaching children a trade. By apprentice schools one does not have in mind a takeover of existing vocational training by interested industries. No; each corporate organization should be responsible for making room within itself for places of open secondary study, the function of which is to offer a full, round education, not special training. Moreover, the student should not be tied to a particular organization for all his secondary study; rather the apprentice school should be a roving school that offers its students the opportunity to experience the inner workings of all different kinds of adult activity as well as the opportunity throughout to study the basic cultural skills and ideas that pertain to the world he is experiencing. By achieving such a combination, the apprentice school would be like—only more general and on a broader scale—the executive training programs that many businesses run, in which the prospective manager spends six weeks or so in each department of the company, getting acquainted with its operations while studying the general principles of the business.

A premise of the apprentice school would be a belief that adolescents could study the cultural core of secondary education somewhat on their own, without being housed regularly in a special school apart. We no longer need to confuse quiescence with continuity. A basis for sustained study can be provided for

65 For such foundations in sixteenth-century England, see Kenneth Charlton. *Education in Renaissance England*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965, pp. 92-3.

young men and women on the move in roving schools by developing special programs of studies that they would follow through closed-circuit television for half a day in places allotted to them by whatever organization they happened then to be observing. That cultural core might be specially designed, for instance, in a five year sequence, with years devoted respectively to the Earth, to Life and Health, to Industry, to Law and Government, to Art and Culture. While these study programs could be centrally produced and broadcast, local educational authorities would be responsible for handling the logistics of arranging opportunities for everyone in an age group to become involved in the day-by-day operations of the various local organizations that dealt with the earth and its uses, life and health, industry and labor, law and government, the arts and culture. Such a program would greatly burden the world of work and it would profoundly alter the pattern by which resources were mobilized for secondary education. But if it could be effectively organized, it could tremendously stimulate secondary school students; it would requisition resources for secondary education more in keeping with the distribution of benefits from that education; and it would greatly lessen the alienation from the adult society that the young learn from the present pedagogical absurdity of isolating them from adult realities. It might even humanize the practical world by reminding those caught up in it that there is more to life than adult obsessions.

*An Encyclopedia of Study*     I wonder if it would be possible to adapt encyclopedias and other works of reference so that they would be more helpful in self-set study. The word "encyclopedia" originally meant the complete curriculum, the full circle of studies, a meaning that it held up to the age of print when writers and publishers began to apply it to books that dealt inclusively with all subjects of knowledge—the reader's university. Such books had been written before the spread of printing; perhaps the most representative was the *Speculum majus* by Vincent of Beauvais (1190-1264) who divided his work into four parts, which treated nature, theology, morals, and history.<sup>66</sup> This functional organization of the encyclopedia—in which the different types of knowledge, however they were conceived, were set forth, each in its integrity—characterized early encyclopedias. The practice of arranging encyclopedia articles alphabetically was an eighteenth-century innovation which gained much prestige when it was used in the great French Encyclopedia edited by Diderot. Yet in developing their Encyclopedia, Diderot and his colleagues had clear ideas about the system of knowledge; they almost used a functional organization dividing knowledge into the sciences, the liberal arts, and the me-

66 Emile Mâle uses the Mirrors of Vincent of Beauvais as the basis for his analysis of Gothic iconography in *The Gothic Image, op. cit.*, n. 29, *passim*. It is an excellent introduction to Vincent's encyclopedic conception.



chanical arts; and they chose the alphabetical arrangement, not for its intellectual superiority, but for its reputed convenience for readers.<sup>67</sup>

Alphabetic encyclopedias are by no means the only possibility, and for purposes of study, this form has several drawbacks. The most serious is that it fragments knowledge. And fragmentation holds the reader in a dependent state with respect to the diverse, authoritative contributors to the great collective work. With feelings of dependence, people develop the habit of going to the encyclopedia for instructive information about things they do not know well; but they will at the same time find it hard to study the alphabetic encyclopedia and to derive from it a full understanding of a connected circle of subjects, a clear conception of the varieties of knowledge, their principles, interrelationships, and applications. To be sure, by means of cross references one can get from Charlemagne to Alcuin and onward, from topic to topic. And further, articles on the basic disciplines (provided that one knows their names) give an overview of their principles; but the way these principles are to be worked out and applied in substantive fullness is rarely displayed. In short, the alphabetic encyclopedia tends to instruct, especially on isolated particulars, and is difficult to study. It is no accident that this format came into vogue as the world of instruction began to flourish.

Alternatives are available. One of the most interesting is the *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade* which is perhaps the greatest encyclopedic innovation since the work of Diderot. The *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade* has been designed for study, "to permit the modern man to grapple lucidly with the problems that confront him in furnishing himself with a complete and synthetic view of contemporary science while at the same time recalling to himself the road that humanity has to date traversed."<sup>68</sup> The encyclopedia is divided into two series, the methodological and the historical, some fifteen volumes on particular subjects, each between 1,000 and 2,000 pages long, have been published in each series. The great value of such a format is that it encourages the thoughtful study of large subjects, of coherent systems of principles; it helps people form a conceptual framework by which they can intelligently relate one thing to another. Yet that is not the end of its value. Contrary to the assertion of the *Encyclopedia Britan-*

67 For the systematic conceptions behind the French Encyclopedia, see Jean Le Rond D'Alembert. *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopedia of Diderot*, trans. Richard N. Schwab. New York: The Library of Liberal Arts, 1963. Some of that Encyclopedia's more interesting articles can be found in N. S. Hoyt and T. Cassirer, eds. and trans. *Encyclopedia, Selections*. New York: The Library of Liberal Arts, 1965. There is a good article on the history of encyclopedias in the XIth edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

68 Catalogue of *Bibliothèque de la Pléiade*, No. 56, Spring, 1970, p. 16. The format of the encyclopedia itself conduces to study, not reference, as the volumes are easily portable and light enough to hold comfortably while reading. I am pursuing comparisons like these further in a project on "Patterns of Popularization: a comparison of how encyclopedias and popular books in French, German, and English offer access to knowledge and culture," which I am doing in The Institute of Philosophy and Politics of Education.

nica, the *Pléiade* is in some ways more useful for reference than is an alphabetical encyclopedia: to be sure it takes a little more thought to decide to look up Beethoven in the volume on *Histoire de la Musique*, instead of in that section devoted to Beethoven, but that inconvenience is more than made up for when one decides to relate Beethoven to Mozart, for one can do it simply by turning back a few pages, rather than by scuttling after another ten-pound tome.

Such innovations in encyclopedias are by no means the only possibilities for orienting serious academic publications to the interest of the independent student. The extensive *Que sais-je* series published by the Presses Universitaires de France is an admirable example of a leading academic press commissioning important scholars to write lucid introductions to their specialties that will thereafter be aggressively marketed to "non-students" of every type. Yet the example of the *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade* seems particularly pertinent in the English speaking world, for the staid university presses of Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard are not likely to follow Paris and plunge into systematic popularization, while it would seem that one of the American encyclopedia publishers might well adopt the *Pléiade* pattern. In format, the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the *Encyclopedia Americana*, the *World Book*, and so on are remarkably similar products, which are made competitive by being subtly adapted to embody various sales pitches specially directed at particular, large-scale markets. It would be a major step towards recreating the world of study if one of these publishers would dedicate their resources to offering the largest market of all, men studying, a choice and not an echo.

*Language Study with Television*     I wonder if cable television could be used to facilitate people's independent study of languages and foreign cultures. The available means of studying languages have been deeply influenced by the vogue of instruction. Hence, a program such as *Guten Tag* on NET consists essentially of televised teaching, with some movies added to display the language in operation, allowing the learner to enter vicariously the world of German. Such movies are expensive to produce, and the whole system has one major drawback, the rigidity of the schedule of lessons. Should one miss a few installments, it becomes difficult to catch up; thus televised instruction becomes as lock-step as classroom teaching, and a major potential advantage of educational television is lost. Such programs are not the only possibility, however, which will become quite clear if we can reassure ourselves that to learn a language one need not receive instruction.

Recall, for instance, the famous story of how as a child Montaigne learned his Latin. Here, Montaigne's advantages stood him in good stead. When he was still an infant, his father hired a young German scholar to live with the family and to have the child accompany him continually. As the scholar went about his business, he addressed his infantile companion only in excellent Latin. Moth-

er and father boned up on it too so that in their son's presence they also spoke only Latin, albeit less elegantly. The servants soon learned to bid young Montaigne's childish will according to Latin commands, and the local dialect even took on a number of Latin words from this curious child who spoke no French. Learned doctors would hesitate to converse with the boy of five for fear of having the flaws in their Latin shown up, and it was not until he went to college that Montaigne learned French and found his Latin becoming corrupt.<sup>69</sup>

Such learning through immersion, which was then a possibility only for the very rich, is fast becoming technically possible for all. Out of the fifty or sixty channels that cable TV can soon be offering, it would not be extravagant to have half a dozen or so broadcasting continuously in foreign languages, and should the system ever reach 300 channels as it perhaps can, it could easily carry continuous programming in all the major languages. Furthermore, the production costs of such broadcasts could be very low, much below those for producing special language courses, if a system could be arranged by which the major cultural networks of the world would exchange, without charges, daily tapes of all their regular programming. If this were done, besides broadcasting its own programming on its regular channel, NET could also broadcast daily on subsidiary channels the programming of its equivalent in French, German, Russian, Latin American Spanish, Italian, Hebrew, Arabic, Swahili, Hindi, Japanese, and so on. In view of the popularity of tourism and the widely diffused curiosity about other parts of the world, the potential audience for such programming might be surprisingly large, especially after a period of time when people had had a chance to become accustomed to its availability. Arranging such exchanges might be an excellent project for UNESCO, and should the exchanges get under way, they would be a great addition to the opportunities of study open to every man and they would greatly boost our cosmopolitan sensibilities.

Pedagogically, the system might revolutionize language study. For most, learning languages is impossibly academic because the opportunities to participate in the system of experience that a language defines are hard to come by. To be sure, one can subscribe to *Die Welt* or *L'Express*, cultivate foreign flicks, and devote one's vacations to the picturesque sights of far-off lands. But these are insufficient in themselves, and they present barriers to the many who have not received rather advanced instruction in the languages in question. In contrast, with daily access to television programming produced for German audiences and a good self-study book like Harry Steinhauer's *Read, Write, Speak German*, any man with a bit of perseverance could not only learn the language, but enter enjoyably the German sphere of experience.<sup>70</sup> In this way, such pro-

69 See Montaigne, "Of the Education of Children," *Selected Essays, op.cit.*, n. 2, pp. 48-50.

70 See Harry Steinhauer. *Read, Write, Speak German*. New York: Bantam Books, 1965. It is important to note that in substance and format a work such as this, intelligently designed for self-

gramming that catered to independent study would be much more than a simple set of language courses; it would evoke an understanding of the genius of different peoples that would far excel the fondest dreams of those who want to teach world understanding through the schools. If people are to understand one another, they need opportunities to experience one another, and such a system of multi-language television programming, plus the great opportunities that many have today for travel, would be a good way to provide for such mutual experience.

I wonder as well about things less programmatic. I wonder if study could be subtly brought to the fore in many further ways, in schools of education, law, and medicine; in the press and entertainment; in museums, exhibitions, and libraries; in scientific laboratories and experimental stations; in politics, business, and labor. I wonder if we can resist consecrating our culture, preserving it for study rather than worship; I wonder whether we can refuse to transform those simple works, which men have made for men, into miraculous, wonder-working relics that the credulous suppliant approaches on battered knees, hoping that with incomprehending obeisance some good will be wrought on his spirit. Such misplaced reverence simply invites the cynic to exploit art for base purposes of commerce and politics. But then, at least the cynic insists that art have a human function; perhaps that function could be more liberating if, instead of teaching children and adults the reasons a critic adduces for believing a work to be great, the teacher would simply let people study how the work can help them find their own greatness, their ability to become what they are.

I wonder quirky things, too; I wonder whether the somber tone of the obituary page in the daily paper might somehow change from a notice of death to a celebration of life; I wonder whether it could become the part of the paper most interesting to the young, for there, day by day, they could glimpse something about the diverse and fascinating courses that human life can take. I wonder also whether introductions to literature might not junk their outworn national frames, substituting for the American novel, for the English novel, and others, a study of something more pertinent to the awakening adolescent, the *Bildungsroman* and its antitype, the novel of stifled aspirations.<sup>71</sup> I wonder, further, whether historians and literary critics might pay more attention to the intellectual and characterological development of significant men, laying bare for others the rationalities and irrationalities that an interesting man, *un esprit fort*, com-

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study, reverts in many of its features to the style of old-time grammars, especially in that it minimizes explanation and emphasizes exercises.

71 It is my hope to offer a seminar sometime on the pedagogy of the *Bildungsroman*, which has been strangely ignored by American students of education even though much American literature falls within the genre. For a good discussion of the antitype of the *Bildungsroman*, see F. W. Dupree, "Flaubert and the Sentimental Education," *The New York Review of Books*, Vol. XVI, No. 7, April 22, 1971, pp. 42-51.

bines in making himself.<sup>72</sup> Lastly, I wonder whether philosophers of education might not mute their interest in the rationale of instruction and return to the question that Plato had Socrates put in the *Protagoras*: what is likely to happen to the character of a student who assents to follow one or another type of teacher?<sup>73</sup>

But enough of wonder! All these and any other speculations that one might spawn will prove mere daydreams unless efforts to implement new hopes can gain energy by working in sympathy with powerful historic forces. Ideas give the flux form, but they do not put the flux itself in motion and they do not determine its basic direction of movement. The powerful historic motions of our recent past, the rise of the industrial nation-states, were given pedagogical form by the Comenian vision of compulsory education through authoritative instruction, and if these motions are going to remain the dominant movements in history, no alternative vision is likely to form the flux, no matter how much some might wish that it would. This is not to say that the basic vectors of development determine all of history; but they do distinguish, generally, very broadly, between impossibilities and possibilities. The latter, the possibilities, are always ample enough for the future to be highly uncertain and exciting; and it is with respect to these that the particular, personal choices by various men inspired by diverse ideas play their essential part in determining historic actuality. What, if any, real, tangible, fundamental developments in the vast historic flux might be incongruent with the compulsory instructional forms characteristic of our recent past? What ineluctable movements may be conducive to some pattern of comprehensive, voluntary study?

*The Future*      Certainly the cultural atmosphere crackles with intimations of departures at once imminent and immanent. The bestsellers speak of "future shock" and an intriguing greening of America. But the one is a breathless compilation of every harbinger of change held together with slogans, not ideas, and assured of proving partly prophetic by virtue of repeating uncritically most every prophecy that an energetic journalist can collect.<sup>74</sup> And the other charts a wistful, wonderful revolution of ideas that perhaps may come about, but again, provided only that it can draw sustaining energies from the hard facts of the historic flux.<sup>75</sup> Still it is to these that we must look.

72 Educational historians might do much more in the way of studying the intellectual growth of important figures as Dominique Arban has done for Dostoevsky in *Les Années d'apprentissage de Fiodor Dostoievski*. Paris: Payot, 1968; and Virgil K. Whitaker has done for Shakespeare in *Shakespeare's Use of Learning: An Inquiry into the Growth of His Mind and Art*. San Marino, Calif.: The Huntington Library, 1964.

73 Plato. *Protagoras*, 318a.

74 Alvin Toffler. *Future Shock*. New York: Random House, 1970. If one can grit one's teeth and bear with Toffler's incredible abuse of language, the book can serve as an interesting compendium of curious signs of the time.

75 Charles A. Reich. *The Greening of America*. New York: Random House, 1970, *passim*, and esp. Ch. XI, pp. 299-348.

Prophets of environmental crisis point to what may be compelling realities, and if the worst of their projections prove true, the effects on our civic institutions would be immense.<sup>76</sup> In large part, however, ecological imbalances are portents of future changes in the physical environment, and whatever adaptations men will have to make in their mores and institutions will have to be carried out under the aegis of other historic forces that may already be coming into play within the social realm. Education occurs primarily within that realm, in the company of men; nature provides but a backdrop, sometimes fresh, but often grim. Are there historic forces newly operative in the social sphere that have a direct, palpable influence on the education of men, their character formation, their intentional shaping of their personalities?

So far, probably the most important attempt to indicate a basic change in the pattern of character formation in the West is *The Lonely Crowd* by David Riesman, et al. In some ways the book is a period piece; writing in the late forties, its authors took the conformist, who proved so prevalent in the fifties, to be a more enduring type than he now seems to have been. Be that as it may, what is important here is the general structure of the argument, which purported to find a demographic basis for long-term shifts in patterns of character formation. Thus, Riesman connected the historic transition from tradition-directed to inner-directed and finally to other-directed character with the so-called S-curve that population growth has followed in the post-Renaissance West. As Riesman saw it, population in the West passed in the seventeenth century from a long period of general stasis, through a sustained period of rapid growth, and entered in the mid-twentieth century into an indefinite time of incipient decline. He then connected his three basic character types to these demographic conditions: tradition-directed men characterized a static population, inner-directed men dominated a rapidly growing population, and other-directed men would proliferate among an incipiently declining population.<sup>77</sup>

A number of questions might be raised about the empirical accuracy of these correlations. In particular, one might ask whether in fact the point of incipient population decline has been reached in the West; for population has increased about 40 percent in both the United States and Europe since *The Lonely Crowd* appeared. One might also ask why, if these correlations are correct, did the highly tradition-directed character of medieval man flourish during the era of dynamic population growth from 1100 to 1300. But more is amiss than such quibbles would indicate. Accepting the broad outline of Riesman's demograph-

<sup>76</sup> For an excellent application of ecological analysis to problems of planning the proper use of the land, see Ian L. McHarg. *Design with Nature*. Garden City, N.Y.: The Natural History Press, 1969. McHarg touches on, but does not fully face, some of the profound questions of public power that will have to be raised as planning become more and more ecologically exact.

<sup>77</sup> David Riesman, Nathan Glazer, and Ruel Denney. *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*, abridged ed., Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953, pp. 17-53.

ics and valuing his ideal character types as useful, illuminating constructs, one nevertheless finds that no compelling causal connection has been explicated between the demographic situation at one or another time and the purported dominance of the appropriate character type. And when hard reasons were given for expecting other-directed men to typify the present day, the reasons concerned the nature of urban life, the mass media, a consumption economy, peer-group politics, and patterns of schooling and child rearing, all of which are, at most, indirectly demographic.<sup>78</sup>

Yet the intention was a good one; in the demographic situation one finds the basic, gross influences affecting the character formation of every person. To come to terms with these effects, however, one needs a more refined measure than simple changes in over-all population. What matters for character formation is not primarily a change in the total number of people, but a change in the number of opportunities each person has for day-to-day contact with others, a change, that is, in his chance for company. A man both acquires and displays character—his beliefs, skills, thoughts, and tastes—through involvements of some sort with other people; hence patterns of character formation can change as options for interpersonal contact change. To be sure, the range of opportunities open to one man for dealing with other men vary in part according to changes in population, or more precisely, to changes in the density of population. But another factor is equally important for determining the chances for intimate relations between man and man; this factor is the ease or difficulty with which men living at a certain time and place can move, travel, and communicate. Today, in some locales the density of rural population has declined from what it was in the Middle Ages; yet the peasant who now may have a telephone, television, and auto has far greater opportunities for becoming involved with other people than did his medieval predecessor, a serf of the manor who could make the day-long trek to the neighboring village only with his lord's permission.

Through most of Western history, each person, be he lowly or exalted, had limited opportunities for day-to-day contact with others. Population was sufficiently sparse and communication sufficiently difficult that each person had to choose his companions from a finite number of possibilities, some tens of thousands, and many sides of his potential character, which he might have liked to cultivate, he had to leave undeveloped for want of anyone to join him in the endeavor. Hence, in the past the demographic trend that was significant for character formation would vary between three basic conditions; the finite number of options for interpersonal contact open to each might be rising, static, or falling, depending on the combined changes in population density and ease of communication. If opportunities for companionship were finite and static for several generations, a tradition-directed type might well become common, for

78 *Ibid.*, pp. 100-4, 120-132, 151-186, 196-200, 210-217.

few changes would confront individuals and groups with new experiences and hence custom could be consolidated. During a long period in which men's choices were limited but rising, inner-directed types might flourish, for tangible growth in a man's possibilities would call forth innovations, optimism, an inner confidence that with drive, concentration, and systematic effort an aspiring individual could accomplish significant achievements. Finally, when men found that their opportunities to commune with their fellows were both restricted and falling, they would tend towards pessimism, conflict, and despair, as happened in the Roman twilight and in the years following the Black Death.

During the past century, however, these situations have ceased to be pertinent to character formation throughout most Western societies. And here, cheerless old Henry Adams, with his reflections on "The Rule of Phase Applied to History," gave an important clue that must be added to meditations on demographic S-curves, for in recent decades each man's opportunities for contact with others have gone through a change of phase that is analogous to the change of water from fluid to steam.<sup>79</sup> Consider a crude measure of the number of options that a man has for daily involvement with others; let us call it "the opportunity factor." Thus,  $O = D\pi R^2$ , the number of people from among whom a particular person can choose his day-to-day companions equals the density of population per square mile times pi times the square of the distance that he or his communication can travel in a day. Let us see what the opportunity factor can tell us about the historic conditions influencing character formation for the average European.

Population density for the whole of Europe was approximately thirty-six people per square mile in 1750, 49 in 1800, 70 in 1850, 111 in 1900, 149 in 1939, and 172 in 1966.<sup>80</sup> Let us say roughly that the average man could travel eighteen miles per day in 1750; with some improvement of roads and canals we could put the figure at twenty-two miles for 1800; by 1850 with short rail lines beginning to be built the distance might jump to forty miles; with the filling out of the railways and the effective introduction of the telegraph, a man's range in 1900 might have trebled to 120 miles; in 1939, with the telephone and the automobile not yet in full popular use and air travel only in its early stages, the figure should probably be put at no more than 250 miles; but by 1966, despite the devastation of World War II, with cars, telephones, and televisions being articles of mass consumption and jet travel open to most, the average man could easily cover over 1,000 miles in a day.<sup>81</sup>

79 Henry Adams, "The Rule of Phase Applied to History," in Henry Adams. *The Degradation of the Democratic Dogma*. New York: Capricorn Books, 1958, pp. 261-305. Cf. Adams. *The Autobiography of Henry Adams*. New York: The Modern Library, 1931, which will become recognized as a classic study of education if we discover the importance of study in education.

80 These figures are from the *Rand McNally Cosmopolitan World Atlas*. New York: Rand McNally and Co., 1968, p. 140.

81 These figures are my own rough estimates, and although as absolute numbers they are rather arbitrary, the progression they define is fairly accurate, I believe.



With these figures we can find the opportunity factor for each period. In 1750, the average European had the physical possibility of choosing his daily contacts from among roughly 36,800 other persons; in effect, therefore, he formed his character within the confines of a substantial provincial town. In the next fifty years his options doubled, becoming some 74,500; thus his personality could then develop in a sphere equivalent perhaps to a thriving provincial capital. During the next half century the increase in opportunity quickened, multiplying almost five times to 352,000; in this way the average person had options equivalent to those then offered by the grim new industrial cities. By 1900 the opportunity factor jumped significantly and multiplied fourteen times to 5,020,000; the average man lived in a realm a bit more populous than London of the day. On the eve of World War II there had been another six-fold expansion to 29,200,000; each man's world was then coextensive with a middling nation. Then, in the shortest period, much of which was occupied with a most destructive war, the range of choice confronting the average European increased more than in any other period, multiplying almost twenty times to 540,000,000; thus, each man could choose his companions from roughly the population of Europe, east and west.

*Infinite Possibilities*

In human terms, this range of possibilities—which, with worldwide jet travel and a global telephone system, is numerically understated—is for all practical purposes infinite. This, then, is the change of phase that has occurred with respect to character formation: whereas in the past the average man had limited opportunities for day-to-day contact with others, he now has infinite options. Although the conditions making this change of phase possible have been developing during the past hundred years, it is mainly since World War II that they have taken full effect as virtually everyone gained easy access to road, rail, and air travel, to telephone, radio, and television. Mankind is fast approaching the unprecedented situation in which anyone, on a day's notice or less, can involve himself directly with anyone else. Thinkers have still to come to terms with the implications of this change for society, economics, politics, and education; and the implications augur well for the future of study.

On the surface, the assertion that personal possibilities have become unlimited seems to ignore obviously the conditions producing a pervasive fear of the all-surveillant state. Arbitrary political barriers still exist, and the ability to accumulate facts and fictions about every individual has increased portentously. Not only in America does the invasion of privacy and the official abuse of civil rights seem rampant. But perhaps the surest way to cooperate with potential persecutors is to take them too seriously, to recoil, not in the face of repression, but at the thought of repression, allowing the action of the state to have a chilling effect in areas where in fact it has little force. Officials of state turn to surveillance and repression out of weakness, not strength; they seek to dominate,

not by virtue of their own great stature, but by casting fearful shadows, by amplifying their ability to destroy this or that individual into an appearance of complete and arbitrary command. To be sure, the centralized, bureaucratic state can gather vast quantities of information, but it can concentrate and act on a human level only on infinitesimal parts of the bulk. And furthermore, in the long run, the most significant consequence for individual autonomy that will result from the change of historic phase may pertain less to privacy and surveillance and more to the nature of social sanctions. It may turn out that big brother will know all about what each does but be powerless to do much about it.

With no implacable limits on the range of personal relations open to most, people have a good chance of finding companions for any imaginable undertaking; and in time, in a rather short time, this latitude may lead to a thorough transformation in the nature of authority. In a world in which each individual can pursue most any personal purpose in most any place that suits him, all on his own initiative, the habit of relying on authoritative institutions, which operate through commands enforced by penalties and inducements, may sharply diminish. With the change of phase in the opportunity factor, people need less and less to rely on formal institutions for a chance to fulfill their personal purposes. And as more and more people become aware of the unlimited choices that they have in their personal lives, sanctions and incentives will become ineffectual means of administering authoritative commands in government, society, business, and education. As everything becomes possible for everyone in their personal lives, only the most extreme sanctions—sanctions that deprive the person of his mobility through extended incarceration or death—have a significant effect on his personal possibilities; and these extreme sanctions must be reserved to check serious crime. But minor sanctions—social disapproval, loss of a job, fines, or even short-term imprisonment—cannot significantly narrow the range of infinite options open to most individuals, nor can minor, perhaps even substantial, incentives meaningfully broaden what is already infinite. Hence, increasingly, attempts to coerce daily behavior will fail, and any and all relationships entered into by consenting adults, provided these do not lead to the serious harm of others, will become both socially and legally acceptable.

Although authority based on sanction is likely to diminish in societies that offer individuals infinite possibilities for involvement with others, authority itself will not disappear, for allocations of effort will still have to be made, but on the basis of a quite different principle. All the iconography of love that has become so popular with the young is indicative of more than a fad, for all around coercive authority is giving way to erotic authority, and many functions that in the past were performed by the use of causal manipulation will occur in the future by virtue of erotic attraction.<sup>82</sup> Erotic authority has always operated

82 My conception of eros as a form of authority is more deeply influenced by Plato, especially

among men, but as never before it is likely to become the dominant form of authority. This change is patent in economics where desire has long since displaced need as the arbiter of demand and where sex is the smooth salve of sales. And in most other areas as well, one finds endless signs of the transformation; in politics, art, science, and education, men are more and more acting according to their aspiration, pursuing what seems to them to be good or beautiful or true because they are drawn to it, for nothing compels them to it. As sanction becomes less effective, allurements will take over, not to enforce the same goals that coercion would assert, but to promote its own goals, so that society will not drift without direction. In a world in which men share unlimited personal opportunities, the natural form of authority will be erotic, not only in the crass sense, but in the best Platonic sense, on the basis of which effort will distribute itself as it is drawn to various possibilities according to a many-layered teleology.

A society governed by eros will not automatically be a good society, for, like any other principle, eros can go astray. The Manson family, for instance, is among the authentic combinations possible when people have infinite options; but it is neither representative nor inevitable. As with any mode of human order, the quality of life attained depends on the wisdom with which the controlling principles are understood and applied. Because of this imperative, man will not make an erotic society better simply by trying to deny its nature; rather the wise course is to accept and understand its nature and to act in sympathy with its principles so that the best in it will fully develop. The principle of eros is to forego domination, to resist the compulsion to correct petty faults in others, and to concentrate on helping those who attract one's attention to achieve fruition. Many in positions of "authority" have still to start acting in sympathy with this principle, yet it is hard to imagine a reversion to a situation in which they can effectively rely on domination, command, and sanction.

Certainly a retreat to strict standards, social and sexual, to be enforced by parents and the pillars of society, is most improbable. As soon as the child masters the basic means of movement that life now offers, he is largely impervious to parental sanction, and whatever parental authority remains inheres in love, not power. And that bugaboo of reactionaries, "permissive society," is co-extensive with the societies that, through a combination of dense population and high mobility, have opened boundless alternatives to their members; consequently the permissiveness results from no mere abdication of authority or slackening of standards: with the mass production of the SEAT 850, it is fast appearing in

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the *Symposium*; Dante throughout *The Divine Comedy*; Goethe, especially in *Wilhelm Meister*; Nietzsche, throughout his work and especially in *Schopenhauer as Educator*; and Ortega, especially in *On Love*; than it is by Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. New York: Vintage Books, 1961, although I have studied the latter with profit. I am working on an historical inquiry into erotic theories of education which I hope to publish in the near future in a book, *Eros and Education*.

very fascist, very Catholic Spain. In reality, permissiveness is no mere consequence; permissiveness is the inherent character, the ordering principle, of the social flux that has resulted from the great change of phase in history. To repress permissiveness one would have to do away with the extensive personal mobility that has given rise to the cornucopia of choice confronting each and every person. Such a reaction will not come except through an atomic war, and public leaders had best face the new realities rather than bemoan bygone simplicities.

Here then, in the change of historic phase, is a complicated, tangible, palpitating force within the flux that is incongruent with systems of compulsory education, for these function by means of sanctions that are weakening visibly as children become aware of their limitless options. Hence, the world of instruction may steadily decline in effectiveness. This would not be the doom of education. Like leaders in other public spheres, educators have the option of working in sympathy with eros. As we have seen, for Plato, eros was one of the principles that made study the most human, most natural form of education, even in times when each man's choices were still severely limited. Hence now—when the most effective authority will be erotic, a set of varied attractions through which men will determine their preferences among their measureless prospects—the character of historic movement will conduce to a spread of comprehensive, voluntary study, directed by the student's selective attention and motivated by his personal initiative. For these reasons, the future of our past looks promising; the prospects for study seem good.

But such an analysis is simply an analysis, one man's interpretation of the way things appear to him. Many words, even when spiced with a few facts and figures, can never encapsulate reality; at best they echo it at considerable remove. Truth is neither in the words nor in the theories that they spin out; truth is in the experiences that each of us has, and the value of words and theories is not that they communicate truth, but that if all is aright they may help us grasp and comprehend the truths of our experience. Hence, in speaking about historic forces and the promising prospects for study, one is establishing no inevitabilities, not even probabilities; rather one is working out certain heuristic propositions, which will hopefully help others understand the truths of their experience, for in the light of that truth, their practice will be wiser, surer, and to greater effect. Such is the praxis of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, the sciences of the spirit.

In this temper, one last hypothesis: in making the case for study, one does not denigrate the teacher's profession. To be sure, one has to speak out against exaggerating the power of instruction. But this criticism does not reject teaching; in place of a rejection, it is a quest for the mean, a celebration of the Greek sense for nothing too much, an attempt to balance an inflated version of the

teacher's mission with a touch of reality. Yes—let us continue our effort to teach all as best we can, but let us do so with more humility, sobriety, and realism.

Instruction does not make the man. A teacher gains coercive power to control and mold his students only so long as they abdicate their autonomy and dignity. Such an abdication is not a good foundation for an educational system, especially since it is less common and continuous than many would seem to believe. The teacher's authority, be it as a model of excellence or of folly, is a quality his students project erotically upon him. It is an attraction or repulsion that results because students are forever suspending their interest in learning their lessons; instead they abstract, they reflect; they step back mentally and with curiously cocked heads they observe their didactic deliverer, musing with soaring hope, wonder, joy, resignation, boredom, cynicism, amusement, sad tears, despair, or cold resentment—*Ecce homo!*

A teacher may or may not cause learning, but he will always be an object of study. Hence the pedant so surely plays the fool. But hence too, the man teaching can often occasion achievements that far surpass his personal powers. Great teachers can be found conforming to every type—they are tall and short, shaggy and trim, timid and tough, loquacious and terse, casual and stern, clear and obscure. Great teachers are persons who repay study, and they repay study because they know with Montaigne, "My trade and my art is to live."<sup>83</sup>

83 Montaigne, "Of Training," *Selected Essays, op.cit.*, n. 2, p. 126.