

**THE THOUGHT
OF ST. JOSEPH CALASANZ**

BUENAVENTURA PEDEMONTE I FEU

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OF ST. JOSEPH CALASANZ

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The thought of St. Joseph Calasanz

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PREFACE

Fr. Bonaventura Pedemonte holds a Doctorate in Philosophy from the Catholic Institute of Paris. His thesis “El sujeto convocado” (428 pp), published in 2007 in Catalan by “Publicaciones de la Abadía de Montserrat”, serves as an introduction to the Personalist philosophical thought of five significant authors of this current.

In the book we have in our hands, he outlines Saint Joseph Calasanz’ thought, already analyzed by some researchers as Sànta, Vilà, Florensa, Giner, Asiain and others, but Pedemonte studies it in the cultural context, showing how the different schools affected and inspired the spiritual and pedagogical itinerary of Calasanz. As indicated in the title, the aim of the work is to share the cultural background of Calasanz, the configuration of his thought under the influence of his cultural environment, and his projection over time through the Pious Schools, the institution he founded.

The three sections of the book reflect the development of the European thought from the late Middle Ages till our days and enable us to understand how the cultural Calasanzian synthesis has emerged and how it has contributed discretely to the evolution of the global culture. Each chapter ends with a clarifying synthesis and a list of items that reflect the matter addressed.

This book of Pedemonte is not, as he acknowledges, the work of a historian, a researcher or a pedagogue. It is clearly the work of a philosopher. Who is seeking a profile of the figure of Calasanz in the global culture’s environment may find valuable inputs to explore broad horizons. Needless to say that this book will be very useful to all those in preparation to become “cooperators with Truth”.

Josep A. Miró

BACKGROUND, CONFIGURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Many books have already been published on St. Joseph Calasanz and his work, so for what reason another publication? It would seem that after the works of Fr. Santha, Fr. Vilá or Fr. Giner, there is nothing else to be said. As far as Calasanz' biography is concerned, the work of Fr. Severino Giner has undoubtedly brought us very near to the figure of the Founder of the Pious Schools; and as far as his pedagogical work is concerned, Fr. Santha's text seems unsurpassable. It is true that many of the current historians contribute to clear some aspects that still remain somewhat dark in his life and work, but sometimes these studies do not raise interest in piarist readers because of the abundance of details that could lead to miss the fascination for the figure and the work of the Founder. What we are needing is a particular approach to grasp the size of his cause.

I'm not a historian, nor a pedagogue, nor a sociologist, not even a researcher. For this reason, my aim is to produce an outreach work, focusing the principal items and referring them to researchers for further studies. The focus will be on the work of Calasanz, understood as the development of a thought that becomes action, as the set of ideas, feelings and vital experiences that launched his work. It is true that his thought is constituted by his ideas; but his new approaches are also a reflection of the process of his spirit, of the events in his life and of multiple meetings with different persons. Philosophy should then accompany us, as it has been a far partner of this man who was captivated by a special interest: the education for all. The greatness of Calasanz is not the fact of being the first to discover this idea, because

other contemporary thinkers may have shared it as well, but the fact of having succeeded to implement it with an exceptional tenacity.

In short, our aim is to show the vicissitudes of the philosophical ideas of St. Joseph Calasanz, as the manifestation of an open spirit in tune with the advanced ideas of his time which he wanted to materialize in an original manner. His thoughts reflect a spirit that was growing since his formation period, with great attention to the Renaissance concerns. Ideas are not pushed into, nor disappear from one century to the other, but are like strata added one on top of the other as our soil. For this reason, the first part of our work considers the philosophical substratum where the innovative thinking of Calasanz was grounded in. Though he studied philosophy in Lleida, we cannot assure that he knew personally all the philosophers we are going to refer to. Furthermore, he is of a practical rather than a theoretical nature, as it clearly appears in his correspondence. However, the ideas that were developing and circulating in the environment he was living in are expected to have influenced the final shaping of his project. In fact, when we examine the writings of those thinkers who could have had some influence in his life we cannot but remain surprised of the coincidence of some principles and the persistence of some ideas that outline the great lines of his pedagogical ideal.

The structure of our work is designed in three parts, which respond to these three moments of the idea of Calasanz. We start by the background of his work, we continue with the analysis of the configuration of his idea, and we finally assist to its historical development. The first part is a sketch of the prevailing philosophical horizon in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that extends from the obsolete heritage of scholastic philosophy to the emergence of new ideas driven by a new humanism. The second part refers to the formation of Joseph Calasanz, a Catholic priest of the diocese of Urgell, established in Rome during the challenging period of the Counter-Reformation, in which he discovers the sense of his life and creates the work that would make him famous. The Pious Schools are an idea transformed in action, the expression of a real universal humanism. Finally, the third part aims at discovering the development of this idea throughout the history of the Pious Schools: a mixed picture with lights and shadows, but essentially faithful to the Founder's idea.

In writing this book I have always been careful to quote at the foot of the page the documents that I have used, and at the end of each part I have provided a general bibliography that can help to further explore each subject. I'm sure there are some omissions, for which I beg indulgence, because there is a great number of piarists who have provided their findings on the person and the work of Calasanz. My aim is not to reach a comprehensive, but a significant result. However, I am very grateful for the suggestions received from Fr. Joan Florensa, Fr. Josep Antoni Miró, Fr. José Pascual Burgués and Fr. Miguel Giráldez, who have provided very useful clarifications for the work as a whole. I'm most grateful as well to Fr. Andrés Trilla, for his careful revision and stylistic adjustment of the work. I look forward to seeing that readers who are desiring to have a better understanding of the figure of Calasanz may find in this text useful elements to further appreciate his work.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ENVIRONMENT IN CALASANZ' TIMES

We start our work with an introductory section, in order to provide an overview of the ideas prevailing in times of Calasanz, which he encountered before founding the Pious Schools. We discover an heterogeneous horizon, as equally heterogeneous was the society of his times, in which the new literary and scientific currents of the Renaissance co-existed with the practices of a medieval society. The Scholastic ideas, criticized by contemporary scholars, actually prevailed in all the universities. Developments were introduced with suspect in an atmosphere in which the weight of the Inquisition was heavily felt. In fact, the society remained shaped by the medieval structures, people lived subject to poverty under the oppression of those in power, the religious environment was associated to fears and superstitions, and ignorance pervaded daily life. Therefore, we have pointed to give an idea of the world in which the spirit of Calasanz moved, in order to have a better understanding of the ideas he had to face and the sources in which his enterprise would find inspiration. We have chosen the authors and ideas that, according to our opinion, are expected to have somehow influenced his mind, either because he personally met some of them or because they had some participation in his subsequent work. We will start going far back to the medieval scholasticism of Saint Thomas, who would be the guiding star of his institute. We will go through Erasmus and the mystics of the “*devotio moderna*” because they injected in Calasanz the incentive of a Christian humanism. And we will end with Galileo and Bacon, because they represent the modern world that Calasanz dreamt for the future generations.

LATE MIDDLE AGES' AND EARLY RENAISSANCE THOUGHT

Since the fourteenth century, the Universities lived under the influence of the Scholastic philosophy that was professed by the different schools: the Dominican school remained faithful to Saint Thomas, and the Franciscan school followed Duns Scotus' philosophy, including the late-medieval derivations of the Nominalistic Ockamism. Discussions on species and concepts often resulted byzantine, with great discredit of the philosophers' activity, dedicated to intrascendental and ineffective matters. Students used to find a boring environment with great poverty of reflection, and philosophy -- the servant of theology -- had no vital approaches or answers. Those desiring other approaches preferred the mystics' movement, that was built from the heart rather than from the brains. Meister Eckhart first, and the Rhenan mystics afterwards, tried to contain the presumption of reaching God with the reason, proclaiming that God is only accesible to hearts that burn with the love of Jesus.

Thus, in late Middle Ages it wasn't in the schools where the spirítuals explored the ways towards God, but in the silence of a chamber before the image of Christ Crucified. A new style of walking towards God had emerged, as a pious and private way that was not based on liturgy but in the love of Christ and the works of charity towards the most needy brethren. This movement of popular piety is known as "*devotio moderna*".

THE LATE SCHOLASTICISM

Since the beginning, the ecclesiastic philosophy had been articulated in the Universities through the scholastic system. Actually, philosophy had passed from the small schools of the cathedrals where a canon exercised the work of teaching, or from the monastic schools where a renowned monk influenced a group of students, to the Universities that were organized as trade unions and sponsored by a civil or ecclesiastical authority. Such was the origin of the universities of Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Montpellier, Palencia or Lleida. The teachers were generally diocesan or regular ecclesiastics, who were hired by the university. The emergence of the mendicant orders entailed the

opening of schools in each of their convents, where the more skillful exercised the activity of teaching, usually with an outstanding prestige. The value and worth of these friars enabled them to teach also in the universities. This is the case of the University of Paris where Franciscans and Dominicans offered such a qualified teaching that very soon they left behind the diocesan and lay teachers. Moved by envy, the latter questioned the right to teaching of the former, and eventually made them return to their convents. However, in the history of philosophy, in Paris and in other places, Franciscans and Dominicans left their names written in capital letters. It would be long to articulate a complete discourse on the matter, but for the purpose of perceiving the influence of these great masters in Calasanz it may be sufficient to outline the principal lines of each current. Not in vain, the systems led by St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas tended to perpetuate with different nuances in the university teaching of the Catholic schools.

Towards the thirteenth century the philosophical trends prevailing in Europe depended to a greater or lesser extent on the ideas of Saint Augustin. The basis that all the philosophers shared was the conviction that philosophy and theology assembled in a single knowledge, so that the data of faith could be approached by human reason. In fact, it was difficult to identify the frontiers between strictly philosophical and theological matters because eventually, following the ideas of the Doctor of Hippo, the reason's light participated of the divine enlightenment which opened the spirit of the believer. Only sin could darken that clean light that opened the heart to understanding. This criterion enabled to discern truth from error. As God is Truth, who falls in error is guilty, as Saint Augustin acknowledged regarding his case. The dilemmas that emerged in this early period of the Scholastic philosophy practiced in the schools referred to the measure in which the reason was engaged in the logic process. There were two opposite trends in this struggle between faith and reason. Considering the extreme positions, we have on the one hand those who granted no value to reason and philosophy which cannot but lead to error (Saint Peter Damian will even say that philosophy is the work of the devil); on the other hand, we have those who encouraged the apology of reason and practiced logic as a valid and

conductive way, even if sometimes indulging in exaggerations. William of Champeaux or Abelard engaged in protracted controversies on the results of such confidence. Between these two extreme positions we find those who were in favor of a moderate stance, as Saint Anselm, who represents a balanced position between the use of faith and reason when discussing about God. These controversies were followed by other confrontations encouraged by other schools, as the one between the school of Saint Victor, that preferred to follow a mystical path towards divine matters, and the membership of the school of Chartres, who preferred to practice the way of experience through the manifestations of nature.

With the consolidation of civil society, knowledge transferred from the monasteries to the cathedrals and became structured in the universities. A new style of religious life also appeared, with the mendicant friars establishing their convents in the heart of the cities, practicing evangelical poverty as a visible testimony of fraternity of all human beings, adopting the way of life of mendicants, wandering squares and streets living of charity. Franciscans and Dominicans established in this way in the great cities, where they opened their chapels for preaching and their halls for hosting philosophical and theological schools. The first hints of two different approaches in philosophy and theology appeared since the very beginning. Franciscans, faithful to the spirituality of the poverello of Assisi, focused on the idea of universal fraternity under the sight of a God who loves, and chose an affective way that finds in the divine love the origin and cause from which all created things descend and, as a consequence, nature and things are a way to burn the heart with love and to reach the contemplation of the divine love. The main character of the will that loves overcomes a purely intellectual consideration. In contrast, the Dominicans who had been created with the mission of preaching, and of convincing with arguments those heretics who were reluctant to conversion, found in the intelligence not only the strength to reach the truth but also the way to raise up to God based on the things. Intelligence was the principle and stimulus of the will, so that nothing can be loved if previously is not known. The dialectics of both ways is not exclusive, but rather complementary and even cyclical, so that one demands the other, but their development

resulted in different nuances that generated different philosophies and theologies.

In the midst of the thirteenth century a distorting factor emerged within Christian philosophy and theology, right in the peak of the medieval Scholasticism. It was about the influence of Aristotle. In fact, medieval Christianity had lost and forgotten his works. However, from the eighth century, the Arabs had recovered and interpreted them. For a long time, Christian philosophy had lived without the ideas of the Stagirite, but from the twelfth century some had already received indirect influences through Averroes' translations. But in the midst of the thirteenth century the whole work of Aristotle could be translated from the Greek and became known to most of the contemporary thinkers. In most cases, to be rejected as dangerous for the faith, and in few cases to be used and explained correctly. The reasons for its rejection included the danger of falling into a rationalism by applying to the faith the aristotelian system, as the presentation of God as a Motionless Motor of a closed system that had nothing to share with Creation seemed to invite to paganism or atheism. The concepts of nature and cause included Christian mysteries within the scope of syllogistic arguments, though not enabling to exceed the reason's limits. When faith and reason distanced from each other providing different and contrasting truths, how could the obstacle be saved? Fidelity to Aristotle meant accepting the truth that was achieved by the reason, but how to continue to be a believer? Averroes had tried to, as well as some teachers of Paris, with Sigerius of Brabante, who decided to follow him. The Arabian philosopher had argued that there was a double truth, one for the reason and one for faith, so that the reason can assert what faith denies. The coexistence of both was necessary, but Averroes didn't succeed. To put it briefly, both in the Islamic environment of Cordoba and the intellectualistic university of Paris the fact of being an Aristotelian led to be suspected of heresy.

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS AND THOMISM

The originality of Saint Thomas Aquinas consists in having introduced the Aristotelian ideas in the foundations of his philosophi-

cal and theological building¹. He managed to integrate it so that his philosophy that had been previously misunderstood, eventually was accepted as the one that best reflected the Church's position. Christian faith, as the contemporary gothic cathedrals, raised over the reason's archivolts and intermixed with the nerves of a conceptual system that was able to lead it very high. The entire philosophy, as an architectonic device, was placed at the service of the sharp arrows pointing upward, with a high-flying theological vision. Through multi-coloured crystals the windows allowed the entrance of the light that shows the way to spirits in search of God. Saint Thomas' system, understood as philosophy at the service of theology, can be considered as the greatest success of the thirteenth century's intellectuality. His genius, self-declared dependent on Aristotle, is reflected in three great intuitions. Philosophy and Theology are not a single system, as the Augustinian school advocated until Saint Bonaventure, but two independent sciences, each with its own method and different objectives: Philosophy, investigating the nature of things, and Theology discussing about God as revealed in Jesus Christ. However, both must be in harmony, honouring the same and unique truth. Their voices could not be incongruous nor formulate different truths as, in that case, Philosophy should give up before Theology: "philosophia ancilla theologiae", was the famous Latin axiom that Saint Thomas passed on to posterity. The second intuition is that we are in an intelligible world, so that our reason and concepts reflect reality and things. What is not intelligible does not exist, because being and truth must coincide. With rational clearness everything can be said, but if something cannot be said it means that it is not real. We can obviously be in front of a mystery, where reason fails. But in this case, failure is not due to the absence of reality but to our limited reason. Trinity, for example, is not an unintelligible absurdity, a non-sense, but such an august reality that exceeds infinitely our capacity of understanding. The third intuition of the Thomist synthesis is the assertion of the

1 Saint Joseph Calasanz always supported saint Thomas' philosophy, so that his Pious Schools continued to consider it a part of his heritage. We ignore the reason of such esteem, but it could be explained by the intellectual clarity that characterizes the Thomist thought with regard to the other schools of that time.

principle of analogy, by which all that is real is articulated according to a certain proportionality. Before Saint Thomas, philosophers found it difficult to find a common language for adequately reflecting humans' reality and God's reality. In fact, when we expect to speak about God and about humans, understanding what we say of each other, we are facing the challenge of using a univocal language. This leads to know God for what he is not and, therefore, to reduce him to our level. On the other hand, if we place in the opposite side, convinced that our human knowledge doesn't allow us to speak about God, as he is completely different, totally other, no discourse on God is possible. When concepts are equivocal, we have no access to God's knowledge; moreover, we should even confess our inability to know anything at all, and we should declare incapable to reach the truth. Against the risk of falling either in monism or scepticism, Saint Thomas discloses a third way, that of analogy. We can know God and speak about him because our concept of existence is analogous, that is to say, that it allows a discourse on God, understood as similar to us but different at the same time, according to an analogy that saint Thomas calls of proportionality. This analogy makes theology possible. If our discourse were univocal, we would not go beyond anthropology; if it were equivocal, no discourse would be possible. Only with analogy we can access an intelligible theological discourse.

Overall, Thomist philosophy provides a realistic interpretation of things, which exist as creatures that receive from God the existence that is not due to them by essence. Only in God existence and essence are interchangeable, because he is the subsistent existence. According to saint Thomas, in God's reality essence and existence are equal, while in creatures essence and existence are really different. Therefore, metaphysics articulates hierarchically, and each creature stands according to its ontological dignity: first the angels, then humans with spirit, living beings afterwards and inanimated beings last. All perform a certain composition: the angels are composed of essence and existence; the remaining creatures are composed of matter and form. All receive its intelligibility from their form, and from their matter its capacity of changing. The Aristotelian theory of act and potency essentially explains the physical changes of the real world.

These are, according to my understanding, the principles that define Thomism and articulate a consistent metaphysics that has been kept so long. The Dominican friars will be eager to preserve it in their schools and to disseminate it throughout the late medieval Europe. Unfortunately, the disciples will transform the vitality of the Thomistic synthesis in an arid system, in an architecture of concepts, that will lose the brilliancy provided by saint Thomas. Thomism has reached our times, but has not been able to raise the spirit that generated it.

In the period concerned, the schools of Dominicans and Franciscans will coexist. More intellectualistic the former, with primacy given to the intelligence over the will and love, and more voluntaristic the latter, with primacy given to the will and love over the intelligence, following the spirit of saint Francis of Assisi, whose life invited to know with the heart. Both schools will interweave their philosophies, being closer or distant at times and creating, within their followers, orthodoxies and heterodoxies that will characterize all this period until the arrival of the Renaissance.

JOHN DUNS SCOTUS AND SCOTISM

When reviewing the late Middle Ages philosophy we must not forget John Duns Scotus, a Franciscan friar whose philosophy would become the official doctrine of his Order since 1593, and who is the most significant thinker after saint Thomas. His influence would extend beyond the reduced environment of the Franciscan school, given that since the fourteenth century his philosophy was adopted by many European universities.

With Duns Scotus there is a glimpse of the empiricist tradition when trying to explain the origin of human knowledge. In his opinion, knowledge starts with sensation and develops through abstraction; however, the intelligence doesn't understand anything else than what comes from the senses and doesn't know anything else than singular existences. Scotus advocates, therefore, that singular existences are the only things that exist outside the mind. The theological implications of this position are that we cannot adequately know either God or the angels, because man is lacking an adequate intuition for the knowledge of essences.

Thus, Duns Scotus stands as the great master of limits, of the subtleness of defining the frontiers of our knowledge, so that any metaphysical assertion is reduced to the merely mental environment. Actually, only concrete individuals exist, only singular things composed of different formalities, that explain their nature. These formalities that the reason discovers are ultimately composed by a precise element that Scotus calls “haecceitas”, understood as “the aspects of a thing that make it a particular thing”. His ontology admits the presence of a plurality of substantial forms in a same thing, from the formality of existence to the last and most concrete formality that identifies the individual and contains all the other formalities. As a consequence, the concept of “being” is the most vacuous and general reality, as it doesn’t define the concrete nature of the only realities that exist that are the individuals.

Scotus appears as a follower of saint Augustine when he asserts that the intelligible being, that is the object of our intelligence, is placed in our mind by divine enlightenment. But human understanding is not free, for it understands what the divine enlightenment enables it to understand. As the divine enlightenment is more love and will than intellect and reason, the latter is of little help to reach God. Consequently, the knowledge of creatures is determined by the divine will that has freely chosen every potential situation.

On balance, the efforts of saint Thomas to assemble philosophy and theology in the search of the only truth vanish with Duns Scotus, who draws up a radical frontier between each other. For Scotus, philosophy and theology are two different discourses that pursue different objects with different methods. Theology’s object is God, revealed through the truths of faith, while philosophy’s object is the “being” and its truths, that are the object of the reason. They can reconcile without confusion only in the mind of a philosopher that believes. Actually, God dwells in a domain that by itself is out of the scope of the reason, but God himself has decided in an act of supreme goodness of his will to make us participants of his knowledge through revelation. For Duns Scotus, the essence and proprieties of the divinity cannot be demonstrated a priori. Human reason cannot demonstrate divine Providence, Omnipotence, or Mercy, due to the fact that it is unable to determine the free divine will. All these truths are reserved to faith

and they cannot be demonstrated. God becomes intelligible by an act of his free will. He creates everything, providing freely and for love the possibility of being. His goodness is inferred from the fact that he wants their existence. Hence, the only reason by which being and creation are good is the fact of his desire. This approach is called voluntarism, in opposition to the Thomistic intellectualism.

RAMON LLULL

Ramon Llull is very relevant for the nations of the Crown of Aragon, as his figure and ideas manifest an independent personality and his influence goes beyond Middle Ages' limits. "Creator of the literary Catalan language, missionary and apologist, subtle logician, didactic novelist, poet and mystic, a one-piece man"². Born in Palma de Mallorca in 1235, he was son of a Catalan knight who had accompanied King James I in the conquest of Mallorca. When he was about thirty years old he felt called by God to an intellectual apostolate for which he left his wife and his children.

Ramon Llull is a self-taught person with an extensive philosophical and literary formation. He knew Aristotle's philosophy, though he is rather Platonist when he contemplates God in his traces in nature. He knows Arabian and Latin, which enables him to drink directly from some sources that were unknown to the Christian West. About the year 1274 he retires to the Mountain of Randa to study and to reflect, where he receives the enlightenment that enables him to write his "*Ars magna*", an irrefutable art of convincing. With this method he submits to the King of Mallorca his project for evangelizing the Muslims. The King authorizes the foundation of the Miramar School where to prepare his apostles. Ramon Llull wanted to lead a peace crusade to convince the Muslims of their errors and with that purpose he travels in search of help. He writes "*Blanquerna*", a novel announcing the reformation of the Church following the spirit of the Spiritual Franciscans. However, after the Council of Vienna, he

2 E. COLOMER, *El pensament català a l'Edat Mitjana i al Renaixement, i el llegat filosòfic grec*, "Espíritu" 27 (1978) 106.

remained disappointed for the discredit of his project. Apparently, he died in Mallorca, probably in 1316, though a legend makes him martyr in North Africa.

Ramon Llull bets for a dialogue between the followers of the three monotheistic religions based on the reason, their common element. Llull had been educated in the Neoplatonism, an element shared by some Jewish and Arabian thinkers, in which the universe is conceived as a hierarchy of creatures. This scale of beings manifested in the natural order is also reflected in the social order, so that the whole Creation can be contemplated through an analogical vision. The three religions concur in the same vision. Based on this original intuition, his apostolic zeal leads him to build an utmost complicated system to proclaim the excellencies of the Christian God.

The ideas of Llull were not received with indifference by his contemporaries, as he himself provided copies of his work to popes, kings and other well-known personalities, in order to disseminate his ideas. After his death, Llulism flourished in Paris, until Chancellor Pierre d'Ailly prohibited its teaching in 1390. However, Heimeric van de Velde introduced it in Cologne, where Nicholas of Cusa could have received its influence. In Valencia, Llulism also found followers until it was persecuted by the Inquisitor Nicolau Eymerich, who obtained from Pope Gregory XI a bull forbidding its teaching. Fortunately, the Kings of Aragon, Pere III and Joan I, defended Ramon Llull's work and questioned the authenticity of the papal bull. In spite of his detractors, who managed to get Llull's name included in Paul IV's Index in 1559, in the early Renaissance Llulism was still alive. Later on, Descartes and Leibniz recognized that they had known it.

In 1483, at the request of the General Council, King Ferran II authorized the creation of a University in the city of Mallorca. Its headquarters was first in La Sapiència, and later transferred to the place where it is now. This University had a Llulian chair, while the Dominicans, Franciscans and the headquarters of Mallorca retained their Philosophy and Theology chairs. The creation of the University consolidated the Grammar Schools that provided the preparatory studies to access higher education, and incorporated the old Llulian school of Randa as a Grammar school.

WILLIAM OF OCKHAM AND THE NOMINALISM

Scotist philosophy evolved towards an erosion of the trust in reason. The Thomistic optimism that linked faith and reason in a complementary architecture would yield to a distancing attitude from the possibility of knowing God with the reason. The divine action's voluntarism moved by an act of the Supreme Goodness' free will matched with the human knowledge's voluntarism that submitted understanding to love, and the faculty of intelligence to the faculty of will. The ways leading to God did not follow the intellectual reasoning but depended on the mystical hope of the divine goodness' revelation.

The philosophy of William of Ockham, prince of the Nominalists, emphasized the same orientation against the principles of saint Thomas' intellectualistic metaphysics. Ockham is a polemist personality involved in the disputes of his time, including heresies on the Eucharist, the issue of the Spiritual Franciscans and the opposition between the popes of Avignon and the Emperor. He accused of heresy, questioned for advocating on behalf of his spiritual brethren, arrested by Pope John XXII and protected by the Emperor Ludwig of Bavaria. In fact, he managed to flee from prison where he waited the sentence of the Pontiff, but unfortunately he couldn't escape from the Black Death.

Ockham's ideas are very innovating, for he rigorously criticizes the previous great philosophical systems and opens some paths that will be followed by the philosophers of modernity. Ockham privileges the intuitive knowledge that enables to know something with total evidence and, consequently, the intelligence is able to recognize whether something is or is not. Experience, whether sensitive or intellectual, is the privileged intuition because it occurs before a reality that is present and it becomes the criterion that ultimately decides on the existence of things. William of Ockham's philosophy remained forever associated to the economy of thought principle (the famous "Ockham's razor"), according to which things are not to be multiplied if not necessary. Why should we duplicate reality with a second reality that the philosophers called "species" where only individuals exist. What are called "species", "universals", "natures" or "essences" have no other reality than that of the mind thinking on them. They are

actually nothing else than “words of the mind”; William of Ockham calls them “intentions”. When we say “mankind”, this concept doesn’t allow us to know anything else than when we say “Joseph”. Actually, these intentions work as natural signs that show us the respective things, as for example the smoke is sign of the fire, and help us to move more easily among them. In fact, there is no other universality than this signifying function that allows us to use the intention to mention all the individuals that hold a certain similarity. This similarity will enable me to apply the concept of “mankind” to signify Joseph, John and Peter, but not to apply the concept “horse” in their case.

With William of Ockham, the metaphysics’ building starts to totter, because if reality is only individual, what’s the value of concepts that identify generalities or abstractions? For Ockham, they cannot have a clear meaning but rather a confused meaning. Thus, the concept of substance does not provide anything else than negative features, since it cannot be directly known through intuition. Similarly, the concept of cause cannot be directly known as the relation between two events that we know distinctly; or the generic concept of matter cannot be known apart from quantifiable quantities. William Ockham’s thought peaks in the radical separation of science and faith, so the scholastic problem is left aside. If knowledge is acquired through experience, any knowledge transcending experience cannot come through a natural and human way.

Regarding political philosophy, Ockham also contributed greatly to the development of the western constitutional ideas, in particular when reducing the absolute power of the monarch to the exercise of a limited responsibility. In this connection, his ideas had a great influence in the emergence of liberal democratic ideologies.

Just as Thomism left a significant trail in late Middle Ages’ philosophy, so Scotism had many followers, not only among the Franciscans but also in multiple schools and universities. In fact, at the end of Middle Ages the Ockamist philosophers gained momentum, in particular in the Anglo-Saxon culture. As a consequence, in late Middle Ages a general crisis would occur in the philosophical thinking, as Thomists and Scotists (*via antiqua*) would be competing with the Ockamists (*via moderna*) in the universities. All this is accom-

panied by a loss of confidence in the reason, that cannot now ensure a metaphysical structure of concepts but is reduced to translate the meaning of natural events into a consistent language. This moment of crisis was the end of the golden brightness of the past. In 1339, though forbidden in the University of Paris, Ockamism continued to progress, due to the fact that an increasing number of truths were declared insoluble and there was greater interest for problems related to nature. A philosopher willing to interpret rationally revealed truths had no other way than the road of devout faith. The intellectual activity of thinkers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries left aside metaphysics and engaged in the discussion of logical problems by way of mystical approaches.

THE RHINELAND MYSTICISM AND THE “DEVOTIO MODERNA”

In the last centuries of the late Middle Ages, Christian society suffered an unprecedented crisis that forced it to seek refuge in a personal piety and a devout life. Above all, the so called Western schism, by which two Sovereign Pontiffs tempted to lead the only Church of Christ, divided the Church and vulnerated the faithful who didn't understand such absolute nonsense. In addition, while forging the modern states' identity, the endless wars between Christian kingdoms resulted in the loss of many of their best people. The Black Plague, that ravaged Europe decimating three fourths of its total population, was something hard to understand for Christians, who lived it with a widespread pessimism considering it a punishment for the sins of men: that generation lived with the obsession of death, immersed in a paralyzing fatalism clearly reflected in the literary and artistic works of that time. In light of these adversities, piety and mercy grouped many Christian members in fraternities for common help and practice of charity. These fraternities emerged especially in the Rhine basin and in Flanders, where a moneyed bourgeoisie was starting a capitalistic system. In this society, the contrast between the traders' and bankers' wealth and the misery of the poor became more visible. At the same time, the liturgical life had lost its brilliance and the scope of its mystery, so that Christian piety found a refuge in the contemplation of the person of Christ, delivered for mankind. This

Christian path towards a spirituality of personal reformation, that had started in the Netherlands with the “Brethren of the Common Life”, is known with the name of “*devotio moderna*”.³ The emergence of this new form of a more customized and internalized spirituality resulted in an appropriate environment for the flourishing of a generation of mystics in the Rhine basin and in Flanders. The Rhineland mysticism movement may be considered in general as an alternative to the life of faith proposed by the hierarchical Church and, as a consequence, a lay-based movement.

In principle, mysticism would seem to be marginal to philosophy, however it must be considered rather complementary. In fact, while it is true that the Scholastic philosophers and theologians dedicated many pages of their Summas to the rational method, this doesn't mean that the religious ideas were absent. The presence of mystic thinkers is an evidence of it. Between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Dominican Jan Eckhart emerges as one the most prominent representatives of the Rhine mysticism. His influence was outstanding, and Tauler, Suso and Ruysbroeck would follow in certain way his steps. Jan Eckhart graduated in Paris and taught in Cologne and Strasbourg. He was acquainted with the teachings of Aristotle, Albert the Great and Thomas of Aquinas, but was more inclined to neo-platonism and to the negative theology. The most radical thesis of Eckhart, that separates him from saint Thomas, is his assertion that God is beyond being, because absolutely free and his own cause. Placing God above being, Eckhart identifies him with understanding, with pure thought, and unity is his proper note. All the other beings are composed, only God is pure unity. If existence belongs only to Him, the other beings are rather pure nothingness. Eckhart's doctrine on God is complemented by his doctrine on man. The thinker leads us to discover that man's most noble element is his soul, the brightness of his understanding, that is one and simple as God, and whose destination is to be united to Him. In this fortress

3 The paternity of these associations of the Brethren of the Common Life is attributed to Gerard de Groote, a cloth merchant, born in Deventer, who decided to change life, dedicating to inner life and to the service of others. .

of the soul, there is no distinction between God and man. Away from God everything is sadness and bitterness, so that the work of man is to recognize its nothingness, to uproot from himself, in order to find the being where to stay and reach liberty. Mystical union with God is thus reached in pure poverty. In short, it can be said that Eckhart's doctrine was not easy to understand and, actually, the ecclesiastical people of his time did not understand it, so they condemned him: but those who saw his soul burning in love for God followed him most fruitfully.

Johannes Tauler, master in Strasbourg and a Dominican friar as Eckhart, follows his doctrine and even radicalizes the transcendent nature of God, as nothing and nobody can participate in the divine essence. Thus, the human being gets lost in God, "gets flooded in the fathomless sea of divinity" without losing its own self that enters entirely in the divine mystery. Heinrich Suso, disciple of Eckhart in Cologne, shares the same ideas, but is less speculative. He thinks that the quality of the union of man with God is of lower degree than God's union with himself. Finally Jan de Ruysbroeck, a Flemish mystic, goes back to Eckhart when he presents the contemplative life as the fulfilment of the union of man with God, as man becomes what he contemplates, and united with God he becomes spirit and life. In this contemplation, however, man loses his essence of creature. Our union with God is conditioned by our knowledge of God and of Christ. This feeling that is expressed by the mystics had its devout and popular translation in the text of Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, that reflects the spirituality of that time.

THE RENAISSANCE AGE

Modernity starts with the arrival of the Renaissance, an age that is characterized by a decrease of the Church's authority and an increase of the science's prestige, so that culture in general will lose its clericalism. In fact, the Church will be substituted in the control of culture by the modern states, which grow stronger due to the fact that in each state aristocracy loses its power in the hands of the monarch, who is supported by the bourgeoisie of the cities where wealthy merchants proliferate.

Italy has been the cradle of the Renaissance. In the fifteenth century, Italian literary persons, as well as historians, moralists or politicians, were convinced that a new age was starting in a break with medieval spirit. This change is interpreted as the reemergence of the Classic man's spirit, which the Middle Ages had forgotten. It's all about a spirit of liberty by which man claims for his autonomy of rational being, and recognizes his union with nature and history, which he assumes as his homeland. The Renaissance Italians were aware of the fact that the return to the past was by no means a repetition but a resumption. Though the manifestations of the Renaissance are reflected in the emergence of a new art, a new conception of the world, the discovery of a new science, a new understanding of history, the practice of a new politics and, in general, a new way of mutual understanding among people, the Renaissance thinkers were convinced that with their attitudes they were resuming what Greeks and Romans had lived in other times. This approach could be summarized as a new mentality marked by the discovery of the inherent value of man, that will distinguish the Renaissance humanism and could be outlined with the three following features.

First, the discovery of the Renaissance humanism entails the acknowledgement of the historic nature of human world (thoughts and events). Man becomes able to place his events in a historic perspective and to assess them in their human value. The eagerness to discover his past encourages the Renaissance man to recover the ancient texts in their genuineness. Classic authors should be read in their respective languages –Greek and Latin– without interferences or deformations. For this reason, the medieval ecclesiastical Latin is underestimated and teachers of classic letters are sought. The fall of Constantinople will actually provide a swarm of teachers of the Greek language that will be welcomed in the Renaissance Italy. Second, the Renaissance humanism implies the discovery of the worldly value of human life. In other words, far from considering man "*sub specie aeternitatis*", the Renaissance sees man as incarnated in nature and history, as author of his own destiny. Man, a mortal and finite being, is not in nature and society as one who is condemned to exile but as one who is in his homeland; nature and society are his liberty tools and his happiness instruments. Man is so zealous of his particular existence that he will

leave his footprint in all the projects he implements. In this sense, Renaissance is naturalistic, not because it denies transcendence beyond nature and history, but because grounded in history and nature, the only environment of his self-fulfilment. Due to this naturalistic approach, Renaissance speaks about the soul and its liberty, not forgetting the existence of the body. In this respect, it feels aversion to the medieval despise of the body and to asceticism that sacrificed the pleasures of this life in the altar of afterlife. Finally, a third aspect that characterizes the Renaissance humanism is the conviction that harmony and peace, that make possible a happy life, match with the earthly city. Consequently, this city of peace calls its citizens to be tolerant in matter of religion, as all the religions are equal. In all these overall features, humanists draw more on the classical world than in Christian world. For this reason they aspire to return to the principles of the Platonist philosophy that discovers God as the common origin of man and world. The discovery of the Classics should give back to man his central place in the cosmos, so that this return to antiquity should be considered as the man's return to himself, that enables him to gain his own originality. This approach is reflected in the return of art to nature, and the description of the human body's perfection will highlight this original place of man that should never have been lost. Under this approach, man will exercise the role of mediator between God and the cosmos, as if he were the world's cupola or the knot of creation.

The above reflections have a designation of origin, for Renaissance occurs in Italy, where the embers of the classical fire had not been completely extinguished. There, the artistic styles of the medieval Europe had passed on tip toes, and the Romanic and Gothic styles had been transformed altogether, becoming less sturdy and more tailored to man. In fact, since the Emperor Frederick II's death, Italy remained free from foreign interferences until the invasion of Charles VIII, king of France, in 1494. This led the territory to be divided in small states, with a human-centered design, that emerged under the leadership of bankers and merchants in the surroundings of flourishing cities, including Genova, Milan, Venice, Florence, Naples and the papal States, around Rome. Genova was a bankers' Republic that based all its power in its commercial fleet. Its reduced continental territory was bal-

anced with the multiple consulates which dealt with its matters. Not for nothing the first European bank, Banca di san Giorgio, appeared in Genova. Milan had been ruled by the Visconti Family during 170 years, until the title of Dukes of Milan passed to the Sforza Family. Subsequently, the French and Spaniards fought for its possession until it fell in the hands of Charles V. Venice had not known any barbarian invasion and was considered subject to the byzantine emperor, which ensured a certain independence from Rome and a commercial monopoly with the East. It was supported by a powerful fleet that dominated the Adriatic and by a skillful diplomatic leadership able to reach agreements on concessional terms. The fall of Constantinople damaged its flourishing trading and had to focus its expansion on the other Italian Republics. The alliances and the League of Cambrai, on the one hand, and the western way to the Indies, discovered by Vasco de Gama, eventually ruined its trading. A high level Italian language had emerged in Tuscany driven by the literary work of Dante, Petrarca and Boccaccio. Florence, its capital, was considered the most civilised city in the peninsula, and was undoubtedly the cradle of the Renaissance. It was under the Medicis Family's leadership, a bankers lineage, that ruled the city with a "popular" approach that was accepted by the citizens and had been obtained through a deft handling. Lorenzo the Magnificent covers the most sparkling period of the government of the city: he was a sponsor of the artists and sought to confront with the great figures of that time. Just for four years he was separated from power during the ruling of the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola, who created a pietist and puritanical teocracy supported by his apocalyptic sermons. When Savonarola lost the people's support and was executed, Lorenzo de Medicis could recover the power and rule the city with the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany. However, Florence had already lost its great influence. The Papal States were in the hands of utmost powerful Popes who acted as princes who protected artists and men of letters rather than as spiritual leaders of Christianity. They were surrounded by learned men and sometimes entrusted the state to unscrupulous people. Their moral life was questionable and their activity excelled more in politics than in piety: Alexander VI or Julius II are examples in this respect. Finally, Naples and Sicily were in the hands of the king of the crown of Aragon and suffered

successive attacks of the kings of France, Charles VIII, Louis XII and Francis I.

It should be acknowledged that Italian politics in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was very complex, due to ongoing wars and to the presence of mercenary soldiers. The wars between the different cities left a defenceless country that the French and Spaniards had no difficulties to occupy. However, the Renaissance was a wonderful time for arts and letters, though results in philosophy were not exuberant. Indeed, if we give a look at the Renaissance thought we do not see the structure of great systems. However, the Renaissance philosophy prepared the greatness of the eighteenth century, because it had the merit of knocking down the rigid Scholastic system and giving new life to the study of Plato and Aristotle, cultivating a free and independent spirit, at least to choose one or the other. It should be noted that the arrival of the byzantine scholars, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, tipped the balance in favour of Plato in whose honour the Florentine Academy was created.

Before continuing in the presentation of the Renaissance movement, a remark should be made in the sense that it hasn't been a popular but an elitistic movement. The Renaissance spirit was reduced to the group of artists and learned people that were supported by the liberal sponsors. The concerns of these privileged circles were too high to care about solving the social problems of their time. People were immersed in the marasmus of an unredeemed life in the same cities where the bourgeoisie held their literary symposia in noble palaces.

GIOVANNI PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA AND LORENZO VALLA

Having to choose two representative figures of the Italian Renaissance ideas we wouldn't doubt in choosing Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Lorenzo Valla, from the Florentine Academy the former and a Roman the latter. Giovanni Pico was a supporter of a Platonic biased idealism, while Lorenzo Valla tended to recover the Epicurean theses. However, their biographies design the Renaissance frame of mind.

Giovanni Pico had a restless nature that led him to make a long journey to escape from what he called the barbarian thought. He was

born in 1463, within the family of the Counts of Mirandola. He studied in Ferrara, Bologna and Padua where he came to know the Averroist doctrines. He travelled through some cities of northern Italy and reached Paris, where the Aristotelian philosophy was still taught. Pico formulated 900 theses on man, the world and God, and was eager to discuss them with scholars of his time, especially in Rome. However, some were denounced as heretical and he was forced to seek refuge, first in France and eventually in the Florence of Lorenzo the Magnificent. This allowed Pico to contact the most illustrious men of the court of the Medicis during the most brilliant period of the Florentine Renaissance. He struck up a friendship with Poliziano, with Ficino and even with Savonarola, who convinced him of the need of starting a reformation of the Church. Giovanni Pico was of a passionate nature, driven by a researching spirit and distinguished by a bright erudition, but prone at the same time to get tangled in dark plots, one of which concluded with the kidnapping of a Florentine madam. In 1494, Pico disappeared under mysterious circumstances, apparently poisoned by his own secretary.

Pico reflects the Renaissance ideal of a religious man marked by naturalism, as human dimension shines more in his thought than Christian dimensions. His work seeks a synthesis between Plato and Aristotle, but the idea of man's dignity is always present in it. A vague Platonism inspires his thought, complemented with elements taken from the Jewish Kabbalah. Which results in a natural religion, where Greeks, Jews and Christians reconcile because it is the fulfilment of a human ideal.

As reflected in Pico's thought, man's dignity appears to be as the Manifesto of the Italian Renaissance. Before his Oration "*On the Dignity of Man*", no one had shown a similar greatness. Pico transforms it in the main subject of his philosophy. The foundation of such greatness resides in the superiority of man over the rest of the creatures, which Pico explains with his own narrative. In fact, when God created man he was left without the goods he had distributed to the other beings, so he determined that all the goods he had distributed to the other beings were to be common to man. God provided man with an indefinite nature and placed him in the centre of the universe. Because of the indetermination of his nature, man may freely choose

his being. Indeed, human being faces a dilemma: or he degrades as the beasts, or he regenerates in God. However, to regenerate is nothing else than to renew (renaissance). Consequently, man's greatness consists in this capacity of illimited metamorphosis, by which he is always able to create something new within an infinite process. In this respect, we can say that Pico is less interested in immutable truths than in the dynamism itself by which man rises above the world. Thus, Pico assigns to human being the attribute of infinity that was only assigned to God, and presents man as a giant that can transform the world.

In Pico's philosophy, the transformation of the world consists in unifying what is dispersed. Indeed, unity of creatures has three levels: a first level, is the unity by which each thing is one in itself; a second level is the unity by which one creature is united to another and to all of them to form a world; and the third level is the unity of the whole universe with its author, as the citizens with their king. However, this triple unity is already present and reflected in each thing as an image of the divine Trinity, so that in the intimacy of each creature there is the presence of unity, peace and concord that unite it to the other creatures and to God.

This general theory enables to discover that all the paths of human renovation and knowledge lead to peace. The ancient Greek philosophers saw in peace the fulfilment of nature that man should look for. Peace is the ultimate end of human life that can only be achieved in theology, for ethics and philosophy are only paths that lead us to it. Here, the Platonic background of the philosopher is stronger than his Aristotelian formation, in the sense that in his mind theology overcomes philosophy. Thus, both the Christian message and the wise manifestations of thinking converge in peace, because in a really renewed life is where man finds his happiness and the supreme good. It is here where the religious scope of his philosophy appears, as Pico portrays this happy life as a return to the beginning, a return to God and to himself.

Half a century before Giovanni Pico, the figure of Lorenzo Valla also reflects the Renaissance character. He wandered through several Italian cities seeking in vain a university chair before establishing at

the court of Naples, under the protection of the king Alphonso V of Aragon, and concluding his days in Rome, as a Canon at the papal court of Nicholas V. He was born in 1407 in Rome where he died fifty years afterwards. Lorenzo Valla appears as a reformer of education, with the purpose of recovering the Greco-Roman spirit that the Middle Ages had forgotten. He was well acquainted with Greek and Latin languages, so that he translated Herodotus and Thucydides into Latin. His interest for poetry and history led him to question the authenticity of the text named "*Donation of Constantine*" that aimed to legitimate the temporal power of the Popes in the testament of the Emperor. In his opinion, it was a forgery written in 754, four centuries after the death of Constantine.

In his work *De voluptate* Lorenzo Valla shows best his humanist and epicurean character. In this work he presents pleasure as the only good that man desires and to which he addresses all his activity. Consequently, the ruling of cities, the development of arts and the discipline of sciences have no other motivation than pleasure. Even virtue ought to be explained as a selective accumulation of pleasures. Good behaviour manifests always as the search of the greatest advantage and the denial of the greatest disadvantage. Even the life of a Christian is explained by pleasure – even if only celestial and not terrestrial – as he also has to choose between these two pleasures. However, this does not anguish Valla, who enjoys a quiet acceptance of human condition in the world.

Lorenzo Valla should actually be considered as a great advocate of liberty, given that true religiosity comes from liberty and not from compliance of formal obligations and asceticism, as religious orders teach expecting to have privileges. Advocacy of liberty leads him to defend the philosophical investigation and to dissociate from Scholastic tradition, including the Aristotelian tradition. Unfortunately, due to his aggressive nature, Valla had many enemies and reaped a certain ostracism that hindered his brilliant thought to be publicly acknowledged.

Where did the influence of these Renaissance Italians reach? Undoubtedly, they were well known in Italy, along with the great contemporary artists and literates, but their influence beyond their

frontiers is not so easy to assess. If the influence of the artistic Renaissance took a century to reach the continental Europe, it is far more likely that the ideas moved more slowly. Anyway, when we think in the Renaissance apparition in the other European countries our first glance ought to be addressed to Flanders, where there was a great vitality grounded in the flourishing trading activity, and in the financial activity of the port cities of northern Europe. It was also there where the first outbreak of humanism appeared in relation with the figure of Erasmus of Rotterdam.

TOWARDS A CHRISTIAN HUMANISM

If we keep in mind that Renaissance is a period in which man returns to himself in search of the source of his own dignity, there is no doubt that this return includes also a renewal of the religious life. From the exile of the Popes in Avignon and the following schism, a claim was increasingly heard for a Reformation of the Church “in head and members” (*in capite et in membris*), meaning the reform of Papacy and of all the levels of the Church. The Council of Constance had already found a solution to the Papacy’s crisis, with the support of the so called conciliarist doctrines, which held that supreme authority in the Church resided with an Ecumenical council, apart from, or even against, the pope. However, this structural solution didn’t improve the life of the Popes, who continued to live separated from the evangelical values. Religious orders were also in decline, as most of them lived immersed in serious crisis regarding their identity and fidelity to their Founders’ charism. Monasteries hoarded wealth as a result of grants, and the mendicant orders had adaptation problems: the Dominicans were engaged in the Tribunal of Inquisition and the Franciscans had suffered several divisions into groups that were more strict or more spiritual, especially regarding poverty. Crisis affected also the diocesans, who were divided in two classes, the high clergy of noble lineage, wherefrom bishops emerged, at times living a court life far from their dioceses; and a low clergy, with little learning and rather relaxed moral customs, whose role was limited to religious celebrations, at times held in rough manners. Under the guidance of such pastors, the people were confused and had lost the sense of liturgy, seeking a refuge in various manifestations of popular piety. Under

these circumstances, heretical movements also emerged among intellectuals who, disinterested of the problems of the people, discussed theological questions that had to be approved by the Inquisition. The overview of Christendom was, therefore, quite bleak. The contemporary society is clearly outlined by Erasmus through the strong criticism of his writings, and by El Bosco, through paintings that couldn't be more eloquent. However, the picture of this society also offered contrasts of light, in the sense that Christian life was strong in many households, in numerous confraternities and associations, that were dedicated to charity works and to the most needy. There were also fraternities dedicated to a semi-recollected life, following the spirit of some religious orders, as for example the Beguines in Flanders, who were ladies living in a semi-cloistered regime and sharing a life of prayer and charity.⁴

It is, therefore, not surprising that the reaction of true believers to these times of convulsion and decline of the religious life would lead them to feel the necessity of a reform, that is a return to the sources of religiosity to be sure of its genuineness. We have already noted how the Italian philosophers also had developed the idea of a reform of religion, especially based on Platonism, but their purpose was to attain wisdom rather than to change life. For this reason, the religious circle of the Renaissance was closed to learned people who practiced a desk reform, boasting of a theological wisdom where Christianity was a message among others, and not the most critical.

A really Christian humanism could only emerge as a result of a return to the very sources of Christianity, not to the word of the theologians but to the word of Christ, as revealed in the gospels and addressed not to the wise people but to all the peoples. Therefore, it was not the word to be reformed, but life. This will be Erasmus' purpose: to liberate the word from all its adhesions and traditions that have been added and had hidden it, to make it become alive in the heart of men. The task was hard and had to start by purifying the biblical text. Thus the philological efforts for understanding the Bible preceded the

4 Besides the Beguines, there were experiences of masculine beguinages in lesser extent.

Reform, which would arrive later with Luther and the other Reformists. This reform didn't emerge only as a change of customs and life of the Christian community, but went further, proposing the reform of even doctrinal matters.

ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM

The figure of Erasmus emerges through the fog of Continental Europe as the most influential reformer of the learned men of his time. He loved the Church with an intellectual love and, unlike Luther who knew how to transmit to the people the desire of a reform, Erasmus was rather cold in his enthusiasm. Erasmus' criticism was true and fair, but distant and cold. We could say that he knew how to sow the seeds of a true modernity and that he conquered the European intellectual youth. However, his ideas were banned after his death and his memory proscribed by the post-Tridentine Inquisition, that deemed most of his works as suspect. In fact, his ideas were unjustly considered as prone to Protestant Reform.

Desiderius Erasmus was born in Rotterdam in 1466⁵, illegitimate son of a priest, but very soon his family moved to Gouda. He studied in Deventer, in the prestigious school of the Brethren of the Common Life, which had a great influence in his education and in his methodology. He was orphaned very soon and his tutors ensured that he continued studies in Bois-le Duc School, of which Erasmus had bad memories. Later, his tutors convinced him to enter the order of the Canons of Saint Augustine, of which decision he was sorry all his life. He professed vows in the convent of Steyn and was ordained priest in 1492 by David de Borgoña, bishop of Utrecht. However, as he acknowledged, he rarely said mass in his life.

5 In a papal brief he is designated as *Erasmus Rogerii*, which allows us to deduce that his father was called *Rotger Gerrit* or *Gerrits*. *Erasmus* was his Christian name, taken from saint Erasmus. He was then called *Erasmus. Desiderius*. This is a second name that he seems to have chosen since 1496. It is possibly a name suggested by his reading of Saint Jerome's letters, one of whose correspondents had this name.

In 1493, he received the charge of Secretary to Henri de Bergues, bishop of Cambrai, Chancellor of the Order of the Golden Fleece, which enabled him to leave the convent and to travel. In this period, Erasmus had become a great Latinist. He studied some time in the University of Paris, but he didn't take any advantage on account of the old and arid discussions in which it was involved. Erasmus despised Scholastic philosophy as obsolete and outdated. During his sojourn in Paris between 1495 and 1499, while preparing his doctorate in theology in the University of the Sorbonne he earned his living working as tutor, teaching rhetorics to the students and helping them to write in good Latin. In 1499 he went to England where he became friend of the Canon of Saint Paul, John Colet, and of Thomas More. During his first sojourn in England he was hosted in the Queen's College of Cambridge, probably as a student. In the next trips to England, he was hosted by More. In the year 1500 he decided to learn Greek, which he did in two years. After six years he went to Italy, where he graduated in theology by the University of Turin. In this period he starts to translate the New Testament in Latin, as he had discovered some mistakes in the Vulgate of Saint Jerome. In 1509, when he was again in England with Thomas More, he started to write *In Praise of Folly*, a satire against all the social classes. Erasmus remained five years in England, between London and Cambridge.

When the Lutheran reform burst in Germany, Erasmus settled in Louvain. By nature against hostilities, he preferred to keep far from the increasing antagonism between Catholics and Protestants as, in spite of his criticism against the Catholic Church, he was not identified with Luther's style nor with his reform. However, his stance was at times ill-interpreted as if he was friend of the Lutherans, and was forced to leave Lovain. He moved to Basel, where he wrote *The Education of a Christian Prince* dedicated to the Duke of Croÿ, tutor of future Charles V, whose counsellor he would become. In 1517, Leo X exempted him from using the monastic habit. After some months in Anderlecht, close to Bruxelles, he returned to Basel. There he clearly opted for the Catholic group when writing his apology of free will, criticized a year after by Luther in *De servo arbitrio*. From this moment the influence of Erasmus declined in such a way that it became insignificant. He retired to Freiburg im Breisgau to write his

comments to Ecclesiastes before returning to Basel for good in 1535. In the last years of his life he refused the cardinal's mitre offered to him by Pope Paul III. Deeply affected by the execution of his friend Thomas More in August 1535, Erasmus wrote: "*In More's execution I also die somehow*", and he said to a friend: "*We were close friends*". His death took place on July 11, 1536. Erasmus is buried in the Cathedral of Basel, at present a Protestant church. On January 19, 1543 his books were burnt in Milan together with Luther's.⁶

Erasmus had renounced to pursue a career within the Church, as he preferred to remain free for studying and keeping his critical spirit. He was in contact with all the scholars and dignitaries of his time, but he renounced to share the Reform movement when he was under pressure.⁷ Erasmus' work is the fruit of his free and critical thought, a true humanist who uses satire to point out the vices and defects of the society of his time. From his first writings, as the *Adages*, a collection of Greek and Latin proverbs that shape the life of man, through his *Enchiridion militis christiani*, which anticipates the bold impulse of Luther, all his work points to the reform of the Church. *In Praise of Folly* is a brief review of all the social classes, noting their defects and their sins with the purpose of amending them. Finally, *Hiperaspistes* and *De libero arbitrio* intend to make the difference with Luther and with his apology of *De servo arbitrio*. He also wrote a manual for children *De civilitate morum puerilium*, a testimony of the customs in Europe during the sixteenth century.⁸

While Erasmus uses satire to show the moral decline of his time, especially of the Church, his criticism is not under a negative and

6 PURCELL Mary, *The quiet companion*, Pierre Favre, Chicago, Loyola Univ. Press, 1970, p. 59.

7 Tireless writer of letters, Erasmus corresponded with all those who enjoyed some celebrity in Europe, whether princes, ecclesiastics, learned people or novices in the literary art. He asserts that he dedicated half of his days to answer letters. More than 600 correspondents in Europe.

8 ERASMUS, *De civilitate morum puerilium*, Friburgo en Brisgovia, 1530. Erasmus proposes liberally-minded rules of good manners for children. They are targeted to children of any social class, and in conflict with previous tradition.

destructive thrust, but moved by the desire of taking back Christian life to the evangelical simplicity of the early times. He uses his intelligence and his great communication capacity to gain greater freedom of thought in the Church. In fact, Erasmus saw that with the Renaissance an absolutely new way of thinking was being introduced, and his effort was directed to changing the tradition and the state of things that persisted since the Middle Ages. Thus, folly represents for Erasmus the image of vital, innocent and naive impulse, of a self-satisfied ignorance with which most men live. Actually, it's all about a vital lie. The whole life of the people, whether young or old, individuals or nations, is supported by lies that conceal reality and appear most attractive to be lived. Erasmus uses the image of folly as an excuse to disclose the truth that is hidden in it.

Consequently, Erasmus reviews popular religiosity, at times reduced to the fulfilment of some devotions and external signs. Prayers and alms are criticised for their outward appearance, and indulgences are condemned as well as formal devotion. He even puts in the lips of Jesus these words "*I promised my Father's inheritance not to habits or prayers and fasts but to the observance of charity*". He criticises the clergy for the abuse of granting forgiveness and indulgences to reduce the time in Purgatory, the worship to saints and also to the Virgin, the disputes of theologians on Trinity and the Incarnation, the Transubstantiation doctrine and the Scholastic sects. He also criticises the monastic orders that act as if the whole religion were about trifles, as the colour or stuff of the habits. When Christ comes back, He will not judge us for anything else than for love. Finally, Erasmus attacks even the Popes, who should imitate better the poverty and humility of their Master, and their only weapons should be those of the Spirit and not those of excommunications, suspensions or bulls.

So, folly includes all the aspects of human life, all classes and professions. Who can feel happy without flatteries and without self-esteem? So we see how the happiest men approach the most crazy trusting in their machinations, as it is the less expensive happiness. It is easier to imagine to be a king than to actually become a king. Similarly, Erasmus rejects national pride, that divides people and leads them to fratricidal struggles when Christ has made us one people; and he makes fun of the professional vanity of nearly all the masters

of arts and sciences whom he considered awfully foolish to the point of basing their happiness in such emptiness.

The background of Erasmus' criticism is Christ's philosophy. Christian's strength is not based in theological culture, that is only useful as a training for doctoral disputes, but in Christ's philosophy that can renovate customs and man's life. Actually, Christ's philosophy is the renaissance of man, understood as the restoration of his well built nature. The foundations of such restoration are faith and charity, and no other irrelevant things as ceremonies, fasts or meritorious works. Christian perfection is not about the kind of life, the clothes or the food, but in the feelings and in the soul.

Total renovation entails a return to the sources. In this respect, Erasmus anticipates the assumptions of the reform. Everyone should know and understand the Bible, so he is against all those who do not want to get it translated in order that ignorants cannot read it. On the contrary, Erasmus hopes that Holy Scriptures will enable man's renovation. For this reason, he himself translated the New Testament into Latin hoping to improve its understanding, and encouraged its translation into vernacular languages.

Erasmus seemed to be near the Reform in many aspects, to the point that he received an invitation from Luther to join him. Notwithstanding Luther's pressures, he remained neutral. Erasmus was rather timid and didn't accept the violence that Luther generated. He only participated to react against the obstinate position of Luther regarding free will. Erasmus answered with a work that definitely divided him from the Reformer. Against a blind dependence of human will with regard to God, Erasmus advocates human liberty. In his understanding, liberty's existence is demonstrated by the biblical importance of the concepts of merit, judgement and punishment, as otherwise divine prescriptions and promises wouldn't have any sense, and the gift of grace would even be inconsistent and useless as a help of God to human liberty.

Erasmus should also be considered the first Europeanist, inasmuch as he advocated universal peace above national differences: "*The whole world is our common homeland*", he announces in his

Querella pacis.⁹ The war that stains with blood and divides English people from French people, and put Spaniards against Germans is an absurdity. And he asks himself: “*Why these names separate us when the name of Christians unite us?*”

EDUCATION AND THE IDEAL OF PIETY, ACCORDING TO ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM

The reformation purpose of Erasmus could not be understood without his interest for education, as he dedicated a great amount of his works to pedagogy. Erasmus is convinced that the formation of the spirit is facilitated by the reading of good authors, including Virgilius, Lucanus, Cicero, Sallustius, Titus Livius, Lactantius and Saint Jerome.¹⁰ He likewise made a collection of old adages, *Adagiorum chiliades* (1500), collected from the classical authors, a compilation of wisdom principles for the formation of the new man. This forced him to learn Greek, which he did in a short time. He collected 818 texts in the first edition, published in Paris, and followed by other editions. However, his most complete educational work is *Enchiridion militis christiani* (*The Manual of a Christian knight*), where he proposes the education of the Christian knight as an investiture of prayer and knowledge. For Erasmus, these two elements are inseparable, as an expression of Christian piety, since the first implores and the second shows what to implore.¹¹ Hence, the practice of piety exercises – hearing Masses or reciting Vespers or novenas – are useless if the soul is not settled. For this reason he outlines 22 rules to guide man towards the discovery of world, so that he can say that the things we see with our fortified eyes are not mere shadows of reality, as Plato asserted.¹²

Erasmus had the occasion of visiting Italian cities in 1506 and he remained disappointed for the moral decline he found, particularly

9 ERASMUS, *Querela Pacis iundique gentium ejectæ prostigatæque*. Leyden, Johan Maire, 1641

10 ERASMUS. *Letter to Thomas Grey*. Ep. 58.

11 ERASMUS, *Enchiridion militis christiani*, cap 2.

12 ERASMUS, *Op. Cit.* Cap. 10. Pag 62

among the Church's membership. This experience suggested him to write *Moiras Erkomion (In Praise of Folly)* in 1509 as a hard satire against all the weaknesses of the society of his time. At the same time, however, the author shows concern for the current state of culture and, as a consequence, his work also addresses the school model. Erasmus writes this work during his sojourn in England and dedicates it to his friend Thomas More, already considered an example of honesty and integrity. The author distinguishes two kinds of people: on the one hand, the majority – the vulgus – that lives dragged by worldly things and furs; on the other hand, the minority of pious people who follow the spirit of God, a minority that doesn't agree at all with ecclesiastic people.

This experience confirms his conviction that religion and education are closely connected and, therefore, the reformation of both will be his objective in the last years of his life. He starts studying Saint Jerome's Vulgate and notes that there are many items he doesn't agree with, so he feels motivated to undertake the translation of the Greek texts of the New Testament. For this reason he is persuaded that in youth education Latin and Greek cannot be left aside: they should not only know these languages but also use them to speak. In his work on *The right way to teach* he shows a method inspired by Quintilianus that incorporates the knowledge of the Classics.¹³ Erasmus thought that the vernacular language had to be avoided, as an obstacle to reach the highest level of education, that is truth itself. According to Erasmus, education has the high target of going beyond the words in order to achieve the truth. However, even if the educational scope of Erasmus is to reach such an excellent level, his focus is reduced to a wealthy group of the intelligentsia.

In the educational method of Erasmus it was expected that after the reading of a Classic the teacher had to outline his biography to locate the text in space and time, so that the work could be later commented in its context. Only afterwards the teacher has to disclose the rules of morphology and syntax that the student writes in his

13 ERASMUS, *De ratione studii*, cap 6, pag 523.

copybook. Finally, the teacher may propose to his student the exercises of composition. In spite of his underestimate of the vernacular language, Erasmus sees no difficulty in writing first in that version, before trying to do it in neat Latin. He himself will write down these tips in his work *De copia verborum*, dedicated to his friend John Colet,¹⁴ famous pedagogue who had opened a school in the surroundings of the cathedral of Saint Paul in London. It's a work of literary composition, illustrated with numerous examples.

Institutio principis christiani was written later in Basel and addressed to prince Charles of Augsburg, who would be crowned emperor of Germany with the name of Charles V. In this work, Erasmus discovers the education of the Christian prince as rooted in the same history of Christ. *Querela pacis* is a claim against all the wars, so frequent in his times: Spaniards against French in Italy, the Turkish in the Mediterranean, and even the Pope, as Julius II, called the Warrior Pope. Erasmus has a discourse that is different from Martin Luther's, in which he manifests his opinion that the problem of war lies in the lack of education. In 1518 he publishes *Colloquia familiaria* where he shows colloquial patterns to start Latin conversations with an educational objective. His ideas are increasingly in confrontation with those of Luther, who doesn't acknowledge the value of human liberty, since man's condition is to live immersed in sin. Against Luther's publication *De servo arbitrio*, Erasmus manifested his position in *De libero arbitrio diatribe sive collatio* (1524), acknowledging that man's liberty is open to lead his own life and to seek the sense of the universe, because God has endowed him with liberty to be able to distinguish between good and evil and to choose the way of salvation.

Erasmus lived his last years in Basel, to avoid the reformers' pressures. However, in 1529, he still wrote a work on education *De institutione puerorum*, where he shows his keen perception of the question. He denounces the incompetent schools and, in particular,

14 "John Colet, son of Henri Colet, Dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral, not desiring anything else than the education and upbringing of the children..., in 1512 founded a school in Saint Paul for free instruction of 153 children". (Preface of the Statues of Saint Paul's School)

the monastic schools, advising the parents to take their children to a “public” school or to keep them at home. In a letter addressed to John Colet we find words with which he enthusiastically praises the teachers:¹⁵

“I always thought that educating young people in virtue and knowledge was an utmost honourable profession, and that Christ didn’t despise that age, over which he poured his love and from which it was possible to expect to reap the most wonderful crop... there is no other work in which it is possible to serve God better than to lead children to Christ.”

In *De institutione puerorum*, Erasmus is convinced that the education of the reason takes time and, consequently, the education of children should start in early age, in their first three years, and not after they turn seven, as was the fashion in classical times.¹⁶ The objection to this principle grounded in the lack of interest of a child of early age, and in his incapacity to retain what he learned, which could also affect his health. This objection, however, was in contrast with the concern regarding the excessive memorization in an early age that accompanied the brutal methods used in that time. Erasmus, who could remember the whippings received when he was a student, was of the opinion that education had to start early, under the condition of respecting the childhood nature, that is, the natural inclination to play, to compete, to receive awards and to solve puzzles.

The basis of education is verbal, so that language is the main tool to be used at school as it allows the development of the hidden capacities of the child. Internalization may become easier and even funny if appropriate mnemotechnical tools are used. Education is a positive process “as it develops the mindreason, it decorates human qualities and leads to God: if its methods tend to these purposes, they should be aligned with them”.¹⁷

15 ERASMUS, *Epistola a Colet*, 29.10.1511; Nichols Ep. 231, Vol. II par 34)

16 BOWEN, *Historia de la educación occidental*, Vol. III, Barcelona, Ed. Herder, page 474

17 BOWEN, *Op. Cit.* pag 476.

Notwithstanding his pedagogical ideas, Erasmus didn't create any school, so that the already mentioned school of John Colet may be the practical implementation of his way of thinking. According to this model, the teacher had to be "a holy and honest man in his body, righteous, and knowledgeable in good and clear both Latin and Greek literature". His conditions included "hosting children of all nations and countries till reaching the number of 153. Children must be prepared in Catechism and know reading and writing". The students come every day morning and evening, winter or summer. They are forbidden violent discussions, shouting as in cockfights. They should be instructed in good Latin and Christian literature. And this teaching culminates in the veneration of Jesus Christ and in a good behaviour and good customs on the part of the children.

Erasmus professed his Christian faith during all his life, in spite of tense and difficult relations with the institutional Church. He left the convent, he was exempted from using the habit of his congregation and, finally, he was dispensed from his vows, even if he refused the conduct of the clergy of his time and he avoided that the influence of Luther could drag him to the Protestant reform field. When he died, some one caught from his lips these words: "O my God, my beloved God". It can be said that Erasmus influenced the whole Europe, but not Germany.

THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

The Reformation of the Church, that had been encouraged since the Council of Constance and always postponed by the Popes, emerges as a rebellion of the northern countries against the intellectual predominance of Italy. It was not a simple matter of lifestyle but also a political and theological rebellion. The opposition between the Pope and the Emperor that had lasted throughout the Middle Ages with ups and downs had sown disagreements and preventions that a spark transformed in a conflict. Luther's movement is known with the name of Reformation, later qualified as Protestant. On the contrary, the reformation of the Church that emerged afterwards as a reaction is known as Counter Reformation.

Who was Martin Luther? He was born in 1483 in the city of Eisleben, in Saxony. Son of a miner who was struck by a lightning. This

event marked deeply his life and left him concerned about the fact of salvation. Was his father saved? With this concern he took the habit of the order of the Augustinians, and was ordained priest in 1507. Three years afterwards he passed by Rome for some matters of his congregation, which allowed him to contact the Roman Church. From 1512 he taught theology in the University of Wittemberg. Luther had been formed in the Nominalistic school, but he had a scrupulous and vehement character and was personally obsessed by the desire of experiencing the feeling of being saved. Immersed in this anguish he found the answer in the epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans where it says "*The just shall live by faith*", a text that Luther would translate as "salvation comes only through faith".

It happened that Pope Leo X granted plenary indulgence to all those who would have collaborated with their alms to the conclusion of the works in the Basilica of Saint Peter in Vatican. The bishops of all the countries called special preachers to announce this indulgence. In Thuringia the Dominican Johan Tetzel was chosen for this task, which triggered the outraged reaction of Luther who placed 99 written theses on justification and on the indulgences in the gate of the castle of Wittemberg. Given his prestige as professor of theology, the theses were soon known throughout Germany and very soon also in Rome, including the Pope, who didn't pay much heed to the initiative: "*Matter of friars!*", *he seems to have said*. However, he called Luther to Rome to declare, but Luther refused to go. The Pope allowed him to declare in Augsburg, before Cardinal Cajetan, but Luther refused to retract his assertions, as proposed by the Cardinal. On the contrary, he claimed the convention of a general council. When the Pope became aware of Luther's attitude, he sent to him the bull "*Exsurge*", in which he threatened him with the excommunication, and actually he excommunicated him when he knew that Luther had publicly burnt the bull in the square of the castle of Wittemberg. This was the year 1520.

From this moment, the elector Frederick of Saxony assumed the protection of Luther and hosted him in his castle. The reformer started a period of retirement that enabled him to translate the Bible into German and to write the following declarations: "*To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*", "*On the Babylonian Captivity*

of the Church», and «*On the Freedom of a Christian*». These texts manifest his reflection on the social and political dimension of his Reformation, as they invited the German princes to take sides. For the territories of northern Germany these were times of anarchy, both in religious and social terms. In religious terms, the Catholic worship was forbidden and many priests got married. Even Luther married the former nun Catherine Bora. In political terms, a confrontation between Catholics and reformers will start: Catholic princes associate in a league and the Protestant princes of northern Germany form another league, led by Frederick of Saxony, the elector of Brandenburg and the Great Master of the Teutonic Order, which became secular when shifting to Luther's party. In social order terms, Thomas Münzer succeeded to excite the farmers with an apocalyptical emphasis on claiming for a communist and utopistic property regime before the feudal lords. A violent war took place in which the farmers' riot would be drowned in blood by the feudal lords, encouraged by Luther's support. Actually, Luther will always advocate this submission of the community to the prince till his death in Eisleben in 1546.

The Lutheran reformation gradually prevailed after many years of discussions and wars, as it actually was only an excuse for the German princes to achieve an autonomy with regard to the Emperor and the Church. Indeed, in his desire to turn back to the origins of faith Luther had contested the value of the whole ecclesiastical tradition. It was required to return to the fundamental teaching of Christ in the Gospel, as it is in this attempt to rediscover the meaning of the evangelical message where Luther becomes aware of the justification that comes from faith. Only God justifies: this is the conviction that is perceived in all the sacred texts. Man must abandon himself to this divine initiative as he has received everything from God as a gift of grace. Thus, religious life acquires an autonomy and a personalized interiorization. Faith is understood as an act of confidence in the salvation that God grants by forgiving the sins of the believer. Man is required to renounce to any initiative on his part and to abandon to God's initiative. The influence of the late Nominalism is also reflected in the lack of confidence in the reason as support of human possibilities, as faith exceeds it infinitely.

In fact, human nature is corrupted and cannot perform any meritorious act. Consequently, man is justified by faith and not by his deeds, that are sinful and cannot save. This does not mean that good deeds should be excluded, as they are a sign of justification. For Luther, true faith is not idle, but active. He explains that fruits come after the tree and do not make the tree good or bad. It is not possible, therefore, to judge a man for his deeds, because deeds lead man outside of himself, where he is not free but slave. Indeed, man is free in spirit and not in flesh, that is, in faith and not in nature. Nevertheless, Luther emphasizes that in nature Christians are the most docile of men and ought to do good in society, so that the work of each one is a divine service, the only work in which a Christian witnesses his inner life. Thus, Luther sees the good work, understood as a sign of faith, in the exercise of civic duties rather in the exercises of piety.

Due to the above, it is clear that Lutheran theology lies on the rejection of any rational understanding of God, that is, that by only the reason man is unable to achieve any knowledge of God, since he is unable by his own strength to know who and what God is. But then, which is the degree of legitimacy that Luther assigns to human reason? To answer this question, we need to distinguish two kinds of knowledge, the worldly knowledge and Christ's knowledge: rational access is reduced to the former kind of knowledge. In this respect, Luther is faithful to William of Ockham, when he rejects the knowledge of universals and only accepts individual experiences, that is, this world's phenomena, so that the scope of natural reason is reduced to experience. The extension of this worldly scope of rational knowledge to faith's world is only presumption and arrogance. Thus, Luther clearly asserts that the reason places itself at the service of the devil and becomes Frau Hulda, Satan's prostitute. However, when man uses his reason to achieve his own temporal objectives, the way of his individual salvation is facilitated, but must always remain on the fringes of faith. Therefore, Luther contradicts saint Thomas' doctrine, according to which reason places itself at the service of theology in order to ensure faith, and appears rather a follower of Saint Augustine, who emphasizes the primacy of the mystery of faith, and of the mystery of grace, its correlative. For Luther, the faith of man and the grace of God are an unfathomable mystery.

On the other hand, Luther opposes also Erasmus when he argues that human liberty and divine liberty cannot be accepted at the same time. Free will is, therefore, nothing, a mere word, as it is excluded by God's prescience and omnipotence. According to Luther, God has predestinated everything, and nothing happens outside of his will, so that both justification and condemnation are his work. We could object to his idea saying that in this way God desires evil. But Luther, faithful to Ockham's thought, answers that God is not subject to any rule. The negation of human liberty emphasizes the irrationality of faith and reflects a totally religious attitude that entails an abandonment to God's will.

We would say that in this so radical negation of human liberty Luther's thought brings us back to Middle Ages, far from the anthropological optimism of the Renaissance, and maybe it is so, as man loses the cosmic projection of the Renaissance authors. However, the real originality of Luther lies on the return to the gospel as a renovation driver. In this desire to go back to the origins and to commit each man to the works of life, leaving aside ceremonies and external manifestations of worship, the Reformation appears as the Renaissance.

Luther had to face several compromising situations in which he appeared to be sometimes contradictory. One of the most awkward was his attitude towards the riot of the German farmers who, encouraged by the burning discourse of Thomas Münzer, took arms against their lords. The war resulted in great slaughters and developed with great cruelty, but Luther took sides with the cause of the lords, justifying the oppression of the poor farmers in riot. In fact, the lords leveraged on Lutheran reformation to go against the Emperor and obtain through the war not only a religious but a political liberty. Charles V had to face this issue that had emerged in his territories, but he was in war with France and the Turkish were threatening by sea and land, so he was trying to save time through consultation diets and peace deals. In 1526, in the Imperial Diet of Spires, held with the purpose of mediating in the dispute, the German princes increased the separation from Rome, but in 1529 a new diet was held in which the conservative majority voted against any tolerance to the reformers in Catholic territories. The reaction of the latter was a protest, claiming the liberty of conscience and the right of minorities, and

for this reason they started to be called Protestants. It was in 1530, in Augsburg, where a final document was agreed sealing the peace between the parties. This was the so called Augsburg Confession, written in 25 articles, that was not accepted by Charles V. The situation was on the brink of war, only avoided by the invasion of the Turkish who had reached Vienna. The Emperor had concluded the war with the French for the control of northern Italy and could start to deal with the German issue. To solve the problem, the Church had convened an ecumenical council in the city of Trent, close to the frontier with Germany, in order to facilitate the access of Protestants. The council started in 1545, but the Protestants were not present. The emperor, having exhausted the diplomatic actions, had no alternative than war. His army faced the German princes who had joined the so called league of Smalkalda and fought until the battle of Mühlberg in 1547, where they were defeated by the emperor. However, a betrayal suffered by the imperial army forced it to escape through the passages of the Alps to Trent, so that eventually the imperial victory became a defeat. With the German princes dismembered and in war, the emperor was left without a counterpart to deal with.

Luther lived his last years with a tired and irritable spirit. As the head of the reformed church he committed gross errors, such as the approval of Philip de Hesse's bigamy. He died in 1546, a year after the beginning of the Council of Trent. Melanchton, his substitute as visible head of the protestant cause, could see the triumph of the cause with the Peace of Augsburg signed in 1555. In this occasion the legitimacy of the Lutheran faith was recognized, while this privilege was negated to other confessions, such as Calvinism. Melanchton died five years later, in 1560. Actually, the Peace of Augsburg, for which there had been a long struggle, was also a compromising agreement which allowed each prince to rule his territory according to the principles of the confession he professed. "*Cuius regio ejus et religio*" was the ruling principle. This situation, that privileged the princes' will, was far from freedom of conscience. However, things had changed in Europe, and a new way of focusing culture and religion could be perceived. The work of Erasmus, Luther and Melanchton had left traces. The former, whereas respected by the Church, had influenced Western Europe, especially England. In Germany,

Luther and Melancton perpetuated their philosophical and biblical influence.

THE REFORMIST PROPOSAL ON EDUCATION: LUTHER AND MELANCTON

Luther's reformist challenge gained momentum following his discussion with Johannes Eck, for after he received the bull "*Exsurge*" that granted him sixty days for a withdrawal, Luther wrote three treatises that marked out his program: *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*", "*On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*», and «*On the Freedom of a Christian*. Then he retired to the castle of Wartburg, under the protection of the Prince Elector of Saxony, John Frederick, where he remained ten months hidden. The quietness of the retreat enabled him to translate into German the New Testament, which is a unique and first-time piece of the German literature.

In 1522 he leaves the place and returns to Wittenberg to collaborate with his colleagues in theology. There he finds young Philip Melancton, born in the Rhine locality of Bretten in 1497, who had a promising future. Melancton had studied in Pforzheim with his great-uncle Johann Reuchlin, famous humanist, assimilating with great proficiency the works of the Classics. Later on, he had pursued his studies in Heidelberg and Tübingen, where he read his thesis on arts, before being invited to the chair in Wittenberg. Luther could listen to his admission speech to the faculty that was focused on the way to improve youth studies. Melancton advocated the promotion of humanism among young people and that Greek and Hebrew were necessary for theologians, otherwise it was better for them to keep silence. Melancton, however, not only advocated verbally the importance of education, but established in his own house a school of humanities, where he taught Greek, Hebrew, Mathematics and Aristotelian Physics. Firmly convinced that the school had to be the institution dedicated to the promotion of illustrated piety, through a strong classic education adequately implemented.

From this moment, Luther and Melancton eagerly inculcated evangelical piety, with the conviction that through the classical studies it would be possible to attain the Scripture's truth. Conse-

quently, when there wasn't even a school system in Germany, Luther addressed all the Councillors of the German cities to encourage them to create schools with the purpose of providing Christian education to the youth.¹⁸ His discourse expresses the conviction that literary studies are an essential preamble for the successful introduction of the Reformation theology; otherwise, negligence of education matters is the ruin of the gospel.¹⁹ In addition, Luther provides practical arguments that confirm his assertions, in the sense that schools will generate learned citizens that respect the laws, build peace and support a good governance. Though he doesn't explain the reason that justifies the mix of profane knowledge and biblical knowledge, Luther criticizes the decline of the German universities of his time and the superficiality of the ecclesiastical studies inclined to make scholasticism eternal. According to the method of the Lutheran reformation, children should learn useful arts and the three biblical languages, in addition to German, history, singing, instrumental music and Mathematics.

The responsibility of teaching falls on the teachers, both men and women, who must be well trained. Luther acknowledges that the activity of a school teacher "*is the most useful, greatest and best duty on earth.*"²⁰ This praise indicates his high consideration of the virtues of education and of the work of the teachers, which he never ceased to commend. Actually, the civilization of every society relies on education, and education relies on the school teacher.²¹ When Luther thinks in other duties, such as preaching, he considers mandatory the experience of school to the point that he associates the progress of faith with the success of the school's mission. The activ-

18 LUTHER, "*An die Radherrn aller Stedte deutsches lands: dass sie Christliche schulen auffrichten un hallen sollen*": *A los consejeros de todas las ciudades de Alemania: que deben crear y mantener escuelas cristianas*. 1524. Obras, IV p. 9-53

19 LUTHER, *An Jacob Schauss in Eisenach*, 25-IV-1524; *Briefwechsel* n° 596, pag. 47-5

20 LUTHER, *Sermón acerca del "Deber de enviar a los niños a la escuela"*. 1530. Obras, vol. 9, p. 58.

21 LUTHER. *Tischreden*, Obras vol 5, num. 5252, cap. 2, September 17, 1540, p. 27

ity of the school is, therefore, promising for the reformed church, as it has not a self-referential purpose but it works for the sake of religion. For this reason the teacher is required on account of our sinner condition, which Luther recognizes, thus reflecting a deep Augustinian conviction: *“If we were totally pure, we wouldn’t need to be admonished, and we would be as the angels in heaven that do not need teachers, and would do everything willingly following our own impulse”*.²²

Schools must be placed in adequate buildings with good libraries, and the books ordered in four sections: Sacred Scripture, Pagan and Christian literary works²³, Law and Medicine. Luther’s suggestion is that children be two hours at school so that, afterwards, , they could do their home duties. Thus study and work would go together while the boys are young and are able to do both activities.²⁴ School must not become as hell or purgatory for the children; on the contrary, incentives ought to be rather positive. For example, libraries should be available only for the most brilliant, for those who are called to be educated persons, able to serve society.

Luther could implement these educational theories when, at Frederick of Saxony’s request, he had the opportunity of organizing the religion teaching in his territories. The situation was rather deplorable as a great number of clerics lived in immorality and ignorance, and the schools were in a terrible state and were extremely poor. In such a situation, Luther developed a plan with instructions to spread Lutheran faith, including a program for reviewing and visiting the schools. Luther and Melanchton assigned to the civil authorities the responsibility of creating and keeping both schools and teachers. The latter had to know Latin and Greek so that teaching would be built on strong foundations. School had to be articulated in three stages or levels: the beginners, the students of grammar, and, finally, those who had passed successfully the second stage.

22 LUTHER. Obras, LI p. 125.

23 Luther acknowledges that good, even pagan, literature is the access door to Holy Scripture.

24 LUTHER, Obras, XV, p. 47.

In the first stage, students learned the Alphabet, the Creed and the Our Father. Once memorized, they went on to read the primers of Cato and Donatus as an introduction to Latin. They had to read and write correctly in this language, as well as to sing, so that at the end of this stage they had to speak Latin correctly. In the second stage, students were invited to explain what they had understood after reading an Aesop's fable. This exercise of understanding was completed by the study of Morphology, that is to say, declensions and conjugations, together with the memorization of selected passages of Plautus and Terentius, constantly repeated. The day ended with a song, and the students took home a maxim to memorize for the next day. In the third stage were the students who had done well in the second stage and were able to make progress both in Music and Latin. In this stage they studied the works of Virgilius, Ovidius and Cicero, and had to be able to write a composition in prose.

This programme was approved by the Electoral Prince as the educational foundations in Saxony. However, the programme collided with some reluctant attitudes of the bourgeoisie, that looked at study with suspicion considering it an indicator of the Church's corruption and were satisfied if their children only knew how to read and write in German and some elements of Arithmetic). Luther addressed this distrust of the bourgeoisie in his sermon *On keeping children in school*, arguing that "*if preaching and law should fail, the businessman will not be a businessman for long; that I know for sure*".²⁵ In this sermon Luther has a moralizing approach when he asserts that there are many good professions available to learned people so that study will benefit goodness. He then addresses ambitious and vain parents with the promise that if their children were kept in school they could become excellent doctors and masters in Holy Scripture and contribute to the implementation of great works. His arguments are accompanied by statistics, likely tested by his visits, for he says that in Germany there were only 4.000 children who attended school. And he continues deploring the pitiful state of the almost empty class-

25 LUTER, "*Dass man Kinder zur Schulen halten solle*". "*On keeping children in school*". 1530, pag 577-578.

rooms of the universities. Luther ends with a persuasive and rhetoric argument: “if you don’t send your intelligent son to school you are helping the devil”.²⁶

JOAN LLUIS VIVES

If there is someone that represents in Spain the spirit and novelty of Erasmus’ thought, this is undoubtedly Joan Lluís Vives, a theologian, philosopher and pedagogue born in Valencia in 1492 and deceased in Bruges in 1540. Born to a Jewish family converted to Catholicism, Vives was a great follower of Erasmus. He started his studies in Valencia, but his Jewish condition and innovative social thinking forced him to go into exile avoiding to fall in the hands of the Inquisition.

So he moved to Paris in 1509 to study in the Sorbonne, but he remained disappointed because of the Scholastic teaching he found in the university. Three years later he moved to Bruges where he dedicated to teach as tutor in William de Croy’s home, where he remained till 1517, when he gained a chair in the university of Louvain, just when Erasmus was visiting the city. Vives remained fascinated with the ideas of the Master and, in turn, Erasmus appreciated the erudition of Vives and entrusted him a commented edition of “*The City of God*” of Saint Augustine. Having gained the favor of the Queen Catherine of Aragon, the King Henry VIII facilitated his entrance in England in 1523 and Wolsey obtained for him the position of Professor in the University of Oxford. His sojourn in England enabled him to become friends with Thomas More. After a short parenthesis in Bruges to marry Margarita Valldaura, he returned to Oxford where he objected the second marriage of the King with Ana Bolena. For this reason he lost his chair, was put in prison and expelled from the country. Back in Bruges, he published his most systematic essay on education *De tradendis disciplinis*. He stayed there until 1539 (the Revolt of Ghent), when he left the city under the threat of the intervention of Charles V. A year later he died all of a sudden, when he was undertaking a *general apology for Christianity*.

26 LUTER, *Sermon on keeping children in school*, 1530. 560.

Vives' thought is essentially social and pedagogical, in opposition to the abstractions of the Scholastics. As an intellectual, he was concerned with a direct education, obstinated as he was against ignorance and convinced of the value of a personal and social discipline. An example of this approach can be found in his work *De subventione pauperum*, where he develops a plan for forbidding begging. All the citizens should be forced to work, and those who haven't a store should learn an office so that nobody is idle; insane persons should be hospitalized. To reach these objectives, Vives considers that teaching should be mandatory from six years old, and funding of this policy should come from the sale of products of the poor, and from the taxes of hospitals and communities of retired religious, not excluding alms. During his sojourn in Oxford, at the request of Queen Catalina Vives wrote *De institutione feminae christiana* and *De causis corruptionis artis*. In his view, corruption comes from human ignorance, so he follows Erasmus considering that the reading of the Classics is the way for the development of young people. The most urgent work is to reach intellectual clarity, an objective that can only be attained using the reason, which is based in a direct observation of the senses, and dedicating all the efforts to a constant acquisition of knowledge.²⁷ This activity of the reason promotes a demonstrative knowledge that enables an exploration of the world, it appears as a natural theology and it promotes piety.

In the pedagogical approach of his work is where Joan Lluís Vives manifests his most original inputs as a pioneer of new times. He is convinced that formation is the result of a lifelong learning. Learning is endless and humanists must be on an ongoing state of investigation. Consequently, it is essential to love working, as God does not bestow his goods to idle people. However, learning must not be reduced to the acquisition of some notions but it is, above all, to know how to be. In this work, the master must show an irreproachable exemplarity in teaching good customs to his students, as a guide who helps to take right decisions. This entails a constant evaluation of his students, in order to discover their abilities, so that each student may be guided

27 Joan Lluís VIVES, *De tradendis disciplinis*, I, 2.

throughout the course to choose his options according to his personal interests. Vives emphasizes in this regard that parents should not impose the studies to their children. The opinion of the master regarding the capacities of the students is very important, so that he should by no means incur in the error of labelling them, because the students tend to adapt to the image of the master in their regard. For this reason, the master must encourage their hopes keeping a great appreciation for each student. It is, therefore, utmost important that the student feels loved and appreciated with a paternal affection by his master, who must gain his affection and encourage him always, even when correction is needed. Vives considers that punishments are out of place.

Joan Lluís Vives grounds his pedagogy in experience, as the student is an active element of learning. The process starts with the observation of reality, which reflects the problems faced by the student. Then the student must develop action models for their resolution and finally confronts them with reality. According to Vives, learning implies an exploration method of repeated experiences to discover the appropriate models and to establish the appropriate rules. There is no doubt that his system anticipates in some centuries the active pedagogies of our time, that are focused in the activity of the student, who lives the experience before understanding it.

Vives also emphasizes the importance of the expression and the need of training the students in eloquence, as speaking well is an advantage for personal success. Rhetoric is not only useful in the courts or for political speeches, but also for good management. Learning of the language should be universal, so that everybody understands each other in the same language, Latin at that time, particularly for the exercise of sciences and literature. Every city should have language schools, where Greek and Hebrew should be taught, without neglecting Arab. However, Vives doesn't despise vernacular languages: he says that during the first years education should be provided in vernacular and the teacher must know it to help the students to make progress in knowledge. Likewise, Vives considers that elements of writing should be taught at the same time as reading. However, the vernacular language is only a bridge to reach Latin and classic languages. Its study

ought to be progressive, before reading the classic authors.²⁸ Vives quotes a list of authors that should be studied especially: Cicero, Seneca, Plutarcus, Plato, saint Augustine, saint Jerome and, among the modern authors, the *Enquiridion* of Erasmus and the *Utopia* of More. Languages, therefore, pave the road to higher studies, including, especially, the sciences of nature, and then Logic, Rhetoric and Dialectics. Vives' curriculum peaks with disciplines that study society and help to live well: history, ethics, economy, law and politics. The students can only rise to the supreme knowledge of theology based in this balanced curriculum, that enables them to be positioned in the world. But these traditional studies must be complemented with practical and useful notions, whence Vives shares a common concern of his contemporaries.

Our author doesn't either forget women's education. In his "*De institutione feminae christianae*" he advocates the necessity of teaching letters to all those women who show a predisposition to study. Ensuring, however, the care of their virtue, in order that their customs do not corrupt. Girls must learn household chores and be careful in their way of dressing; they must be decent, go out little to avoid temptations and gossiping tongues that could damage their reputation.

For Vives, the environmental conditions of learning are utmost important and are reflected in the ideal place of the school. Therefore, in the location of a school several factors must be considered such as sanitation, isolation from environmental noises and separation from urban roads. He asserts: «*Nobody should be surprised that the search of the place for the birth of wisdom is so carefull, just as the place where to establish the hive for the bees that give us honey*».²⁹ Vives shares Erasmus and Luther's interest regarding the creation of schools, as an institution that serves knowledge, and deems that all the states should establish public school in each province. He

28 Vives suggests to start with Donatus, as an introductory book that provides short and selected sentences, and to follow with *De emendata structura* of Thomas Linacrius, the *Rules* of Melanchton or the grammar outlined by Luther and completed by Colet and William Lily.

29 Joan Lluís VIVES, *De tradendis disciplinis*, II, 1.

conceives them as communities of good and wise scholars who work together “*teaching disciplines to all those who seek instruction*”.³⁰ Teachers should be paid by the public treasury.

In short, though Vives, disciple of Erasmus, has a Platonizing trend when he reduces to few persons the capacity of contemplation of the truth, he argues however that knowledge is a public asset that everybody is entitled to, and “*if each person accepts to help strenuously in the implementation of this task and encourages other people to collaborate*”, this would be the best way to promote the common good.³¹

THE EDUCATION REFORM IN EUROPE

In the European Renaissance, the reformers of pedagogy agree in linking peoples’ civil harmony and citizens’ social peace with culture, to the point of considering that the society itself can be instrument of education. All the educational effort materializes in the school as the most appropriate means to implement it. Spadoletto, Vives, Sturm and Elyot share these ideas, so that both in theory and in practice they consistently develop these convictions. However, most of the teachers continued their traditional practices, based on a mechanical and rote learning, so that when addressing the plan of improving the educational activities, they didn’t understand it as a radical reformation of methods, but as an adaptation of traditional methods according to the possibilities of each student.

Among the innovating pedagogues, Johannes Sturm (1507-1589) implemented in Strasbourg, at the request of the city, his school experience called Gymnasium that was open to children of wealthy families. He soon gained the attention of all Europe, as he was proposing a ratio or methodological system that intended to develop an illustrated and eloquent piety. The objective of study had to be to attain piety, but a developed piety, that is to say wise and eloquent.³² Sturm thought

30 Joan Lluís VIVES, *Epistolae* ed 1642. 1505s.

31 Joan Lluís VIVES, *De tradendis disciplinis*, quoted in Weber, p. 289.

32 Johannes STURM, *De litterarum ludis recte aperiendis*, 1538, Col. 15.

that the Classics, both Greek and Latin, were the way towards such kind of piety because, as he used to say, an inconsistent and graceless discourse hinders people to reach the ultimate truth. The learning of Latin by language immersion enabled the students of Sturm's school to understand rapidly the classic authors. The school was composed by 500 students and 6 superiors. Students were divided in fifteen grades, nine low grades and six higher grades. For a more effective learning in each grade, the students were divided in groups of ten (the decuries). Studies started at the age of seven with Latin texts of Donatus³³ and ended with notions of Hebrew and the teaching of Holy Scripture and the New Testament. The programme was completed with studies of mathematic, history and geography. The nine grades of the Gymnasium were followed by six grades of the Academy, during which, besides liberal Arts, the students were accompanied in the preparation of their particular vocations, with the study of Medicine and Law.

Sturm's method spread all over England and the Catholic world, through the Society of Jesus, that designed its "ratio studiorum" under its inspiration. The Jesuits, who had the monopoly of education in the Counter-Reformation Europe, extended Sturm's influence to the whole Catholic area.

Thomas Elyot, a more critical spirit, denounced the discontinuity between the ideal thinking of his time and the practical reality of education. He had already deplored that the teacher's vocation was underestimated and badly paid and that, as a result, their teaching was reduced to repeating rules, because they were not true grammarians. Elyot wrote *The Governor*, where he addresses the education of men who were intended to occupy public offices in England.

33 To Aelius Donatus, a grammarian of the fourth century, is attributed the creation of the *Ars grammatica*, very renowned in antiquity. It is formed by two parts. The first part is dedicated to those starting to study grammar, and is based on questions and answers. The second part, divided in three books, was about phonetics, metrics and stylistics. These two sections were identified as *Ars minor* and *Ars maior*. The former remained until the Renaissance as a text for beginners of Latin.

His text, inspired by Plutarch's *De liberis educandis* and by Castiglione's *The Courtyer*, addresses the formation of leaders. While deemed monarchical, it considers that a public employment requires a greater delegation of authority and a greater knowledge of relevant responsibilities.

In the sixteenth century, the higher level education exceeded the universities' framework. In England, for example, civil law studies were concentrated in the vicinity of London, as from 1223 the Westminster court of common pleas forced the lawyers to look for accommodation in the surroundings. Thus, several *inns* became Jurist inns called Bar Associations, as they attracted students wishing to learn Jurisprudence. These had the grade of barrists and could engage in the life of the inn (*inner barrists*) or were considered as external (*utter barrists*) before reaching the highest grade of "*serjeant-at-law*".

In the continent there are several prominent figures. Pedro Ponce de León (1520-1584) was a Benedictine monk, born in Sahagún, who refuted the doctrine according to which the deaf-mute were unable to access rational language. In fact, he had two deaf-mute disciples whom he taught to speak, read, write, sing, pray, learn the doctrine, go to confession, and one of them became a priest. Juan Huarte de San Juan (1529-1588) was a doctor and may be considered a pioneer of modern psychology, as he published a study on Examination of Men's Wits, where he speaks of eugenics of humans. The educator has to discover the wit of each student. He launches also a classification of human sciences, that he divides in intelligence, memory and imagination sciences. Institutions include the Academy of Geneva, founded by Calvin as the first institution with a programme of religious studies. It should also be noted the foundation in 1517 of a new school of biblical and exegetical studies in Louvain. Though organized under the auspices of the local University, it actually worked as an autonomous institution according to the testamentary arrangements of Jerónimo de Busleyden. It was called trilingual school because it had Latin, Greek and Hebrew departments. As an institution, it was a model for the emergence of other similar schools in Utrecht, Leipzig, Wittenberg and Heidelberg.

To explain the relevance of the educational reformation, it is worth stressing the transcendental event of the proliferation of printed texts, as they contributed to the dissemination of self-learning books and handbooks. The encyclopedias also appeared, real summaries of the universal knowledge, compendiums that translate the ideal pursued by the reformers of presenting the events of the universe as “a succession of events that lead us to God”. The encyclopaedism attracted many illustrious minds, and has been one of the most effective tools of the education.

IN PURSUIT OF A METHOD: THE “RATIO STUDIORUM”³⁴

The educational institution created by the Reformation was the Latin grammar school and its pedagogues focused on the programming of studies and on the search of the best possible method. To better understand its role, we need to clarify the meaning of two terms used to identify the result of its review. The term *ratio* (reason) implied the construction of a theory, that is a set of notions to be studied. In contrast, the term *ordo* (order) emphasized the right disposition of the subjects within a succession. Therefore, the pedagogical work, especially when applied to Latin, was reduced to a systematic gear of concepts to be submitted according to a school program.

This arrangement consisted in finding the grammatical texts that had to be used in a progressive manner. Thus, it started with the *Ars minor* of Donatus or the *Doctrinale* of Alejandro de Vila Dei. These starting works were followed by the reading of some simple texts known with the name of *Florilegium* (a collection of flowers), a literal translation of the Greek *Antología*. Learning occurred in a room where the teacher explained the lesson and students were seated in benches and had very few elements. In the room there was a blackboard, pens, ink and paper. Actually, the introduction of paper had enabled the students to develop a greater activity, and the

34 Some of the data regarding the school in times of the Reformation are taken from the excellent work of Buenaventura DELGADO, *La educación en la reforma y en la contrarreforma*, Ed. Síntesis, Madrid 2002.

invention of the printing press had enabled each of them to have its own grammar. For this reason, grammars started to multiply. One of the first grammars was the *Compendium totius gramaticae* by John Anwykyll, a set of Latin rules written in English. In Spain, Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas (Brocense), professor of Salamanca, wrote the *Minerva*, also known under the title *De causis linguae latinae commentarium*, a grammatical commentary of the figures of the Latin syntax. It seems that also Erasmus had developed a grammar, that actually had been written by John Colet and William Lyly for his schools of Saint Paul.

As complementary reading texts, Erasmus' *Colloquia* should be noted, which included some dialogues to practice conversation. Vives published *Linguae latinae exercitator*, and the French Corde-rius, the *Colloquia selecta*, both designed according to the model of those of Erasmus. Later on, also dictionaries will be introduced: Elio Antonio de Nebrija published the first grammar of the Sapanish language with a Latin-Spanish dictionary; in France, Robert Estienne published *Thesaurus linguae latinae*, as well as in England, Thomas Elyot would do.

Undoubtedly, the introduction of the *ratio* provided an organizing principle of schools that will be implemented throughout Europe, first in the Reformation section, and later in the Counter-Reformation's. As a scoop, Melanchton had already tempted a regulation of the schools located in German territories that had accepted the Reformation, establishing articles on visits. These articles had to prepare the visits to be performed in the schools and contained minimal standards of organization. Melanchton had established three quite general divisions in each of the schools he had founded, that recognized a principle of regular learning progression through graded steps. However, the first school where a *ratio* was applied was the foundation of Strasbourg created by Johannes Sturm. The implementation of a *ratio* in the schools of the Catholic section was done through the initiative of the Society of Jesus, as the Jesuits had applied one in all their schools and succeeded to disseminate it in all the existing schools, especially taking in consideration that they virtually had the monopoly of education.

THE SCHOOL OF SALAMANCA: FRANCISCO DE VITORIA

The Renaissance and his influence reached Spain a century later, in coincidence with the reign of Emperor Charles V. In the Crown of Castile still prevailed the spirit of struggle of the Middle Ages, though focused on the conquest of America. The incorporation of territories that were far from the crown reflects the issue of the indigenous inhabitants to whom was imposed a foreign culture and faith. The nations under the crown of Aragon cannot participate in the American adventure, and their interest was rather in the Mediterranean. The Protestant Reformation has opened a front for the imperial armies that have to face the German princes that have chosen the Protestant faith, while the Church of Spain and Italy will raise as the Church of the Counter-Reformation. In most of the Spanish universities the Scholastic philosophy is still alive, as well as in the universities where the clerics of each of the religious orders were formed. However, the principal universities were those of Salamanca, Alcalá and Coímbra, where great figures will appear who not only will have an influence in the renovation of the peninsular thought but their doctrine will have a universal influence.

The roots of the resurgence of the Scholastic philosophy are to be found in two Italian Thomist philosophers, both Dominicans, Tomás de Vio Cayetano and Francisco de Silvestre de Ferrara, who wrote commentaries on the works of saint Thomas. Developments of this resurgence of Scholasticism with respect to medieval philosophers can be summarized not only in the use of a new language but also in the introduction of new subjects, as the economical ethics, the sovereignty of the people, the natural law and the law of nations.

The Spanish Scholasticism of the sixteenth century has the merit of having summarized the most positive inputs of the medieval Scholasticism and transmitted them to Modernity, thus constituting the nucleus of the philosophy that faced the Protestantism and led the Counter-Reformation. The principal authors of this school are virtually concentrated in two orders: the Dominicans and the Jesuits.

The Dominicans include Francisco de Vitoria, a Basque, who studied and taught in Paris, where he met Lefebvre d'Étaples and Erasmus of Rotterdam. Upon his return to Spain, he taught in Valladolid,

and three years later he obtained the chair of Salamanca. Francisco de Vitoria helped to disseminate Thomism in a great number of Catholic universities of Europe and may be considered as the inspiring thinker of the so called school of Salamanca; Vitoria spread new ideas that would influence future thought, and his authority was so great that emperor Charles V chose him as counsellor. He was a consultant in the Council of Trent, where he couldn't be present because of his illness that led him to the tomb in Salamanca in 1546.

The thought of Vitoria is focused on ethical-political issues, as the natural law, the law of nations and the law of war. As the Catholic Church considered a sin the enrichment of business people, Vitoria was interested in economical issues and in natural law. According to Vitoria, natural order implies the free movement of persons, goods and ideas, which enables people to know each other better and increase fraternal links. He likewise laid the foundations of the civil and ecclesiastical authority, of the Emperor and of the Pope, who claimed for a universal supremacy and had lived so many conflict times in the Middle Ages. For Vitoria, civil authority has to be subject to the Pope only in the spiritual domain, but not in the temporal domain.

For Vitoria, any law that is against natural law is not valid. For this reason he is interested particularly in the right of the indigenous and protests against the abuses caused by the Spanish conquerors. American Indians are not inferior beings, so they own the same rights as the the other men and are the legitimate owners of their lands and goods. They are fully members of the human community and may not be submitted to foreign laws without their consent. Nor the old pretensions of the Romans regarding a universal domination are based on the natural law but the result of a conquest under the excuse of imposing a right to peoples without law. Vitoria doesn't accept the universalism of political imperialism, but is universalist in applying the law of nations, as in this regard humanity is one single Republic. He opposes the law of blood to the law of the soil, so that Jews could not be expelled from Spain and Spaniards would have to obey the laws of indigenous peoples. As a consequence, he denies to justify the conquests and doesn't either accept the right of imposing the true religion, because consciences must not be forced. Vitoria is one of the principal theorists of the just war and he studies the limits of the use

of force to settle disputes between peoples. War can only be declared to respond to an attack in a proportionate measure, so that wars due to religious differences or for the purpose of conquering a territory are not legitimated.

The modern international law finds in Vitoria one of his founders. Domingo de Soto and Melchor Cano, his disciples in Salamanca, will study further his thought, eventually connecting with the synthesis of Grocio y Pufendorf. One of the most fruitful ideas of Vitoria was to consider humanity as a community of nations based on natural law so that international relations cannot rely on the use of force. Against Machiavelli who had liberated political action from any ethical consideration, Vitoria advocates that every worldly action is ruled by moral regulations.

THE JESUITS. FRANCISCO SUÁREZ

The Society of Jesus was founded by Saint Ignatius of Loyola, a Basque soldier who was seriously injured in Pamplona's siege. During his painful reestablishment, the book of Thomas à Kempis, "The imitation of Christ", fell in his hands and contributed to his conversion and decision of serving his true Lord with all his spirit. After a retreat in Montserrat, where he discovers a book of "Ejercitaciones espirituales" (Spiritual Exercises), he dedicates a whole month to his own exercises in a cave close to Manresa. Unlike Luther, Ignatius trusts in the progressive efforts of the will for preparing to receive a grace with which he will actively cooperate. Ignatius was still a lay man with a new method of piety, and this could be seen with suspect in a country of enlightened people, so he decides to go to Paris for his studies. In 1543, with other four companions he professes his vows in the basilica of Montmartre. This is the birth of the Society of Jesus, a real army at the service of the Pope, with a particular missionary commitment. For this purpose, the jesuits will adapt to all kind of civilizations, from China to Japan, from India to Paraguay. The vitality of the group is soon reflected in the number of young people that join the institute, which in the midst of the seventeenth century reaches 13,000 members. The jesuits will have a significant participation in the development of the Council of Trent, and, once finished, their mission will be

to restore the Christian unity in the spirit of the Counter-reformation, focusing their battle against heresy. Against the Protestants, they defend the free will of human person and they oppose to its predestination, as salvation also relies on each person's will and is reached not by faith only but by faith and works. For this reason, the jesuits undertook also the educational activity, using the classical humanism for a moral rearmament of society; they multiplied their schools for the formation of élites in each country, in competition with declining universities. They also became famous as indulgent confessors, which made them more popular than some other ecclesiastics.

The jesuits developed their particular version of the scholastic philosophy. Concerned above all with the work of clarifying the meaning of every concept, they created their own school in which Francisco Suárez shines with a special light. He was born in Granada in 1549 and belonged to a family of Toledo. He had studied law in Salamanca before knowing and joining the Society of Jesus. He taught in a succession of different places: Valladolid, Avila, Roma and, finally, in Coimbra, which was the most famous University in Portugal when this country was a viceroyalty of the crown of Castile. Known among his people as "Doctor Eximius", he died in Coimbra in 1617. Suárez left his "*Disputationes Metaphysicae*", which was the most extensive presentation of metaphysics up to that time and would be present in the philosophical teaching of all the schools of the jesuits. The contribution of Suárez' scholasticism extends to his juridicial and political treatises.

Suárez' metaphysics has three characteristics. In the first place, it is the first metaphysics outlined in a systematic manner; secondly, Suárez doesn't separate the treatise on being from the treatise on God, as the latter appears as the highest level of a single ontology; thirdly, Suárez aims to be eclectic, in the sense that he follows saint Thomas, but he corrects his approach leveraging on the analysis of Scotus and Ockham, thus providing a certain originality to his own approach.

Unlike Thomism, for which the inherent reason of the existence of being is the act of being, that is to say in the moment of his constitution, Suárez considers being as a state of existence, or as already

constituted. As a consequence, he starts providing a different concept of being. The Thomist conception results from a formal abstraction, an abstraction that considers a quality in being, while Suárez practices a total abstraction, which reaches the universal essence of an individual (*quidditas*). Thus Suárez reaches an indefinite concept of “being”, which includes in itself the actual and the potential being. Though he advocates the analogy of this concept, it isn’t an analogy of proportionality but an analogy of attribution. Therefore, he doesn’t agree with saint Thomas in a real distinction between the essence and existence of finite beings, as the distinction is only conceptual: they are not really separable; they can only be conceived as logically independent.

In the consideration of the principle of individuation there is also a difference with the Thomistic doctrine. For Suárez, individuals are explained by the proper concrete entity of beings and not through matter, considered as principle of individuation. As for Suárez, beings are only those that really exist, the human compound for example will appear as a unity. In this sense, he denies that the essence is really compounded with the existence, and that it receives existence as an exterior aggregation: between essence and existence Suárez sees only a reason difference.

Other important feature in which Suárez’ philosophy manifests its originality is found in his philosophy of law. His definition of law is more restrictive than the definitions of previous philosophers as he tries to explore the sense of positive law. Suárez defines it as a common, fair and stable precept, adequately promulgated. While every law must be based on natural law, in fact it is a living role of the human spirit and not a set of precepts, so that law is rather a task than a possession, as it should be informed on an ongoing basis.

Suárez’ philosophy was taught in the universities and in the schools ran by the Society of Jesus, and it contributed to transmit to modernity an accurate version of the metaphysics and of the traditional law. Descartes, who studied in the jesuits’ school of La Fleche, was undoubtedly educated according to the principles of this metaphysics, and had a great influence in the development of philosophy. Also Joseph Calasanz’ formation was completed in the jesuit schools of Valencia and Alcalá, and if he received any philosophical influence in those schools,

it was surely marked by Suárez' ideas. In short, the metaphysical work of Suárez implies a significant effort of systematization, through which a balanced combination was reached of the three schools that were available at that time: Thomism, Scotism and Nominalism. Deep presenter of the writings of the medieval philosophers, he could enjoy the reputation of being the greatest metaphysician of his time.

THE ERASMISM IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA: THE UNIVERSITY OF ALCALÁ

The erasmism expanded throughout Europe and also influenced the restless intellectuals of the Iberian Peninsula. Some of them knew Erasmus personally in Paris or in London, others received his influence through the university studies. Among the universities of the Crown of Castile, the bastion of erasmism has been the University of Alcalá. Founded for the second time in 1499 by Cardinal Cisneros, Regent of Spain, in 1499, who equipped the old Center of Studies that had been erected in 1293 with a new projection of the reform spirit. Cisneros introduced the innovating influences of the universities of Bologna and Louvain, so that the University of Alcalá became the forefront of the Renaissance and humanistic culture. Cisneros had conceived it as a means for innovating the formation of the clergy that had to face the Reformation, but it became the forge of the most illustrious representatives of the Spanish literature of the Golden Century. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, some great masters have taught or studied in its classrooms, including Nebrija, Tomás de Villanueva, Ginés de Sepúlveda, Ignatius of Loyola, Domingo de Soto, Arias Montano, Juan de Mariana, John of the Cross, Lope de Vega and Quevedo.

Erasmus of Rotterdam was greatly welcomed in Castile where many of his works had been translated between 1516 and 1517.³⁵ Towards 1516, his books and doctrines started to enter in Spain, and

35 Diego López de Cortegana made the first translation into Spanish of the *Querela Pacis*, and Alonso Fernández de Madrid made a version of the *Enchiridion* or *The Manual of a Christian Knight* that was printed in 1526. Luis Vives wrote to Erasmus in 1526 on the success of his translations in Spain: *If many people read them, as is reported, a great part of their old tyranny would disappear.*

Cisneros invited Erasmus of Rotterdam to come personally to Alcalá, but he refused to accept the invitation. His prestige was very great among the literary and humanistic groups, but his influence hadn't had the time to reach the masses. What was the reason? The erasmism had been supported by the Emperor Charles V until suspicions arrived against all the intellectual and religious currents that claimed for a reformation of the Church. There was an important erasmist nucleus in Alcalá, including Brothers Valdés and Juan de Vergara, that had great influence in the Christian life of some spiritual trends. Among these, the enlightened who soon started to be persecuted by the Inquisition as heretics and people who practiced magic;³⁶ the printing house of M. Eguía, and a group of professors of the University that fostered the theological theories of Erasmus and disseminated them rapidly until the Inquisition declared them heretical (1528-30). A great majority of scholars had to exile from the peninsula, but Erasmism didn't disappear completely. In fact, it subsisted in certain texts of fray Luis de León, as "*De los nombres de Cristo*" or in the sensitivity of the Society of Jesus, because Ignatius de Loyola had followed during his youth the erasmist circles and had read some of Erasmus' works.³⁷ The Emperor succeeded to avoid the condemnation of the erasmism by the Board of Theologians of the Inquisition of Valladolid in 1527, when they were suspected of collusion with the Protestantism. Notwithstanding, after Erasmus' death, the dissemination of his works was forbidden in the kingdoms of Spain and his influence started an irreversible decline. Traces of the free and critical spirit of Erasmus of Rotterdam can be appreciated only in some works of literates of the Golden Century of the Spanish literature, especially Miguel de Cervantes.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE UTOPISTS: MORO, BACON AND CAMPANELLA

The new Renaissance vision considers man as the centre of a universe that is created at his image. This humanistic reflection leads to

36 Regarding this subject, the work of Marcel BATAILLON, *Erasmus y España*, Fondo de cultura económica, México, Madrid y Buenos Aires, 1950, should be consulted.

37 Cfr Marcel BATAILLON, Op. cit,

think in the possibility of a fully human world living in an ideal society. If throughout history these fantasies were possible to imagine, it is even more possible when an optimistic vision was prevailing. Not surprising, therefore, that in the Renaissance Age engineers of a utopistic thought would have emerged designing the image of new societies. A dream!: from Isaiah to Martin Luther, passing through Plato's Republic, Virgilius' IV eclogue and the utopias of Thomas More, Bacon and Campanella. Each dream with different nuances, depending on the elements that are highlighted: politics, economy, science or tolerance, but having in common an optimal situation (a dream) that is able to become reality. However, the reference to a far off geography suggests that it is not feasible in this world. The features and traces involved point to a dreaming thought that could be similar to the one that inspired the work of Calasanz.

Thomas More, friend of Erasmus, was a polifacetical figure who happened to live in England in the fifteenth century, shocked by caprices of King Henry VIII. He was born in London in 1478, son of a lawyer. He studied in the University of Oxford, but because of his sympathy towards the unbeliever philosophers of the Italian Renaissance he was expelled from the University. A man of deep piety and proven righteousness, he had the intention of joining the Carthusians, but Erasmus dissuaded him, so that he decided to follow his father's profession. In 1504 he became member of the Parliament and gained the trust of the King who entrusted to him several diplomatic missions. When Cardinal Wolsey fell out of favour, Henry VIII appointed More as Lord Chancellor. Unlike the usual practice of corruption at high government level, More kept far from any kind of bribery. Unfortunately, he lost the royal support because he didn't approve the divorce of the King with Catalina de Aragón to marry Ana Bolena. In 1532, he resigned his charge, thus showing his incorruptibility: at the moment he only received 100 pounds per year. In 1534, the King enforced the approval by the Parliament of the Act of Supremacy by which he became the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England. Thomas More denied to sign it and, for this reason, he was condemned as guilty of high treason, confined in the Tower of London and beheaded in 1535.

Thomas More is remembered for his "*Utopia*", a word of Greek origin, *ou* and *topoV*, meaning in no place. The work portrays the life

in an island of the southern hemisphere where everything happens in the best possible way. An explorer, Rafael Hithlodoy, who incidentally happened to visit it, describes it after living in it five years. Thomas More expresses his own convictions and depicts an imaginary world where education and discipline are at the service of liberty.

In fact, in Utopia everything is owned in common, as equality is not possible without this communism. In the island there are 54 cities that are all equal, with the exception of the capital; all the streets are equal, as well as the houses. Every ten years, the citizens change house to avoid that the sense of propriety grew in them. Everybody dresses the same way, with the only distinction between men and women, married and not yet married. Everybody, men and women, must work six hours a day, three hours before lunch and three hours after. Everybody goes to bed at eight p.m. to sleep 8 hours. In the morning there were conferences on voluntary assistance, and after supper an hour to play. In general, there are no idle people, and work is not missed.

Some men are chosen to study and are exempted of any other work. They are ruled by a representative democracy, in which the magistrates are selected from educated people, three deputies for each city, presided by a prince elected for life, The first mission of this Senate is to balance the richness among the cities. The household pattern is patriarchal. Children stay at home until their father becomes old. Women cook and teenagers clean the house. Food is taken in common refectories, and slaughter is implemented by slaves. The slaves are persons condemned for hateful crimes.

«Every head of household seeks what he needs and takes it without paying. Why should he pay if everything is so abundant and nobody fears his neighbour will take more than what he needs? And why ask more than what one needs knowing that nothing will be denied? In fact, what makes somebody avid and rapacious is the fear of the lack of something».

Not having currency, they exchange through barter. Utopia trades with foreigners only surplus production, not for becoming wealthy. They are obliged to import iron because there is no iron in the island, but they despise gold and silver as raw materials for vessels and chains

of slaves. Trading does not exclude the possibility of war, so everybody has to learn to fight, though nobody is forced to. They are not interested in the glory of weapons, as they only accept wars to defend their territory or to liberate an oppressed nation.

Utopians are pacific and tollerant, they love freedom and nearly all believe in the existence of a Supreme Being and in the soluy's immortality. Their morality is based on the will of living according with nature and its public manifestation is rather rigorous. Concealment is condemned, as well as hunting, gambling, poligamy and adultery. Rafael Hythloday explains that he preached Christianity in Utopia and that many were converted when they knew that Christ was against private property. At the end of his work Thomas More asserts that in all the other nations nothing else is perceived than the conspiracy of wealthy people that seek their well-being in detriment of common good.

Utopia is a tool through which Thomas More criticizes contemporary England, and becomes a clear example of what it should be. The communist regime that More proposes is a report of nobility's hoarding that caused people's suffering.³⁸ However, More is not a dreamer, but rather "an intransigent realistic man" who is attentive to his environment and reports what is unacceptable. Utopia ends up with an advice that reflects the author's realism: "*However, there are many things in the commonwealth of Utopia that I rather wish, than hope, to see followed in our governments*", an expression that reflects more an invitation to action than a frivolous and sterile expectation.

Eight yeas after Thomas More's death, Francis Bacon was born in London to Sir Nicholas Bacon, lord privy seal of Queen Elizabeth I. He had studied in Cambridge, and after being for a short period in Paris in the entourage of the Ambassador of England, he started

38 England was subjected to social and economic shocks promoted by the Tudor's dynasty that privileged the trade in wool rather than the farmers' work. The aristocracy dedicated to rear large herds of sheep with prejudice of farming... agriculture, which, even if scarcely developed, was the poor households' livelihood. The confrontation of the two economies was dramatic for the farmers' subsistence, who were cruelly deprived of their livelihood.

his political career, joining the Parliament. However, Bacon was not trusted by Queen Elizabeth. When Jacob I became King, Bacon's outlook changed: supported by lord Buckingham, a favourite of the King, he was appointed general lawyer, procurator general and eventually, Lord privy seal and Lord Chancellor, with other nobility titles as baron of Verulam and viscount of Saint Alban. Blamed of having accepted a bribe from parties, he admitted the accusation and was condemned to pay forty thousand pounds and was incarcerated in the Tower of London until the King decided. He was deprived of all the State charges and disqualified for life. The King forgave the philosopher's fine and jail, but his political life was finished. Francis Bacon retired to Gorhambury, where he passed his last years dedicated to study.

Bacon's figure is not so attractive due to his image of skillful and ambitious courtier, but his relevance lies on the fact that he recognized the value of science, placing it at the service of humankind. He was convinced that, through an active and practical science, humankind could reach power over all things. Actually, his thought is also utopistic when he imagines progress that man can make based on science. His « *New Atlantis* », an incomplete work, depicts a well ruled republic. His executor says that "*expecting that the work would be too long, he resigned, wishing to dedicate himself to natural history that attracted him most ...*". As Bacon was more concerned with power than with social justice, the organization of his society is based on cold, accurate and juridical texts.

Bacon imagines a paradise in an unknown island beyond America, called Benisalem. It is ruled in a monarchical manner, under a powerful class of intellectuals who reside in "Salomon's House". These are the élite of the country, heirs of the ancient mandarins, who rule the country without any participation of the people. Actually, the whole island is like a laboratory of experiments. Inhabitants are concerned with science and are eager to know the hidden forces of nature in order to extend as far as possible humankind's control. The protecting gods of the island are the great inventors of all the countries, and the copies of their greatest and special inventions are their sacred relics. Their productions include some that imitate the flight of the birds, others that imitate fishes swimming, strange clocks and objects able to create devices that imitate the movements of living beings as

beasts, birds, fishes, snakes and men. Salomon's House exercises the control, working as a social body of wise men whose discoveries are not revealed to the State. Their key task is to separate what is right and wrong both in scientific and religious areas. The wise men learn to distinguish accurately between laws of nature and divine miracles.

Thus Bacon manifests his total trust in science and technique, and considers that their control enables to dominate the world. Actually, he intended to create an Institute of Sciences and Techniques with the royal support, so that his utopian novel offered sufficient reasons to succeed. The secret society depicted by Bacon anticipates the freemasonry that would emerge some years after the publication of his work.

A third model of utopia is found in the work of Tommaso Campanella "*The City of the Sun*", that seeks to place theology as the foundation of the political and religious unity of humankind. Born in Stilo (Calabria) in 1568, Campanella joined the Order of Preachers when he was very young, but through his writings he soon appeared to be a rebel character. Imprisoned in Naples, he managed to escape first to Rome and later to Florence and Padua. Convicted of heresy, he is tortured in Rome by the Inquisition. Back in his country he prepares a plot aimed at establishing a teocratic republic, but is discovered and transferred to Naples, where he escapes feigning to be insane. His sentence is commuted into life imprisonment. Thus, during 27 years he will be in prison, proclaiming the political and religious unification of humankind and writing again most of his works that had been destroyed or lost. Finally, he was liberated by the Viceroy of Naples and delivered to the Holy See. Urban VIII gave him the whole Palace of the Holy Office as prison. He eventually succeeded to escape to France in 1634 with the aid of the French Ambassador, where the King Louis XIII protected him till his death in 1639.

Campanella's philosophy appears as a political theology with which he intended to enlighten the evil of this world and to implement a reform aimed to restore justice and peace. But it is also a philosophy in polemic with Aristotle, in which he proposes a new way of approaching nature through sensation, as if it were inhabited by sensitivity. For Campanella, nature is God's manuscript.

Campanella not only had in his mind a utopian republic inspired by Plato but intended also to implement it: first through the King of Spain, and then through the King of France. Anyway, Campanella always defended Catholicism as the religion that had to be imposed, as it was the only true religion and the one that better reflected, according to all peoples and cultures, the ideal of the natural religion. His prophetic spirit would have been betrayed in the case of choosing a false religion. For this reason he proclaimed the need of a reformation ruled by the Catholic Church.

The city of the sun, as a perfect state, must be ruled by a prince or a priest called Sun or Metaphysician, assisted by three side-princes, Pan, Sin and Mor, representing power, wisdom and love. The organization of this state would be accurately designed by scientists that would establish the community of goods and women. Its inhabitants would live under the dictations of the reason and subjected to natural religion, as distinguished from Christianity for the lack of revelation, though its followers know the divine Trinity. This natural religion is fit only for learned people but unable to promote the unity of mankind, as it lacks the supernatural complement of revelation. Natural religion is the pattern that enables to discern the truth or falseness of historical religions, so that it is always true, while the acquired religion may be false. Natural religion belongs to all the entities that have their origin in God and tend to him, while acquired religion is peculiar to man.

«Casas, aposentos, lechos, en una palabra, todo es común entre ellos. Cada seis meses los magistrados designan a cada uno el círculo, la casa y el aposento que debe ocupar. [...] Cada una de las artes mecánicas y especulativas es común a ambos sexos. Solamente los trabajos que exigen más vigor y que se realizan fuera de los muros son ejecutados por los hombres- [...] A cada novilunio, como a cada plenilunio, se reúne, después de un sacrificio, el consejo. Todos los individuos de una edad superior a los veinte años son admitidos a dar su opinión sobre la situación de la república, a plantear sus quejas contra los magistrados o a tributarles elogios. Cada ocho días los magistrados se reúnen; es decir, en primer lugar el Sol, después la Sabiduría, el Poder y el Amor. Cada uno tiene tres magistrados bajo sus órdenes, encargados de la dirección de los oficios de los que son especialistas,

lo que da un total de doce magistrados. El Poder dirige todo lo referente al arte militar; Sabiduría, todo lo que se refiere a las ciencias; el Amor se ocupa de la alimentación, de la vestimenta, de la generación y de la educación.»

But since you are so curious I will add more. Both when it is new moon and full moon they call a council after a sacrifice. To this all from twenty years upward are admitted, and each one is asked separately to say what is wanting in the State, and which of the magistrates have discharged their duties rightly and which wrongly. Then after eight days all the magistrates assemble, to wit, Hoh first, and with him Power, Wisdom, and Love. Each one of the three last has three magistrates under him, making in all thirteen, and they consider the affairs of the arts pertaining to each one of them: Power, of war; Wisdom, of the sciences; Love, of food, clothing, education, and breeding. The masters of all the bands, who are captains of tens, of fifties, of hundreds, also assemble, the women first and then the men. They argue about those things which are for the welfare of the State, and they choose the magistrates from among those who have already been named in the great Council. In this manner they assemble daily, Hoh and his three princes, and they correct, confirm, and execute the matters passing to them, as decisions in the elections; other necessary questions they provide of themselves. They do not use lots unless when they are altogether doubtful how to decide. The eight magistrates under Hoh, Power, Wisdom, and Love are changed according to the wish of the people, but the first four are never changed, unless they, taking counsel with themselves, give up the dignity of one to another, whom among them they know to be wiser, more renowned, and more nearly perfect. And then they are obedient and honorable, since they yield willingly to the wiser man and are taught by him. This, however, rarely happens. The principals of the sciences, except Metaphysic, who is Hoh himself, and is, as it were, the architect of all science, having rule over all, are attached to Wisdom.

Among all the historical religions, Christian religion is the only one that doesn't contradict the reason but helps and improves nature. In this regard, Campanella shows his prophetic character when he ensures as imminent the return of all peoples to Christianity, that is the authentic religion, and confirms his predictions with signs of

astrology. To the Pope and to all Christians he recommends to reform customs, not dogmas; to return to the Church of the Fathers and, as a consequence, to her capacity of proselitism and universal dissemination. This program of Campanella seems to match with the intentions of the Counter-reformation, but actually is not so, as the reason why he accepts Catholicism is because he identifies it with natural religion, and the reason why he accepts revelation is because without revelation and its miracles natural religion has no persuasive potential nor dissemination capacity.

Campanella was hosted by Joseph Calasanz, who entrusted to him the philosophical formation of his religious. There is no doubt that his influence was significant in the court of France where he seems to have participated in the formation of young Louis XIV, called the Sun King.

HEROIC FURORS: GIORDANO BRUNO

The Renaissance entailed a new conception of man, but also a new conception of the universe, which resulted in the establishment of the new science. If the fifteenth century had a clerly literary nature, the sixteenth century was above all a scientific century. Thinkers of this age got further and further away from the Aristotelian conceptions, but some of them couldn't avoid to develop a theosophical and mysterious environment when trying to explore knowledge arcanes. Paracelsus, Reuchlin, Boehme and Telesius outlined a natural mysticism that implied the world as macrocosm and man as microcosm. Philosophical elements mixed with theosophical reasons to speculate with the control of nature through methods not strictly scientific. Sometimes using the Kabbalah, which made them suspicious to the Inquisition. Giordano Bruno is undoubtedly an exemplary case of this universalistic spirit of love for nature.

Giordano Bruno was born in Nola in 1548 and at the age of fifteen he joined the Order of Preachers in Naples, but at eighteen he started to manifest problems of faith. From that moment he sought refuge in Geneva, Toulouse and Paris, where he published his first comedy and his first essay entitled "*De umbris idearum*". He then taught in Oxford and during his sojourn in England he was in contact with the court of

Queen Elizabeth; he passed by Paris in his way to Germany, where he taught in Marbourg, Wittemberg and in Francfort, where he finished his poems. Bruno was invited later by the Republic of Venice, but in that city he fell under the hands of the Inquisition and transferred to Rome where he remained seven years in prison, without giving up his ideas. In 1600, he was condemned to death at the stake, executed in Campo dei Fiori, close to the Calasanctian school. His works include *“Concerning Cause, Principle, and Unity”*; *“On the Infinite, the Universe and the World”*; *“Heroic Furors”*.

The interest of the figure of Bruno is his emblematic character that reflects the new times that were open to the infinity of the universe. He lived this period in a passionate way. The key feature of his thought lies on the love for life, which made intollerable the cloister and hateful and pretentious the Aristotelian writings. Bruno exhibits an overexcited and lyric interest for nature, as he contemplates it as a living and animated reality, that extends infinitely. In this point he manifestas great interest for Ramon Llull’s work and doesn’t conceal his interest for magic as a way to disclose the arcanes. Naturalism becomes his religion and at the same time he rejects any religion that is grounded in a system of creeds. When they consider natural laws as banalities, Bruno qualifies them as an absurd and repugnant set of superstitions opposed to reason; he calls Christianity “holy asininity”, in contrast with the religion of the learned, that is the fruit of philosophy and of its vision of nature.

Bruno argues that according to this naturalistic religion God is unknowable and transcendent so that the divinity as such is out of the researching scope. It is more reasonable to look at the revelation of God in nature, as God is nature itself and its immanent principle. He is the cause and principle of the world: the cause, because he determines things, being different from them; and principle, as he coincides with the very being of natural realities. God animates and leads nature. He is the “anima” of the world, the form that organizes matter. The unity that results is the Universe.

Bruno follows Nicholas of Cusa when applying to the universe the qualities that the latter had identified. In Universe, there is the coincidence of the opposites: maximum and minimum coincide, as

well as the indivisible point and the divisible body, the center and the circumference. World is, therefore, infinite, because the infinity of the cause coincides with the infinity of the effect. Being infinite, God includes all – the whole and its parts – while the infinity of the universe dwells only in the whole. The first infinity is the foundation of understanding, the foundation of soul and life, and this infinity is where the religion of infinity is based.

Bruno's question is, therefore, how to reconcile in God-nature the immutable unity of the whole with the mutable multiplicity of things. The philosopher explains it by distinguishing between the being – the whole – and the modes of being, the things. Each individual thing has the being, but not all the modes of being. In fact, this One-All doesn't extend only to the exterior, to greatness, but also to the interior. For this reason, within the Monad, maximum coincides with minimum. Thus, the least contains the greatest, and the greatest repeats what is small and total, surviving in itself and for itself in an eternal immanence.

Our philosopher accepts the Neo-platonist ascension of human knowledge, but its highest level does not consist in its mystical union with God, but in its merger with the Monad, thus assuming unity of all and becoming nature. Just as Actaeon, who became a deer when contemplating Diana that was naked, so the soul that seeks nature becomes nature itself. This union doesn't mean the end of theoretical life, but the end of practical life. In God, liberty and necessity always coincide; on the contrary, due to his ignorance, man hasn't a perfect liberty and not always implements what is best. However, the "heroic furors" that have fascinated him, exalt him and drive him to equal God and to reach infinity.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE NEW SCIENCE. GALILEO AND BACON

The modern world launched by the Renaissance peaked the design of a new mental structure with a new conception of science. The old medieval conceptions formulated by the Aristotelians would be left behind, and a new model would emerge in spite of the difficulties created especially by the Catholic Church. A new cosmological con-

ception was in discussion, the one provided by Nicolaus Copernicus, Polish canon of Frauenburg, who had written "*On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*". This work questioned the Aristotelian geocentric cosmology, in the understanding that all the astronomical difficulties were better solved under the heliocentric hypothesis, that is to say that the earth is not immobile but moves on its axis in a daily circulation, and in a circular orbit around the sun on an annual basis.

It should be noted that Copernicus' approach is not yet modern, but Pythagorean, inasmuch as it is based on the axiom that all the heavenly movements should be harmonious, uniform and regular due to strictly aesthetical reasons. However, the principal thesis of the work is the displacement of the earth from its central position and from its geometrical preeminence. After Copernicus, other astronomers followed speculating with his theory and providing amendments. The Danish Tycho Brahe held a mixed theory where the sun and the moon turned around the earth, and the rest of the planets around the sun. Kepler, a German astronomer who had to fight with Protestants and Catholics to keep up with his ideas, was more innovative. While he lyrically exalts the world's beauty as an image of the divine Trinity, his most significant contribution is the scientific establishment of some physical laws on planets' circulation. According to his theory, planets describe elliptical and not circular orbits around the sun moving with speeds that depend on their average distance from the sun.

Modern science thus started to make its way, but only with Galileo Galilei it can be considered historically founded, as he is the father of modern physics. He was born in Pisa in 1564 and had addressed his studies towards medicine while dedicated to the observation of the nature's events. Thus, in 1583, the observation of the movement of a lamp of the cathedral of Pisa enabled him to discover the isochronism of the Law of Pendulum. Later on, the study of the works of Archimedes enabled him to invent the scale as a tool to measure the specific weight of the bodies. In that time, Galileo had already been appointed professor of mathematics in the University of Pisa, when he made his experiences of the body freefall from the leaning tower of the cathedral. Later, during his eighteen years of professor at the University of Padua, he constructed a telescope, a device provided

with a magnifying lens with which he could explore the sky. He discovered four moons of Jupiter which he called "*Medicean Planets*" in honor of Médicis family; he observed that the Milky Way was formed by thousands of stars; he discovered the rings of Saturn, the phases of Venus, the mountains of the moon and the sunspots, which refuted the supposed incorruptibility of the celestial bodies. Based on these discoveries, Galileo started to support the Copernican doctrine, which motivated the Inquisition to start a process against him. He had written "*The Dialogues on the two systems*" that were condemned by the Inquisition. Later on, Galileo was required to appear in court of the Holy Office, which, after a long process forced him to retract. At the age of 70 he was exiled to Arcetri, close to Florence, sick and blind, but still writing "*Discourses concerning the new science*". As we will see below, some piarists accompanied him in these times of exile and attended his teachings. Galileo died in 1642 while he continued an intense correspondence with numerous friends.³⁹

Galileo has certainly a great relevance as astronomer, but much more indeed as creator of dynamics. As a matter of fact, it was he who discovered the importance of the acceleration that the bodies experiment, that is to say the variation of their speed, regarding both size and direction. Galileo argued that this change of speed or direction should be explained by the application of some "force". Galileo called "law of inertia" this principle on which the whole physics is based.

Galileo was also the first who formulated the law of falling bodies, by which, when a body falls freely its acceleration is uniform, as long as the resistance of the medium through which it was falling remained negligible. Moreover, the acceleration is the same for all kind of bodies, both heavy and light, big or small. He also fostered the study of the motion of projectiles, which enabled him to deduce the principle by which if several forces act simultaneously on a body the effect is the same as if each of these forces acted successively. Therefore, it is possible to assess the total effect of a certain number

39 As a matter of fact, Galileo was condemned twice by the Inquisition. In 1616, he was forbidden to disseminate the heliocentric ideas of Copernicus, which he didn't obey and was condemned a second time in 1623 with the exile to Arcetri.

of forces on a body by analyzing separately the laws of the different forces to which the mobile bodies are subject.

All these physical discoveries of the illustrious scientist imply some philosophical principles to which Galileo always held fast. Firstly, he persists in rejecting the Aristotelian deductive method, as for clearing the path of scientific research it is required to remove obstacles from a cultural and theological tradition. Consequently, by advocating the direct study of nature he is criticizing the Aristotelians and facing at the same time the ecclesiastical authority. It is improper of a philosopher, he says, to look at a paper world when God has disclosed for our learning the book of nature. In fact, Scripture and nature both come from God. Therefore, what nature reveals through a sound experience should not be questioned.

Only the book of nature provides the object of science. And only experience is the method for its interpretation, as experience is the revelation of truth built in nature. However, reasoning – especially mathematical reasoning – has a similar relevance, as its objective is the interpretation and transcription of a sensible phenomenon. In this regard, Galileo argues that the book of nature is written in a mathematical language, on which its necessary order is based. In order to understand this language, science must build a system of accurate measuring procedures, so that quantification becomes a sure criterion of the objectivity of the experience. On the contrary, qualities cannot be measured and have, therefore, a subjective nature.

Consequently, Galileo represents a shift to the criterion that modern science must remove any finalistic or anthropological concern. No wonder, because the works of nature may not be judged in terms of human ends or according to a utilitarian criterion. We cannot answer questions on the usefulness of Jupiter or Saturn or of some of our organs, because they have no sense. However, this impossibility is not a limitation for science because they are out of place. Our anticipations are out of the sciences' scope. To conclude, according to Galileo, experience is the most true philosophy to achieve nature's truth.

We cannot finish our trip through modern science without underlining the importance of Francis Bacon, already mentioned regarding his utopian thought, because he had the merit of high-

lighting the value of science in a man's life. According to Bacon, active and practical science provides huge benefits to human kind, including the power over everything. He wrote this in his "*Essays*", a collection of short analyses of political and moral life, in which he uses the wisdom of the Ancients. However, his broader project of creating an encyclopedia of all sciences remained only outlined in his work "*On the increasing of sciences*", followed by "*Instauratio Magna*", where he was expected to propose the guidelines of all the sciences. It consisted of three parts that were reduced to a scheme, with the exception of the second part called "*Novum Organum*". In this work he presents his inductive method as opposed to the syllogistic method of Aristotle.

Bacon is convinced that knowledge is power, so that the mission of knowledge results in practice, that is to say that it extends man's control over nature. Science becomes at the service of man, whose power it helps to increase, while, on the contrary, ignorance precludes the way to success. To enter in nature, human intelligence needs tools that are appropriate and fit for purposes. These instruments of the spirit are described by Bacon in his *Instauratio magna* "*as the marriage between the spirit and the universe, from whose union the generation of a great deal on inventions fit to alleviate human miseries is expected*".⁴⁰

To find an adequate method for science Bacon pursues to get away from deduction, that is only fit for speculation. He compares the work of the philosophers with the work of the ants, that is reduced to carry food to their nests without any order or classification; or with the work of the spiders that weave their webs with an internal fluid without external inputs. Philosophical thought must not imitate either the former nor the latter, but imitate the work of the bees, that take from outside the flowers' nectar to process the honey that they store in their honeycomb. The metaphor is clear enough to define experience not as a blind accumulation of data nor as a speculation

40 BACON, Francis, *Novum Organon, The Instauratio magna. Part II: Novum organum and Associated Texts*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2004. (Spanish Translation, *Instauratio Magna, Novum Organum, La Nueva Atlántida*, Mexico, Porrúa 2002).

without an empirical basis but as a process of external data implemented by the thought.

All this manifests that nature doesn't disclose clearly its laws so as to make them known at a glance. For this reason it is easy to understand why sometimes wrong roads are taken, making difficult the way of Science. Bacon describes them with the name of idols, identifying four kinds, two that are inherent to human nature and two that are external, coming from social life. The former include, on one side, the *idols of the tribe*, inherent to human nature, common to all men, for example the insufficiency of our senses or of our understanding, which hinder us to reach what is not seen. On the other hand, the *idols of the Cave*, which arise within the mind of the individual: indeed, each man has his own preferences, his viewpoints, as if each one had a cavern where the light coming from nature deviates. Secondly, among the idols Bacon appreciates those coming from outside, the *idols of the marketplace*, which arise from the false significance bestowed upon words: in fact, men intend that all the words are reasonable, but discourses often mislead us and mix up our understanding, either when they say names of things that do not exist or when they say ambiguous or poorly determined names. Finally, the *Idols of the Theater*, that are related to thinking patterns of previous generations, for example when we take as good Plato, Aristotle or the Scholastics without further justification.

Once these prejudices are overcome, a sound resource is required to make progress in scientific knowledge. Bacon emphasizes the advantage of induction over deduction, as science cannot be established as a true knowledge if the intellect doesn't impose its discipline to sensitive experience and, in turn, experience doesn't impose its discipline to the intellect. In other words, deduction must be ruled out because it escapes from sensitive experience's discipline. Consequently, for Bacon only induction is valid. In fact, Aristotle had already presented induction as a merely logic process of reasoning, but it was all about an induction based on the simple list of particular cases, which is always exposed to the risk of error. Bacon proposes an induction system where experience data are confronted with each other, are organized according to tables, hypothesis are designed, and are submitted to an empirical test.

With this eagerness of finding a new method, in order to implement his induction of a law Bacon develops tables of presence and tables of absence of the features that determine an experience. For example, if we decide to discover the nature of heat, supposing that it consists in rapid and irregular movements of the smallest parts of warm bodies, we should make a list of warm bodies (table of presence), a list of cold bodies (table of absence) and a third list of warm bodies with varying degrees of heat (table of variations). In each one of them we must test whether in the first list the movements of the parts of the warm bodies are speedy, whether in the second list of the cold bodies such speed doesn't exist and whether in the third list the variations of more or less warm bodies match with different degrees of greater or lesser speed of their particles. Through these lists Bacon expected to find some features that were always present in warm bodies, and not present in cold bodies, and that appeared in a varying manner in bodies with different degrees of heat. Based on this method, Bacon expected to reach in a first moment some general laws with a lesser degree of generality which he designed with the title of Baconian hypothesis. With a certain number of these laws he expected to formulate laws of a second degree of generality, after testing them under new circumstances. If this second law was operational even under the new circumstances, it could be approved until that point. To implement this test Bacon provides some utmost valuable examples because they enable to take a decision between two different theories. These examples are called "prerogative instances". The critical instance among them is called "crucial instance", as it definitely decides on the cause of a phenomenon.

This apparently laborious process leads to a sorting of the experiments. Bacon distinguishes between luciferous experiments, which provide new lights and new hints for discovering paths, and fructiferous experiments, that appear useful to man's interests. Bacon thinks that with this management of natural phenomena nature will eventually be under the control of science. Ultimately, he coincides with Galileo when defining true science as an interpretation of nature, insofar as his entry point is the observation of facts and not the exegesis of ancient texts, as was proposed by the scholastic philosophy that he criticizes. Knowledge, however, is a power that enables us to act on

the object itself to obtain what we want, so that science and technique are complementary. In fact, science allows to put in order the facts that are observed and to design new inventions, but also technique allows to explore facts and make new discoveries.

CONCLUSION AND TRANSITION

Our aim was to portray the ideological profile that preceded the world lived by Saint Joseph Calasanz. He undoubtedly met those ideas, and his thought has been influenced by them to a greater or lesser extent, so that even the work he offered couldn't be marginal to them. What follows is a synthesis of the most significant features of the world Calasanz found in his journey through Spain and Rome.

1. In the schools and universities in which he studied, Calasanz surely found the declining scholastic philosophy of late Middle Ages. Among the Dominicans, that philosophy had its origins in Saint Thomas Aquinas; among the Franciscans, in the philosophy of Duns Scotus and Ockham, with some elements of Lullism in the universities of the Crown of Aragon. However, taking into account that in Valencia and Alcalá Calasanz kept close contact with schools under the jesuits, he surely was aware of the Suárez-based metaphysical version. Even when for the formation of his religious Calasanz always required the acceptance of Saint Thomas' doctrine, by that time the genius of the Thomist philosophy was sluggish. The dynamism of his metaphysics of the act of being had been left aside on behalf of a greater accuracy in the meaning of the concepts, which had to be recited as the answers of a Catechism. This work resulted in a vivisection of the true philosophy of Saint Thomas, which was undoubtedly supported by the philosophy of Suarez.
2. Calasanz' formation also experienced the influence of the carmelitan mysticism through his spiritual directors, who certainly transmitted to him the spirit of the devout piety. As we have seen, this mystical current had its roots in the spirituality of the "devotio moderna", which nourished a distrusting attitude towards reason. May be this is the reason

that led Calasanz to show some timid manifestations of mistrust regarding the work of the philosophers. In his *Apology of the Pious Schools*, Campanella expresses a suspicion regarding the righteousness of philosophers as Erasmus, Luther and Valla, suspicion that seems to have been shared by Calasanz. It can be assumed that the spirit of the Catholic Counter-reformation recommended such distance from the ideas of these proscribed philosophers.

3. A century before Calasanz arrived in Rome, all Italy had entered in the Renaissance age. As a literary and artistic phenomenon, it belonged to the intellectual elites, but also the people was attracted by humanism and liberty. As a consequence, the ideas proposed by the Renaissance philosophers couldn't be strange to them, in particular those that commended man and his values as person, the trust in his individual growth, the claim for a happier citizen life and the demand of a better cultural formation. The integral spirit that Calasanz wished to introduce on behalf of childhood and its cultural and human education reflects the universal spirit that the Renaissance had launched.
4. Moreover, it is expected that Calasanz assimilated Christian humanism project transmitted by Erasmus and Joan Lluís Vives and that he even was aware of the practical implementation fostered by the Reformation work. It is expected, above all, that he welcomed the project of a man focused on the sources of Christian life, when he valued in his Pious Schools the basic education. It is under this vision that the pedagogical influence of the humanists of northern Europe on Calasanz becomes clearer. His conviction that children's education was necessary from earliest years, his certainty that society's future relied on such education, his will to create a school for all and his tenacity in organizing it in a progressive and uniform manner have their background in the work implemented by other pedagogues, under the inspiration of Erasmus and the thrust of Reformation. In spite of this, it is easy to understand why, in the midst of the Church's Counter-reformation, Calasanz silenced such acknowledgement.

5. In fact, we cannot forget that Calasanz lives in the midst of the Counter-reformation launched after the Council of Trent, which meant a moral and spiritual rearmament for the Church. The conflict represented by the existence of the reformed had to be faced rigorously, closing ranks around the Catholic cause. It was a time to search securities, to strengthen convictions and to create personalities with sufficient intellectual resources to contrast heresy; but at the same time it was necessary to create habits of living together. For this reason, education enabled to prepare the students for life and, at the same time, to strengthen their faith through catechesis and piety. Education became, therefore, the way towards truth. For this purpose, however, cooperators were required, who not only had to be tenacious but had to be trained with a good method. So, just as Galileo and Bacon designed a new method for sciences, and Descartes was searching a reliable method for philosophy, the school of Calasanz was marked as well by the search of a method for teaching that had to be simple.
6. The Renaissance Jurists and philosophers of law had made progress in the acknowledgement of the individual rights of persons, which centuries later would be written in the Chart of the Nations. After the discovery of America, there was the question about the rights of the American Indians, and little by little the first outlines of an international law were developed based on natural law. With the foundation of the Pious Schools, Calasanz performs a tacit acknowledgement of the children's rights, as his intention is not only the creation of an assistential work, in the line of charity, but the implementation of a right, in the line of justice. The poor children have the right to learn. This is the development that goes beyond the time in which it was created by Calasanz and, as a consequence, is the development that he will pass on to posterity.
7. The first Renaissance, in the fifteenth century, was rather of a literary nature, but the second Renaissance, in the sixteenth century, is rather scientific. The first humanists announced the infinity of the universe with an epic greatness,

the second humanists developed the tools to discover the autonomy of its laws and created modern physics. Calasanz is able to perceive the value of this change and, above all, he undertakes to introduce it in his school for the students. Calasanz' open-mindedness clearly appears in his approach to the figure of Galileo, especially when the Inquisition had already sentenced against him, sending his religious to study with him. Until that moment, education was centered in literature, studied with the help of the great Latin authors' texts, and further developed with the study of grammar. With Calasanz, it will be centered in science, with the learning of mathematics and the principles of mechanics. By then, this openness was already perceived as original and fruit-bearing.

8. Finally, a conviction derived from Renaissance is that human life is open to an infinite development. In history, this conviction is translated in progress terms: progress at an individual level, through a healthy and educated growth, and progress at the level of social life through a progressive control over nature. The utopias designed during the Renaissance period are signs of a social construction which men and peoples should aspire to. These are models that portray a righteous, wise and well ruled society or a society in constant development. It would seem, therefore, that the Pious School is the materialization of these utopias, as it takes in consideration these aspirations and implements them. In fact, in his constitutions Calasanz expresses the conviction that thanks to education a better future for society will be achieved, which would an implementation of the utopia.

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SAINT JOSEPH CALASANZ' THOUGHT IN HIS WORK

In this second part we reach the core of our work. After having envisaged Joseph Calasanz' background, we must pay attention to his own personality, in order to identify the way his thought has been shaped in his spirit. Our reflection should lead us to understand his response to the requirements of his days and, at the same time, to justify the innovative originality of his thought. We have already said that our purpose is not to write a biography of Calasanz, as there are already many excellent works on the subject. Our work is motivated in the idea of identifying the genesis of his thought based on the events that have marked his existence. His intellectual itinerary starts in Estadilla, continues through his priestly ministry until the maturation of his idea in the foundation of the Pious Schools. Our imagination will lead us also to acknowledge the intellectual encounters which forged his spirit. May be the overall thinking of Calasanz does not appear as an intellectual work. His greatness resides rather in the tenacity with which he leads the revolutionary idea of a popular education. Calasanz' conviction is pragmatic: children's education must point to reach a better world. All his life will be dedicated to materialize this insight, trying to facilitate youth's education with a methodological approach according to his time. The last part of our work will outline the basic features of his pedagogical approach.

CALASANZ AND HIS PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

The period covered by Saint Joseph Calasanz' life (1557-1648) goes from mid-sixteenth century to mid-seventeenth century, so his

life matches with the critical age of the Renaissance Popes, the Catholic Counter-reformation promoted by the Council of Trent and the launching of new sciences which caused a revolution in the knowledge realm. Calasanz lived also the Protestant Reformation event, which after Luther's statements became increasingly antagonistic. Peace would arrive only on 1648 in Westfalia, near Calasanz' death. So, we are referring to a period not just easy for Europe nor for the Church. Europe faced a bloody war which involved nearly all the countries of the Christian world that were split in two opposite poles: on the one hand, those who followed the flag of the free interpretation of the Bible; on the other hand, those who kept loyal to the Pope. For its part, the Catholic Church struggled to protect its securities, as a way to respond to the Protestant Reformation. As Philosophy is always conditioned by history, the one prevailing in the times of Calasanz had to align to that situation.

What was, then, Joseph Calasanz' formation? Where did he have his first contacts with the great thinkers? His intellectual itinerary starts from Estadilla.

CALASANZ WITH THE TRINITARIANS OF ESTADILLA

Estadilla is a town in the southern side of the Pyrenees, at 450 m above sea level, in Ribagorça region. The history of population in the place dates back to ancient times if we consider the archaeological remains of Forau del Cocho, where we can find figures of the Bronze Age, including the painting of a cervid with digitoform lines and points. In the age of our concern, this town belonged to the Barony of Castro, as Peralta de la Sal, natal town of Joseph Calasanz. Estadilla was built in the surroundings of a castle now disappeared, and at its side there was a gothic church currently in ruins. The town is like an ancient place with houses of noble people and a "Puerta del Sol" that has been changed. Its agricultural lands are irrigated by the *Ésera*, through a canal yielded in 1331 by the owner of the place; there is still a flour mill of that time. In the town there was a convent of Calced Trinitarians and a Legal Mayor. Of the Trinitarians' convent only a gothic hall remains, with two arches and keystones in which the signs of the stone-carver can still be noted.

At the age of eight Joseph Calasanz was taken by his parents to Estadilla for a triennium of “humanities”, including grammar, rhetoric and poetry, under the guidance of the Trinitarians. From 1568 through 1573 he lived in a house called “Sardis”, today Marro, where a plaque of the Pious Schools of Aragon, placed on November 26, 1997, commemorates the event. His companions in Estadilla used to call him “el santet” (the saint) for his exemplary behaviour at such a tender age.

The Order of the Most Holy Trinity and of the Captives, known also as the Trinitarian Order or the Trinitarians, was founded by Saint John de Mata (1154-1213) and Saint Felix de Valois, (1127-1212) a hermit in the in the forests of the diocese of Meaux, as its co-Founder. Their Rule was approved by Pope Innocentius III and the Order is the first formal institution of the Church dedicated to the redemption of captives. In times in which the military orders were abundant, the Trinitarians intended to liberate the captives without drawing on weapons. The Order is not a monastic institution, and it spread in Europe and Spain during late Middle Ages promoting the devotion to the Virgin of Remedies. According to Fr. Florensa, his stage in Estadilla, far from home coziness and from his mother, could have favoured homesickness in young Calasanz. The distance from his natural environment and the absence of his mother and sisters could not but increase the nostalgia of a feminine presence. No wonder if this situation would facilitate his personal devotion to the Virgin Mary, which he would never abandon and would lead him to the religious consecration.

In those times the Order of the Trinitarians was under a reformation process, supported by King Philip II and encouraged by the Holy See, after the conclusion of the Council of Trent. The Trinitarian Order had to look over its multiple convents, at times with very small communities, such as the community of Estadilla, constituted by no more than three or four members. The reformators’ idea was to close these small convents and establish greater communities where religious observance could become more visible. However, the proposal was resisted by the religious of those communities.⁴¹ We don’t know

41 Cfr. Juan PUJANA, Juan, *La reforma de los Trinitarios durante el reinado de Felipe II*, Salamanca, Secretariado Trinitario, 2006, pag 176.

how the community of Estadilla lived this tension and how the education of the students was affected, but it is reasonable to think that the whole situation reflected somewhat in the life of the convent.

In Estadilla, Calasanz coursed his triennium of humanities, including a first cycle of grammar and Latin syntaxis and a second cycle of rhetoric and poetry. With these studies the student was qualified to start the university after undergoing an examination. So, once Calasanz finished his studies in Estadilla, he continued his formation in the University of Lleida, where he studied theology and law in two stages, the first during 1574-1578 and the second during 1581-1583.

THE UNIVERSITY OF LLEIDA

The University of Lleida was considered the first University of the Crown of Aragon. It had been founded by the king James II on September 1, 1300, though it had been authorized by a papal in 1297. The king wanted lawyers for his Crown, and this explains that the Law Faculty would have the greatest development among the faculties of the universities which otherwise had a lethargic life due to their ups and downs. For lack of resources it couldn't offer great possibilities to students coming from the three nations that formed the Crown of Aragon: Catalonia, Aragon and Valencia. The University of Lleida had received royalties from the monarchs of the House of Barcelona, but its fortune had changed with the arrival of the kings of the House of Trastamara who were often in opposition to the Catalonians. Lleida was a quite isolated town from the rest of the country and, in particular, from the capital. Salaries were unstable (60/80 Forints) paid in two instalments, on Christmas and in the Feast of Saint John Baptist. The distance from the town and the modest wages didn't attract great teachers, so teachers were local and mediocre, and a scarce number of Professionals. Each year, the City Hall (*paeria*),⁴² the town council and the council of the University voted the professors to be employed. In addition, as student riots were frequent, studies hardly made pro-

42 "Paeria" (Cith Hall) is the name of the municipalities in Western Catalonia, and "paer" is the name of the mayor.

gress. It should be noted that the University's Administration was autonomous and was ruled by a Rector, who was a student chosen each year among the students of the last year of Law. This election was done by rotation among the students of the three nationalities of the Confederation – Catalonians, Aragonese and Valencians. The Rector had authority in the whole territory of the university, solved disputes and represented the university before the city and the town council.⁴³

The University of Lleida received influences from the universities of Toulouse, Montpellier, Bologna and Paris; however, since the arrival to the kingdom of Aragon of the Monarchs of Trastamara an influence is felt from the University of Salamanca, the most renowned of the kingdom of Castile. In the fifteenth century the City of Lleida and the University underwent great hardships. The University had had among its students Alfonso de Borja, who became Chancellor of the University, bishop of Valencia and Pope with the name of Calistus III (1455-1460) and as Pope he signed various Bulls in behalf of the University of Lleida. However, the darkest times came with the war between Catalonians and King John II who in 1464 besieged the city. The mediation of the delegates who went to deal with the King the conditions of surrender timely saved the situation of the University, which even received from the monarch advantages and privileges. But the number of students was rather reduced, mainly due to the emerging competition of the University of Huesca, which had more resources and captured many students of Lleida. Moreover, the universities of Barcelona, Perpinyà and València attracted more students than the University of Lleida. Under the rule of Ferdinand the Catholic, the influence of the University of Salamanca became stronger, so that many students felt attracted by their studies, which, however, didn't influence the style and contents of the Lleidan University, more influenced by the universities of southern France and the Italian Renaissance.⁴⁴

43 Also at the University of Bologna the Rector was a Student. Cfr. *Catalaunia* 470 y 471., 2011.

44 GAYA I MASSOT, *Influencia de la Universidad de Salamanca en la de Lérida*, extract text from "Analecta sacrae tarraconensis", Barcelona, Ed. Balmesiana, 1959.

The triumph of humanism would arrive in 1524 with Bishop Conchillos in the See of Lleida.⁴⁵

In the XVI century the influence of Salamanca enforced the introduction of the figure of Chancellor which was unknown in the structure of the University. The Chancellor was appointed by the King or by the Cathedral Chapter, as representative of the authority that conferred the university titles. He presided over the academic events and the bachelor degrees and doctorates, on behalf of the authority that sponsored the University.⁴⁶ The introduction of the figure of Chancellor allowed some changes, such as the advice to professors of not dictating the lessons but interpreting them. Regarding studies of philosophy, there were three chairs with professors of three different schools: Thomistic, Suarezian and a mixed approach. However, Gaya i Massot thinks that the influence of the University of Salamanca shouldn't be emphasized too much, as with the arrival of Charles I bachelors and doctors of the University of Lleida would have the same prerogatives as those of Salamanca and Bologna. Because the University de Lleida relied on the Aragonese/Catalonian confederation more than on the City, nobody would attempt to challenge the primacy of its work. James II had outlined the Magna Carta of the privileges of the University, and the city had to cover the costs without receiving royalties. There were discussions in the city on the matter. As Gaya i Massot explains in his article entitled "*Rentas del estudio General de Lérida*", sometimes the Vicar ("veguer") had to intervene to force wealthy people to anticipate resources for the University.⁴⁷

45 Following Lladonosa, figures that studied at this university ... Estudi general at that time include the already mentioned Alfons de Borja, Joan de Perugia, Antoni Cerdà, future bishop of Lleida, the dean Joan Castells, Cosme Montserrat, future bishop of Vic, the chancellor Melcior de Queralt and Salvador d'Aigües.

46 The institutional structure of the universities was different. For example, while at Paris University a board...body of professors was the nucleus of the university, at Bologna the structure of the university was based on the students. The latter is closer to the model of the Estudi General of Lleida.

47 GAYA I MASSOT, *Rentas del estudio General de Lérida*", extract text from "Analecta Sacrae Tarraconensis", XXV, Barcelona, Ed. Balmesiana, 1954.

In the midst of the seventeenth century, the University was already imbued with the post-tridentine spirit and the figure of the chancellor or “mestrescoles” was consolidated. He was a scholastic judge linked to some jurisdiction external to the University, so the scholastic dogmatism of the counter-reform, based on the force of authority, would be imposed. In the Courts of Monzón, Philip II was asked to create the figure of the “mestrescoles”, to assume the civil and criminal jurisdiction that had been exercised by the Rector, with his appointment reserved to the king.⁴⁸

Three faculties formed the body of the university, after the courses of Arts and Philosophy: Theology, Medicine and Law. Each had a maximum of one or two professors. Law was the the faculty of greatest prestige, due to famous personalities working there. Even when professors were poorly paid and often did not attend classes. Their absenteeism resulted in the reformation promoted by bishop Aznárez in 1454 who established that teachers could not be absent for more than ten days without a penalty. Theology and Philosophy were greatly influenced by the Order of Preachers, so that both disciplines were handled by the Dominican Friars, with the exception of a short period under a Llulian influence. Dominicans used to teach also in their school of Sant Domènec, close to the University and from 1504 incorporated into it.⁴⁹ They were preferred by John II, but their influence was not exaggerated. Franciscans had also theology lectures in their convent, with a clear influence of Lull among the students,⁵⁰ as reflected in the discussion on the Immaculate Conception of Mary. Franciscans’ approach was “immaculist”, while Dominicans’ was “maculist”. As a result of the dispute, in the second part of the sixteenth century a university college was founded under the advocacy of the Immaculate

48 Cfr. ESTEVE I PERENDREU, Francesc, *Mestrescoles i rectors de l'Estudi General de Lleida (1597-1717)*, Lleida, Ed. Universitat de Lleida, 2007.

49 Cfr. P. DIAGO, *Historia de la Provincia de Aragón de la Orden de Predicadores*, Barcelona 1598. TORRES I BAGES, *La Tradició Catalana*, Barcelona 1892.

50 According to Lladonosa’s work, this Llulian influence is justified by the invectives of the General Inquisitor Nicolau Eymerich agaisnt Ramon Llull’s doctrines in 1386 and six years after the process against the student Antoni Riera.

Conception. In addition, Dominicans attempted several times to alternate the chair of theology with the Franciscans, but unsuccessfully because the latter argued that the chair belonged to them by right.

The studies of Arts were subdivided into the disciplines of Grammar, Logic and Philosophy, and the books used were those of Saint Thomas, Saint Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, Peter Lombard, Boetius and Ricard de Mitjavila.⁵¹ With the arrival of the printing press it would have been possible to procure text books for the dissemination of the humanistic ideas of Italian Renaissance, but the University de Lleida stayed anchored under the influence of the scholastic philosophy and the medieval traditionalism, as is reflected in Lladonosa's reports on the books published in the printing house of d'Enric Botel.⁵² Almost all are texts of philosophy written by commentators of the mendicant orders. Courses dictated in the University followed literally the school of Aristotle, with a servility that was condemned by Luis Vives and Francisco Sánchez (el Brocense).⁵³ Apparently, in this point the University of Lleida was separated from Europe, and this caused its ruin. Another cause of its decline could be found in the migrating incomes of the teachers that were not increased, not even after the request addressed to the king Philip II in the Courts of Monzón (1585). The request was reiterated in the Courts of Barcelona (1595) to king Philip III, but with no improvement. The number of students gradual-

51 Cfr. According to Lladonosa's work, in the Franciscan libraries they had *De vitiis et virtutibus, Primum scriptum Sancti Thomae, Quattuor libris sententiarum* by Jaume d'Altamira and the *Commentaria Aristotelis* by Porfirius.

52 *Editiones in Categoriis Porfirii predicamenta Aristotelis*, by Francesc Mayrones (25/10/1485); *Commentarium super libros Ethicorum Aristoteles*, Pere de Castroval (02/04/1489); *Super totam philosophiam naturalem Aristotelis*, de Pere de Castroval (12/09/1489); *Tractatus super libros Physicorum Aristotelis*, by Pere de Castroval (14/07/1489); *De Consolatione*, by Boeci, translated in Catalanian by Anselm Ginebreda (04/06/1489); *Philosophia pauperum*, d'Alberto Magno (1489); *Logica*, by Pere de Castroval (26/10/1490) and *Aesopus, Fabella trasnlata a graeco a Laurentio Vallensis*, (1495)

53 Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas (1523-1601), grammarian and professor at Salamanca who was condemned by the Inquisition for having criticized the literary form of the gospels.

ly declined due to the discredit of the university and to the continued wars that devastated the country.

In the University of Lleida Calasanz obtained his degree in Law, which would prepare him to work in important charges as secretary of bishops and, in his diocese of Urgel, as secretary of the Chapter. It seems that this preparation in Law motivated also his travel to Rome to defend in the Tribunal of the Roman Rota the interests of the diocese in the complicated inheritance of the castle of Mur. But in the University of Lleida he also prepared his licence in theology which he reached after passing by Valencia and Alcalá. We must suppose that this preparation has been limited, taking into account the poor performance of the faculty. Maybe this explains his presence in other universities where studies were stronger. Some courses of philosophy were introduced along with theology, and we must think that these favoured the attraction he felt for Saint Thomas' philosophy.

VALENCIA AND ALCALÁ: LATE TOMISM

We ignore the reasons that led young Calassanç to the University of Valencia and later to the University of Alcalá.⁵⁴ As we have said, the discredit of the university of Lleida regarding the studies of theology may have influenced the decision, while also the search of a greater openness in terms of ideas and of better qualified teachers could have influenced. However, we know little about the exact schedule of his sojourn in Valencia and Alcalá, and about his intellectual progress. The only thing we know is about a relationship with a woman in Valencia who attempted against his chastity, and for this reason he would have fled to Alcalá. However, behind this moralizing explanation may be there is a deeper motivation of intellectual nature.

No doubt that the University of Valencia enabled Calasanz to contact the Jesuits who had great influence there, particularly through the community of Gandía, where Fr. Antonio Cordeses had been Su-

54 The place where he studied is not sure, whether at the university or with the jesuits, as he is not listed at the university.

perior.⁵⁵ Calasanz had already known the Jesuits in Lleida during a Lenten preaching, but the leading figure of Fr. Cordeses is related to the development of a contemplative spirituality based on the affective prayer as reflected in two of his works: “*Tratado de la oración mental*” and “*Itinerario de la perfección cristiana*”. He had received the influence of Henri Herph, who had introduced the “Devotio moderna” in his book “*Espejo de perfección*”, included in the Index in 1599, in times of Sixtus V. Cordeses’ ideas were controversial among the Jesuits and were later submitted to the Inquisition, that considered them close to the position of the enlightened. However, his ideas had a great impact in the spirit of Calasanz who found in that mystical way an encouragement for his work and a balancing element in the midst of the increasing activities of the schools.⁵⁶ It seems that Calasanz kept a manuscript of Cordeses’ work since he was a student.

In Alcalá he found an intellectual environment according to modern times. Erasmus’ ideas had entered smoothly in that context before the Inquisition started its persecution against his followers and spirituals blamed as heretics. When Calasanz arrives in Alcalá, the counter-reformist groups had already promoted a smear crusade against the Flemish reformer. In his study on Saint Joseph Calasanz, Fr. George Santha believes that the Founder of the Pious Schools had there the great opportunity of knowing in depth the Thomistic doctrine, which he and his sons would profess,⁵⁷ as it seems that most teachers had been trained by the Dominican friars. As a matter of fact, in his Constitutions Calasanz expresses his desire that the formation of young piarists be done according to the Angelical Doctor’s doctrine. It should be argued, however, that his sojourn in Alcalá hasn’t

55 Antonio Cordeses was born in Olot in 1518. He joined the jesuit province of Aragon, and professed in 1559. Professor of philosophy and theology, first at the school of Gandía and later at Coimbra university. He was Provincial of Aragon and Toledo. His treatises on spirituality had great influence within the Order and outside. A man of proven virtues, he participated at high levels in several General Congregations of the Society of Jesus. He died in Seville in 1601 taking care of plague-infested people.

56 GINER, Severino, *San José Calasanz*, BAC, Madrid, 1992, pag 331.

57 SANTHA, György, *San José Calasanz*, BAC, Madrid 1956, pag. 12

been long enough as to capture all the subtleties of the Thomistic philosophy. In particular, when the late Thomism stagnated in the search of accurate concepts and precise formulations in order to defend the principles of a sure doctrine, thus loosing the metaphysical sharpness of Saint Thomas. We may say that we haven't the context which would allow us to say that Calasanz' adherence to Thomism has been duly balanced to result in a consistent conviction. In fact, the Jesuits provided their own version of the Scholastic philosophy which, following Suárez, they expected to be also faithful to Saint Thomas' thought. Calasanz also contacted them, and it is easy to imagine that nuances between the schools were left out of Calasanz' solemn adherence.

ERASMUS' INFLUENCE

We haven't so many data about Calasanz' sojourn in Alcalá, but its confirmation could support the scenario that he followed the path of many young clerics who were interested in approaching the forward-looking ideas developed in the Complutense University of Madrid. In fact, many great writers of that time had benefited from the reformist air of the university that Cardinal Cisneros had refounded. Nebrija and Carvajal had taught there. Friar Luis de León, friar Luis de Granada, Ignatius of Loyola, Lope de Vega and Quevedo, had been alumni in Alcalá. Erasmus of Rotterdam had been invited to teach in the university, but had rejected the invitation. However, even if he didn't go, his ideas were very present in its cloisters. So, Calasanz' presence in Alcalá could not have been fortuitous. Here we follow Fr. Josep Anton Miró who studied the relation between the pedagogical texts of Calasanz and the ideas of Erasmus and Joan Lluís Vives. In fact, Christian humanists of the generation before Calasanz were convinced that human nature could improve through intellectual formation and thereby society's reformation could be reached.⁵⁸ Erasmus and Luther really contributed to place education on the front line as the best instrument for keeping the faith, as through education Christian humanism substituted Scholasticism in most of the

58 MIRO, Josep Anton, *Erasmus, Vives i Calassanz*, in *Catalaunia* n° 379 (1996) 4-5.

universities of Europe.⁵⁹ Erasmus' influence in Alcalá didn't last long, however. The Council of Trent and the poor reputation that the Counter-Reformation Church launched against the Dutch philosopher gradually swept away from Alcalá the ideas of Erasmus. For when Calasanz passed by Alcalá not even embers were left.⁶⁰

As we have already seen, the pedagogical ideas of Erasmus are mostly found in the *Enchiridion militis christiani*, where he sets two principles he had learned from the Brothers of the Common Life. The concepts of “*docta pietas*” or “*pietas litterata*” seek to reconcile the ideas of science and piety in accordance with the Flemish tradition's spirit of the “*devotio moderna*”.⁶¹ In the *Enchiridion militis christiani* we find some statements that anticipate Calasanz' intuition:

“Two special weapons. Prayer and knowledge be the chief armour of a christian man. Prayer and knowledge, otherwise called learning. Paul would we should be ever armed, which biddeth us pray continually without stop. Prayer pure and perfect lifteth up thine affection to heaven, a tower beyond thine enemies' reach. Learning or knowledge fenceth or armeth the mind with wholesome precepts and honest opinions, and putteth thee ever in remembrance of virtue, so [57] that neither can be lacking to the other. These twain cleaveth so together like friends, the one ever requiring the other's help (Horacio).”

“Therefore the chief care of christian men ought to be applied to this point, that their children straightway from the cradle, amongst the very flattering of the nurses, whiles the father and mother kiss them, may receive and suck under the hands of them which are learned opinions and persuasions meet and worthy of Christ: because that nothing either sinketh deeper or cleaveth faster in the mind than that which (as Fabyus saith) in the young and tender years is poured in.”

59 BOWEN, James, *Historia de la educación occidental, tomo II. La civilización de Europa del s. VI al S. XVI*, Ed. Herder, Barcelona 1992.

60 Cfr Marcel BATAILLON, *Op. Cit.*

61 Cfr. MEDINA, Jaume, *Erasmus de Rotterdam*, in *Clàssics del Cristianisme* num. 24 Barcelona 1991, Introducció.

It is quite strange that the figure of Erasmus, which we presented as meaningful in the philosophical and pedagogical European thought before Calasanz, and which undoubtedly influenced his spirit, is not mentioned in his work but only once and in a quotation of Campanella.⁶² Above all, because it seems undeniable that Erasmus' ideas did, directly or indirectly, influence the work of Calasanz.

It is also undeniable that the work of Erasmus and of the Reformers had an influence in the greatest European pedagogist of the seventeenth century, the Moravian Amos Comenio, virtually a contemporary of Calasanz. It is interesting to see the great similarity of each other's work. Both see the school as an instrument that prepares the student for everlasting life, without forgetting daily life; both are concerned with a good school structure and with the use of the best tools, and both emphasize intellectual education as well as moral education. The most important difference could be place in the fact that Comenio's work lost vitality when he disappeared, while Calasanz' school kept alive up to our days.⁶³

JOAN LLUÍS VIVES, PREDECESSOR OF CALASANZ

Closer in the spirit than Erasmus, Joan Lluís Vives also left trace in Calasanz' pedagogical thought. Joan Lluís Vives was born in Valencia, though soon he had to disappear from the public life due to his status of converted Jew which he shared with his father and all his family. His father was eventually condemned by the Inquisition to be burned at the stake, when Joan Lluís Vives was already in Bruges, where he could think and write with greater liberty and freedom. His ongoing concern was how to join piety and letters, as outlined by Augusto Monzón:⁶⁴ *“Vives received the strong influence of Erasmus regarding the crucial item of the connection between Christian faith and secular culture: the philosophia Christi with all its ecclesi-*

62 SANTHA, György, *Op. Cit.* pag 208

63 Cfr SANTHA, György, *Ut supra*, pag 613.

64 Cfr. MONZON, Augusto, *Juan Luis Vives*, en *Clàssics del Cristianisme*, num. 33, Barcelona 1992. Introducció.

al, spiritual, ethical and political consequences” (p. 13). “All his late works point to this goal: to shape a Christian piety out of the secular source” (p. 29) In all his works, Joan Lluís Vives manifests a high moral sense and a true piety, as well as a particular sensitivity towards the most poor. His respect for traditional religiosity and his reformist sense of society gives him the unique feature of a Central European humanism, more affected by Flemish religiosity than by Mediterranean piety. To childhood education he dedicated his *Introductio ad sapientiam* (1524) where he states that “all the rest of our life is supported by the education received in the early childhood”, and in his work “*De subventione pauperum*”, in the chapter dedicated to the children’s care (*De cura puerorum*) he writes: “Children must not only learn to read and write, but above all Christian piety”.⁶⁵

Miró concludes his research by saying that Calasanz received a direct or indirect influence of the Northern European humanists.⁶⁶ The similarity of concepts and even words enables us to perceive an ideological influence of the same pedagogical approaches and also the projection of an assimilated spirituality containing the signs of the “*devotio moderna*”. Notwithstanding, Miró emphasizes that the key difference of Calasanz’ strongly practical approach with respect to the Northern European humanists was the active translation of these ideas, which enabled him to live the evangelical virtues of charity, humility and patience that the humanists preached. It is not in vain that Calasanz refers to philosophers as “*recte sentientes*” who illuminate the intelligence, but he often treats them as arrogant philosophers whose spirit is not worth to follow.

VALUE OF THE SACRED STUDIES OF PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

Among the sacred studies implemented in universities and schools of the Catholic Church, Theology had the best part. It was always lectured according to the formulation of the great schools, but

65 VIVES, Juan Luis, *Obras completas I*, Madrid 1948, pag 1397.

66 Cfr, MIRÓ, Op. Cit.

in dogmatic matters never moved away from the official profession of the symbols of faith. Philosophy occupied a secondary place and served as auxiliary for a rational support of the profession of faith. This was the context in which the nuances and formulations of the different schools took place in an effort of interpreting the doctrine of the great masters, considered as a reliable doctrine. Two courses of philosophy had to be completed before receiving major orders. Logic and Metaphysics were studied during that biennium. The Aristotelian doctrine informed most of the questions that were treated, and Saint Tomas' interpretation was privileged among the schools of the Dominicans and the Jesuits which were the most. Fr. György Santha acknowledges in his work the scarcity of documents regarding the curriculum of such studies. We suppose its philosophical thrust was not excessive and that its magisterial orientation was rather to ensure a strong instruction than to awaken a critical mind.⁶⁷ Therefore, we cannot but speculate on the philosophical formation received by Joseph Calasanz under the influence of Dominicans and Jesuits in Lleida, Valencia and Alcalá. If we add the short period he benefitted from these teachings we cannot make out that he had received a very deep formation. As his biographers recall, he was shocked by the death of his elder brother and the consequent requirement of his father regarding the stewardship of the family farm which meant leaving the ecclesiastical studies.

When some years later Calasanz had to design his Order's programme and outline the profile of the piarist religious he had in mind, his strong advocacy of the philosophical studies for the formation of his religious and of the external students confirm his confidence in a serious study of philosophy that he hadn't received. Calasanz is seen greatly interested in overcoming difficulties in searching good teachers for his schools. His open mindedness to modern thinking led him to search the services of Andrea Baiano, in the Collegio Nazareno of Rome, Campanella in Frascati, or to allow the Florentine religious to approach Galileo in his exile in Arcetri. That this concern not always matched with the real situation is clearly reflected in the critiques ad-

67 SANTHA, György, *Op. cit.* pag 266.

dressed by representatives of other religious congregations who considered piarists as of scarce formation. Unfortunately, a reasonable claim, because for Calasanz the main objective was the education of the children, that was the real mission of the Pious Schools. As a consequence, the urgency of having teachers for the schools meant that they had less time dedicated to formation in order to start working as soon as possible. Another reason was added to this priority: Calasanz wanted his religious to be humble for the teaching of the children, and an excessive philosophical formation could make them grow vain and miss the target.⁶⁸ These hesitations in the spirit of Calasanz were ratified by the ecclesiastical authorities that made the apostolic visitation in 1625. The Prelates' Committee advised Father General to ensure a sound pedagogical formation of his religious, even if this would limit their philosophical and theological studies.⁶⁹

Some of the most keen piarists reacted to these reservations with a more critical attitude, requiring more studies of philosophy. Calasanz didn't remain insensitive to such request, and, once he got through the difficult times in which teachers were lacking for the schools, he strongly supported their desires. The Pious Schools had to overcome prejudices and critiques of all those who considered that

68 Cfr. SANTHA. *Op. cit.* pag 203. « *El Santo Fundador y uno de sus íntimos amigos y consejeros, el P. Juan de Jesús María, carmelita descalzo, se sintieron profundamente preocupados ante el problema. Una diaria experiencia les demostraba que los sacerdotes enriquecidos con una alta cultura filosófica y teológica se dedicaban con mayor dificultad al humilde quehacer escolar entre los niños pobres y harapientos. Sentíanse, en la mayoría de casos, más atraídos por la enseñanza de la filosofía o de la teología, o bien por el ministerio, más destacadamente sacerdotal, de la confesión o de la predicación. Todo ello, claro está, con merma y perjuicio del auténtico ministerio calasancio.* » (The holy founder and one of his intimate friends and counsellors, Fr. Juan de Jesús María, discalced Carmelite, were deeply concerned about the issue. A daily experience showed that for priests endowed of a high level of philosophical and theological culture it was very difficult to do the humble work of teaching the poor and ragged children at school. In most cases, they felt more attracted by the work of teaching philosophy and theology or by ministry, especially the priestly ministry of confession or preaching)

69 Eph. Cal. 5 (1959) 201.

their mission had to be reduced to primary education, and not to invade higher education, monopolized by other Orders. Some people saw with suspicion the fact that children of the needy classes could one day have access to higher studies, reserved to students of wealthy classes, as in such a way the foundations of society would be upset. Calasanz had to struggle against all these difficulties to reach the objective of giving his popular students the chance of receiving a higher preparation to face modern world equally as the other students.

THE CARMELITE MYSTICISM

After the years as Secretary of the Chapter in Seu d'Urgell, full of activities and worried about his future, Calasanz points to Rome where he will start the second part of his life, more attentive to the needs of others and more sensitive to spiritual life. In Rome he entrusted the spiritual direction of his life to his friend, Fr. Juan de Jesús María, a discalced Carmelite, who exerted great influence in his spirit.⁷⁰ Thus, we cannot deny the importance that the Carmelite Mysticism, reactivated after the Reform of Saint Teresa and Saint John of the Cross, had in Calasanz' thought. Fr. Juan de la Cruz had dedicated one of his works to the Calasanctian institute, *Liber de pia educatione sive de cultura pueritiae compendio escriptus*, with many tips for children's education. The book is of an exhortative nature and can be considered a summary of the Calasanctian pedagogy.⁷¹

The influence of the Carmelite spirituality in Saint Joseph Calasanz was based on the prestige of the works of Saint Teresa and of Saint John of the Cross, who introduced the spirit of their Rule into modernity. The originality of the Carmelite Rule is about combining the life of prayer and silence of the hermits of Mount Carmel with the apostolate among the people, under the auspices of the example of Prophet Elijah and with a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

70 The best study on the influence of the Carmelitan mysticism in Joseph Calasanz is Fr. Claudio Vilà's doctoral thesis "*Fuentes inmediatas de la pedagogía calasancia*", Madrid CSIC 1960.

71 SANTHA, György, *Op. Cit.* pag 203-204.

Their emergence in a thirteenth century's Europe had to be under the status of mendicants. Their dual charism was built within the Order as a persistent tension between a continued nostalgia of the desert and the integration in society with a special dedication to worship and study. Saint Teresa's Reform was driven by her non-conformity. She lived the tension between the aspiration to solitude and the presence within the life of the Church through a contemplative life at the service of the Church.⁷² In this organization of the Carmel's life the devotion to the Virgin occupies a prominent place, because if dressed with her habit they should also be dressed with her virtues, contemplating her life and assimilating her feelings towards Christ.⁷³ Finally, prayer should be the axis of the whole spiritual life, so that it could never be left aside.⁷⁴ Therefore, we should recognize that Saint Teresa's mysticism left an indelible mark in the apostolic spirit of Calasanz, as he never missed to combine in his own life and in that of his congregation the contemplative aspect - as a support of the educational mission - with the apostolic dimension. The Marian imprint was also a sign which permeated his religious life. In this respect, following the example of the Carmelites, he associated his name to the name of the Mother of God. Finally, the spirit of enduring prayer with which Saint Teresa permeated all her daily acts inspired in Calasanz the initiative of the continuous prayer, practiced by some students, which accompanied the educational work of the teachers of his schools.

Saint John of the Cross (1542-1591) represents the most metaphysical version of the Carmelite mysticism, as he outlines his spiritual programme as an ascension to Mount Carmel in search of

72 TERESA OF JESUS, *Mansions*, 1, 2. «All we who wear the holy habit of the Carmelites are called to prayer and contemplation. This was the object of our Order, to this lineage we belong. Our holy Fathers of Mount Carmel sought in perfect solitude and utter contempt of the world for this treasure...» ...

73 TERESA OF JESUS, *Camino de perfección*, 1, 3. «Let us, my daughters, in some small degree, imitate the great humility of the most sacred Virgin, whose habit we wear».

74 TERESA OF JESUS, *Op. Cit.* 4, 2. «Our Primitive Rules tells us to pray without ceasing. Provided we do this with all possible care (and it is the most important thing of all) we shall not fail to observe the fasts, disciplines and periods of silence».

the universal and eternal transcendence. His nuances escape from the simpler approach of Saint Teresa's writings and overfly his cloister's silence and solitude to join the unlimited horizons of God's dwelling. Therefrom he illuminates the integral person, body and soul, not hiding its natural gifts but dignifying them. So, for Saint John of the Cross, the asceticism is not to be understood as a violence done to the person but as a transformation of its being. Thus transformed, creature has an access to God, who dwells in its spirit, and may operate jointly with Him. The Virgin Mary is an outstanding example of this ascension towards God, as she has been obedient to the Holy Spirit who moved her to perform divine actions.⁷⁵ The entire theology of Saint John of the Cross considers Christ's humanity as the source of sanctification of corporal things, so that through Him the whole creation reflects the presence of God.⁷⁶

After the Celebration of the Council of Trent, the Carmelite mysticism gained an increasing momentum becoming more Christocentric. Its increasingly dialectical approach materialized in the development of courses and treatises of mystical theology, the first in the University of Alcalá de Henares and, afterwards, in the University of Salamanca. The vitality recovered by the Carmelite Order through the Teresian Reform affected the Marian piety and the ongoing prayer, significant aspects of the piarist spirituality, but in particular Calasanz adopted in his Order the conventual style of the Carmelites. Some examples allow to identify the carmelite source, such as mental prayer in common and various practices in the choir. In short, the Carmelite spirituality's features are maintained in the life of piety of the piarist community and in its conventual style of life which reflect a family resemblance with the developments of the teresian reform.

THE POPULAR INSTRUCTION BEFORE CALASANZ

During the period 1550-1650 Europe was plunged into a great experience of uprooting and upheaval. Two authorized eyewitnesses,

75 JOHN OF THE CROSS, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, 2, 10.

76 JOHN OF THE CROSS, *Canticle*, 5-7.

Shakespeare and Cervantes, have described it as an “iron century”. We need to think only in the religious wars that devastated the European territory and resulted in forced migrations and epidemics. Besides these wars, the threatening presence of the Turks in the Mediterranean and, after the Discovery of the New World, the iniquitous conquest of the new territories and the subsequent slave trade. In the meantime, the society lived poorly in the great cities where an emerging middle-class started to trade craft products. Social life masked a mostly barbarian and illiterate population. Its religious feelings were rather reduced to superstition and to the practice of magic, because their faith-related knowledge was very rudimentary. Most people were poor and their food was so precarious that they often were hungry. Against this background, the promotion of an educational and humanitarian work was a real emergence for the whole European Continent. The Protestant movement had promoted the evangelization in countries where the Reform had settled, but countries under the Catholic Counter-Reform needed a huge work of Christianization and culture.

Inviting people to read the Bible, Protestant Reformers encouraged the formation of the Christian conscience and stimulated literacy, thus succeeding to reach the dissemination of Protestant reform as well as the progress of culture. In the Catholic world the foundation of local schools had started before the Council of Trent⁷⁷ as well as the establishment of Christian Doctrine schools, which since 1539 were disseminated in almost all the parishes of Northern Italy and in many of Central Italy and in Rome. Several Orders ran these schools, such as the somascans, the barnabites, the capuchins and the jesuits. Lessons were given in these schools during 85 days a year, in which two or three hours were dedicated to read the Catechism, write with good calligraphy, often including arithmetic.⁷⁸ Popular missions also helped to take culture to remote territories in the South and far away in the mountains. This interest for education led some bishops to found free seminaries for poor children, who, after a protracted

77 Neighborhood schools, established by Pope Leo X (1519).

78 It seems that Charles Borromeo was inspired by the schools of the Christian Doctrine when he organized the catechesis in the diocese of Milan.

schedule of cultural and spiritual formation, were directed towards the ecclesiastical career, eventually renewing and strengthening Catholic clergy in every respect.

Following the list of the first school initiatives, it seems that in the first half of the fifteenth century the Hussites of Bohemia and Moravia had created within their communities mutual education schools, where children and adolescents learned Greek, Latin and Hebrew.⁷⁹ Humanistic schools were established in the fifteenth century, and Savonarola, in his brief Florentine government, created schools and orphanages for poor and abandoned children. As we have seen, in early 15th century the English humanist John Colet, friend of Erasmus and of More, founds in London Saint Paul's School, with 150 students. In Venice, in 1520/1521 there was a free school for poor and mendicant children where they learned to read, write and count, but also some crafts. Throughout the 16th century it was not unusual that many Italian cities employed at least one teacher for groups of poor children in order to teach them reading, writing, counting, but also grammar and Latin language. All these initiatives were often funded from legacies and foundations.

SOCIAL SITUATION IN ROME AT THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

In the sixteenth century Europe witnessed a high population growth resulting in a great social mobility, that can also be explained by wars, epidemics and civil insecurity. In one century many cities duplicated the number of inhabitants, which meant a significantly increased poverty index. Homeless children, women and elderly people wandered in the streets. Hospitals and hospices were full of patients, while the poor were taken to tribunals or prisons to avoid their presence in the cities.

Rome is not an exception. During this century the number of inhabitants duplicate, from 55.000 to about 100.000. The Popes' administration undertakes urbanistic reforms, creating new boroughs and channelling the Tiber. However, in contrast with this precarious situ-

79 Testified by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, future Pius II

ation, the baroque Rome is featured by the building of the great palaces of Roman noble families and by the ornamentation of aqueducts, fountains and numerous churches, using for this purpose pieces of ancient roman ruins. The Palace of Venice, the Lateran, the Vatican, St. Peter's Square, the Chancellery, the Farnese Palace, the Sapienza, the Most Holy Trinity of Pilgrims, the Roman College, the Capitol or the Hospital of Mendicants were buildings of this time. The alms and indulgences helped to fund these significant costs, but taxes and the sale of religious offices also fell on the Papal States' inhabitants who had to support the small state's policy and the public expenditures it generated. Towards the end of the century – 1591-1594 -, a financial crisis exhausted public savings and many Banks had to close. The immediate outcomes of this crisis were an increase of debts, a financial failure of traders and a degradation of customs. A whole crowd of people remained on the street and many households plunged into extreme destitution relying on charity. A swarm of beggars wandered by the squares asking help or stealing or being involved in organized crime. It should be taken into account however that Rome was the capital of the Catholic Church and had witnessed the birth of religious orders, ecclesiastical residences, seminaries, societies and confraternities dedicated to the exercise of charity. Also orphanages, hospices, schools, reformatories, colleges, hospitals and houses for the rehabilitation of prostitutes had been created. Calasanz had the opportunity of knowing many men of great virtue, and even sharing their life and environment, such as the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri with its joyful method of teaching catechism and hosting children, which would greatly influence the future Pious Schools' style; the discalced Carmelites of Trastevere, who provided Calasanz the spiritual direction he was needing; the conventual Franciscans of the Twelve Apostles, who transmitted to Calasanz the love for poverty; the figure of Saint Camillus de Lelis, an example of dedication to the sick; Saint John Leonardi, great spirit dedicated to the care of souls.⁸⁰ So, Rome was a mixed reality of social imbalances and compensation tools.

80 GINER, Severino, *San José Calasanz en la Roma de la Reforma postridentina*. In *Archivum Scholarum Piarum*, n° 78, Rome 2015, pag 78-80

CALASANZ FOUNDS A POPULAR SCHOOL

The Roman situation found by Joseph Calasanz reflected this description. Pope Sixtus V⁸¹ had tried in vain to promote crafts, industries and trading because building had exhausted all the resources and the city was lacking infrastructures, professional skills and psychological attitudes. It was full of pilgrims, poor people and crowds of children wandering on the streets. When Calasanz reached Rome in 1592 he took up residence in Cardinal Colonna's Palace where he worked as a teacher for the boys of the house. However, his sensitive spirit drove him to roam the streets of Rome where he witnessed the degraded environment people lived in. In nearby Trastevere, a great disaster occurred due to the river overflowing which resulted in more than two thousand casualties and a multitude of homeless households. A further tribulation to a quarter already left aside. As Calasanz worked tirelessly helping those affected, he could touch with his hands the miserable situation they were plunged into. Therefore, to dedicate to charitable action in behalf of the sick, mainly during the epidemics following the flood, he joined the Confraternity of the Twelve Apostles. Children continued on the street even more helpless, and the idea of doing something to support them began to stir his spirit. He was impacted by the fact that many children didn't attend school due to the lack of resources, so he started to nourish the idea of creating a free school for all the children, especially the most needy. In the city there were already local schools and Christian Doctrine schools, besides colleges, seminaries and convictories opened by the Jesuits. Calasanz thought it a good idea to develop the same approach. However, local schools managed by one teacher couldn't ensure formation for a great number of children nor continuity, as ages were mixed and it would be hard to tailor teaching to each student's requirements. So he proposed his idea to the ecclesiastical authorities, to wealthy Chris-

81 Sixtus V ruled the Church between 1585 and 1590. He was considered a hard man and a self-satisfied person. He tried to improve the public order persecuting energetically criminals and brigands. He also opposed the work of the prostitutes. At the end of his days he ordered the construction of his bust at Capitolium which was removed at his death, as a testimony of the scarce affection Roman people had in his regard.

tians and to religious orders – such as Jesuits and Dominicans – which had already opened some schools, but all disregarded his proposal.⁸²

Calasanz didn't get discouraged but decided to undertake the implementation of his project. With the cooperation of the parish priest of Santa Dorotea he started on a provisional basis a first free school for poor children in the sacristy. There was a real need for a popular school as the one founded by Calasanz in Santa Dorotea. The best evidence was the fact that all of a sudden the demand grew so much that they needed larger spaces, first in Campo dei Fiori and eventually in Palazzo Torres, longside the church of Saint Pantaleo. The project reflected the real requirements of the Roman children, of the poor and illiterate environments of the districts of Trastevere. Reading, writing and counting, with something of Latin, Catechism and good manners, were the requirements felt by the people and met by Calasanz' work.

Leaving aside the inevitable counter-reformist traces, the school of Calasanz may be considered a modern school because of the structure of its programmes, the organization of its classes according to ages and levels of knowledge, and the specialized nature of teachings as each professor has a specific subject to develop. The school is inspired by the humanistic idea of the universal nature of culture, far away from the traditional elitist approach to knowledge. For the first time the right to a free school for all, including the poor, is advocated. The children, or “the least/little ones”, as Calasanz used to call them with affection, become the centre of the educational system; and knowledge is placed at the service of man and not the opposite. Fr. Salisti praises Calasanz for having made of the school his mission, as he writes in a letter: *“He hablado con personas, que todavía se acuerdan de cómo permanecía inmóvil sentado en el patio de las escuelas y les oía leer, les corregía las páginas, los atraía a la doctrina cristiana, al ejercicio de las virtudes, y les daba como premio estampitas de santos, dulces y confetis, y a los más pobres los libros de lectura, el papel y las plumas; y en aquella venerable edad parecía ser un chiquillo entre ellos, pero un chiquillo repleto de una gravedad*

82 GINER, Severino, San José Calasanz en la reforma de la Reforma post-tridentina, *Archivum Scholarum Piarum* n° 78, pag. 75 y ss.

*inocentísima; por las noches además se apresuraba a prepararles los modelos a escribir; y, con todo esto, terminadas las clases, no dejaba de trabajar, yendo también a la cuestación, barriendo las mismas escuelas y limpiando incluso la cuadra y el borrico con una total ecuanimidad, en cualquier circunstancia”.*⁸³ (I have spoken with persons who still remember him in the courtyard of the schools with the students listening their reading, correcting their duties, teaching Christian doctrine. As a child in midst of other children. He used to give pictures, sweets and cakes... Books, paper and pens to poor children. And after school he went to quest, clean the school, etc.)

The particular feature identifying Calasanz' school is its popular nature, in the sense that it is open to all the children without discrimination. Calasanz accepted in his schools many Jew children, even though his objective was the formation of a religious conscience, moreover a Catholic conscience, in an effort to contrast the Protestant thrust. There is no doubt that such a school was problematic for those times in Rome, as it prompted a series of unforeseeable events. The aspiration of educating poor young people giving them a Christian formation through a free school was a hardly acceptable in the post-Tridentine context. The fact that children of low classes could have access to higher education and could, therefore, aim at developing professions reserved to wealthy people, was highly criticized because it would result in social changes with disturbing consequences. Actually, the educational sediment that remained after the experience in the school of Calasanz implied a seed of integral formation of the human person.

THE SCIENTIFIC IDEAL

Joseph Calasanz is contemporary with the awakening of modern science. The emergence of the Pious Schools coincides with the eclosion of new Physics and new Astronomy that were about to change the world's representation. But modern world was born with labor pains and, sad to say, with a consistent opposition of the Church to the new

83 Regestum litterarum P. Jo. Chrysostomi Salistri. Archives of the General House of the Piarists in Rome, S. Pantaleon, Reg. Gen. 139, p. 372.

theories conveyed by Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo. The Inquisition, supported by a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, discredited the new heliocentric theories that were discovering the infinite dimensions of Space. Without an empirical basis, the Aristotelian Physics' principles could not stand before the new Physicians' findings. However, the Inquisition decided to condemn Galileo's heliocentric system and obliged him to retract by saying that the Earth kept immobile while the celestial spheres revolved around it. After four centuries the Church recognized that this offense against science had been actually an error. However, while the wisest philosophers started to step back from speculations that were deprived of empirical foundation, at first timidly but afterwards openly, the institutions of the Church continued to teach according to the model of the world's old image. Against this background, the attitude of Calasanz regarding science in general and the figure of Galileo in particular is more valuable because it indicates his openness towards progress and modernity. In Fr. Santha's work we read that Calasanz was very concerned with favouring a scientific education in his schools, in particular because subjects were predominantly literary. So, from primary school, besides reading and writing, great importance was given to elementary calculus, say practical arithmetics or Abaquus.⁸⁴ Calasanz had the intuition of the scientific approach that would characterize the new times, which led him to ensure this programme through the incorporation of mathematics in the formation of piarist religious so that they would become excellent Abaquists.⁸⁵ More specifically, Calasanz supported the foundation of the Higher School of Mathematics in Florence, where he and some other piarists became friends of famous Galileo. He even allowed his religious to accompany Galileo in his forced retirement in Arcetri, close to Florence.⁸⁶ He was moved not only by the desire that his religious were prepared as best as possible in the knowledge

84 Apparently, the study of practical Arithmetic started in the Republic of Venice, which needed the collaboration of accounting teachers for exchange operations with Byzanz. From Venice it spread throughout Italy, but Calasanz has the merit of implementing it at primary school level in order to prepare the children for daily life.

85 SANTHA, György, *Op. Cit.* pag 149.

86 PICANYOL, Llogari, *Epistolario I, Galileo Galilei*, pag 34-35 i pag 69.

of sciences but in particular by the practical motivation of ensuring his poor students the essential resources for their livelihood activities. In this respect Fr. Francesco Castelli, a collaborator of Calasanz, deserves a special mention as an open-minded man who opened the Pious Schools to scientists in vogue, including Galileo. Driven by his thrust, Calasanz promoted the study of Mathematics in the Pious Schools of Rome, Florence, Genova, Naples and Podolin (Poland).

In the last moments of his life, Galileo was actually assisted by some piarist religious with the Founder's permission. *"From the very beginning (this group) provided a clear and distinct direction to the new order of the Pious Schools in a scientific-positive and modern sense"*.⁸⁷ Fathers Francesco Michellini, Angelo Morelli and Clemente Settimi, share the experience of having been direct disciples of Galileo, who was fascinated with their keenness and intellectual value. Fr. Settimi became his personal secretary and, when Galileo became old and needed a close support, he asked Calasanz to accompany the famous Physician at night. The three of them taught Mathematics in the school that had been founded in Florence.⁸⁸ Their presence near Galileo was not only motivated by their desire of knowing more about the world's nature, but rather by their intention of cooperating in the research of a truth always renewed. They were aware of the fact that they were working on a "new philosophy", a new vision of the world, leaving behind the old approaches of the Aristotelian Physics. Their awareness in this sense is confirmed by the report submitted to the Inquisition of Florence against these Galilean piarists. Fr. Mario Sozzi reported that they professed atomistic and materialistic doctrines. They were blamed as denying the Aristotelian doctrine of the hylomorphic composition of matter in favour of the atoms theory; supporting the heliocentric conception of the universe; not believing in the existence of colours and considering Mathematics as the only science that enables to know God and to convince the unbelievers. Mario Sozzi's accusation included the Grand Duke of Tuscany who had also been attracted by these ideas, and they reached even Calasanz, who had to

87 SANTHA, György, *Op. Cit.* pag 152-153

88 Cf. AUSENDA, Giovanni, in *Op. cit.*, p. 510-511.

respond to the Roman Inquisition. While many of these accusations were excessive and not attended by the Court of the Holy Office, they can give an idea of the new educational approach of the Pious Schools.

Not only Mathematics raised Calasanz' interest, but also Grammar. He sent two other piarists to Milan to join Gaspar Schopio in order to learn what he called the philosophical or reasoned grammar, which he explained in his school in Vienna. His method included a progressive teaching of Morphology combined with the learning of Latin sentences. Schopio had no confidence in the Jesuits regarding the Counter-Reform in Austria, so he proposed to the piarists the follow-up of his school in Vienna. He called the piarists the "reformed jesuits" because he considered their life more in accordance with the gospel and appreciated them for their fidelity in teaching the poor. The piarists found Schopio's method to be a simple formula that drove them to create their own grammar. Fr. Apa published it without quoting Schopio among its sources, which left him very displeased.⁸⁹

MEMORIAL ADDRESSED TO CARDINAL MICHEL ANGELO TONTI (1621)

Cardinal Miguel Angel Tonti (1566-1622) was the Rapporteur of the Papal Commission that had to study the approval of the Constitutions and the status of Religious Order of Solemn Vows that had been requested. Calasanz addresses a Memorial to the Cardinal justifying the existence of the Order of the Pious Schools among the institutions of the Church. This document became a critical piece of the history of the Order, as it contains the best definition of the nature, objectives and relevance of the Institute. Actually, Calasanz outlines the reasons by which he requests the Holy See the status of an Order, as he sees it as the consolidation of his educational work. The path that had preceded this request had been long. Since the starting experience in Santa Dorotea, where he began teaching in the sacristy of a humble parish in Trastevere, Calasanz had first requested the Jesuits and the Dominicans

89 LECOINTE, Claire, *Gaspar Schppe et les Ecoles Pies. Un exemple de collaboration scientifique et pédagogique au XVII siècle*, en *Archivum Scholarum Piarum*, n° 18.

to run his work, and then he sought the support of teachers and lay people, who helped him indeed but were not able to keep pace with him nor to commit themselves in a work that was based on benevolence and, therefore, without future. Calasanz understood that only a religious bond could seriously involve faithful collaborators who would not abandon the work. The Holy See suggested the Pious Schools' association with the the Congregation of Lucca (the Lucchesi) founded by Saint John Lonardi: the "Lucchesi" would provide the religious spirit to the work of Joseph Calasanz. But it didn't work. The "Lucchesi" preferred to be dedicated to worship and spiritual direction, and were not attracted by teaching in schools. So in 1617 Pope Paul V, who sympathized with Calasanz' work, organized the Pious Schools as a Pauline Congregation. Later on, Calasanz would try to stabilize the group by requesting the approval of the Pious Schools as an Order of Solemn Vows. A request that seemed strange and obstinate, after the Lateran Council had forbidden the creation of other Religious orders. However, Calasanz was not searching a privilege but the strength that his Institute required in order to avoid its destruction that would be facilitated with temporary vows easy to abandon. The strength required by the Pious Schools moved him to request the Holy See the status of a religious Order.⁹⁰

After four months in Narni, Joseph Calasanz wrote his Constitutions, and in mid March of the year 1621 he submitted them to Pope Gregory XV for their approval, which involved the acceptance of the Pious Schools as a religious order. The Pope appointed a Commission of Bishops, led by Cardinal Tonti,⁹¹ to study the case. The Commission's decision was unfavourable to the creation of a new order, based on the same reasons of the Lateran Council.

90 Calasanz had had already a negative experience regarding the support that bishops could provide to a school initiative. When he was a canon in Seu d'Urgell and had to witness to the request addressed by the pastor of Senterada, mossén Pere Gervàs de les Eres, to Philip II regarding two schools in the Pyrenees to counteract the influence of Hugonotes. The project interested the King who entrusted its implementation to the local bishops under the coordination of the bishop of Barcelona. The result was null, because the project was not implemented. Calasanz learned not to entrust to others such an important project as the organization of schools.

91 Cardinal Michelangelo Tonti was Archbishop of Nazareth and bishop of Cesena.

The negative decision of the Commission encouraged Calasanz to argue on the convenience and opportunity of his institute, which he did through a memorial addressed to Cardinal Tonti, a real masterpiece of his pedagogical thought. The historians of the Order didn't hesitate in qualifying it as "Calasanz' doctoral thesis" or the "original hymn to the educational work", as it highlights his deep conviction on the value of education and the strength of his character. The text modified the Cardinal's attitude, and transformed his doubts in convictions, so that he shifted from the position of an opponent to that of a cooperator of the Pious Schools. The Commission also changed its judgement on Calasanz' request and recommended the Pope to upgrade the Pious Schools to the status of a religious order. A fruit of his adherence to Joseph Calasanz' work was the donation of a part of his patrimony for the foundation of a school where the poor children were fed and educated freely. Such is the origin of the Collegio Nazareno in Rome.

The aim of the document is to respond to the objections moved against the new order and to declare that the Pious Schools should be approved, in spite of the IV Lateran Council's prohibition. Calasanz' arguments are expressed with an extraordinary zeal and great conviction, based on the widespread need of children's education in all the Christian countries, especially because of the lack of institutions exclusively dedicated to this end. The Pious Schools filled this gap and offered a better future to the Church and to Society through their religious, consecrated by vows to the mission of accepting and educating poor children⁹².

92 *Ephemerides Calasanzianae* published the full Italian text (Vol. XXVI, 1967, 472-477); shortly before, it had appeared also in the doctoral thesis of Fr. Adolfo García-Durán "Itinerario espiritual de san José de Calassanz" (Barcelona, 1967, pag 170-179). For the first time, the "Biografía crítica" of Fr. Calassanz Bau provided the text translated into Spanish (pag 411-417); later, it appeared unretouched in the work of Fr. György Santha "San José Calasanz: escritos" (Madrid, 1956, pag 703-709). In 1968, Fr. Claudio Vilà published a new translation into Spanish, completely revised. The text of the document is divided in paragraphs, that are numbered to render quotations easier. Fr. Vicente Faubell also provides a translation of the memorial in his *Antología Pedagógica Calasanziana*. Finally, the General Congregation has published a deluxe edition, bound in leather, with photos of the document and its translation into four languages.

The document could be divided into five sections. In the first section, Calasanz argues against the reasons proposed by the opponents (1-5). While it is true that the Lateran Council prohibited the creation of new superfluous orders, which reproduce charisms already present in the Church in other Institutes, Calasanz tries to demonstrate that the Pious Schools are not superfluous. He states that his ministry is necessary and nobody reclaims it, notwithstanding the fact that children's education is the main instrument for the reformation of customs. The claim becomes stronger when Calasanz presents the reasons to defend the Pious Schools' ministry. If other orders that are not so necessary have received the status of an Order, how could it be denied to the Pious Schools whose ministry is utmost worthy, noble, meritorious, beneficial, useful, necessary, rooted in human nature, reasonable, worthy of gratitude, pleasant and glorious. In conclusion, Calasanz is convinced that the Church will be fortified with the Order of the Pious Schools pursuing such an important objective as the children's education, as no other Order has assumed it as its own ministry. Calasanz emphasizes the importance of this ministry for the reformation of customs, with the fact that many princes have requested the presence of the Pious Schools in their territories in order to achieve these purposes. He expresses also the conviction that it is God who inspired this work. The memorial concludes requesting the status of an Order for his Institute because the ministry of teaching poor children requires the availability of the best teachers. This availability cannot be obtained by any other means than by a strong bond as that of solemn vows, which would provide stability to the Institute. When Calasanz establishes the preferred area for the Pious Schools' action, namely the education of the least, he focus on popular districts of great cities or small villages. Other institutes are already involved in the education of wealthy classes in great cities. To come close to the poor, the Pious Schools must also be poor so that no child feels underestimated in their classrooms. For this reason, Calasanz will claim for his Order the mendicant status.

THE APOLOGY OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS BY TOMASSO CAPANELLA

We have seen that Calasanz was an open-minded man to ideas announcing new times. He opened the doors of his institute to the

new science promoted by Galileo and allowed some piarists to learn from him the principles of Astronomy, Physics and Mathematics. We have no reference of any relationship with Giordano Bruno nor of any sharing of his heroic furors, though Calasanz couldn't ignore his tragic end at the stake in Campo dei Fiori, condemned by the Inquisition, because the sentence was executed in front of his schools. However, Calasanz knew Campanella, another visionary and reformist philosopher persecuted by the Inquisition. After Pope Urban VIII liberated him from the prison to which he had been condemned by the Court of the Inquisition, he was hosted in the piarist school of Frascati for some months, between 1630 and 1632. Campanella had known the Pious Schools when he was in Naples and appreciated them very much. His sojourn in Frascati enabled him to provide some lessons of philosophy to young piarists. Actually, this closeness to the Pious Schools enabled him to discover Calasanz' work and he was so excited with it that he undertook the writing of an *Apology of the Pious Schools*. Campanella highlights the focus of Calasanz' institute and praises the piarist ministry, full of admiration and enthusiasm, persuaded of the need and the relevance of the work⁹³.

Campanella also wrote an *Apology of Galileo*, in the preface of his *Theology* (1636), where he manifests the interest of his times for the geographic discoveries, which had radically changed the image of the earth, as well as for the Copernican revolution, which he interpreted in his own way. He also perceived the Aristotelian doctrine's gaps regarding the exposition of revealed truths, and he dreamt on the great "reform" which should result in the unification of human mankind through the acceptance of a single faith, namely the catholic reformation. This was his interpretation in his utopian narration of "The Sun's City". When he came to know Calasanz and his work he introduced them in his narration, while

93 See the work of translation and interpretation by Maurizio Erto, in Tommaso Campanella, *Libro apologetico contro gli avversari dell'Istituto delle Scuole Pie. Liber apologeticus contra impugnantes Institutum Scholarum Piarum*, a cura di Maurizio Erto, Fabrizio Serra editore, Pisa-Rome, 2015, pp. 80.

dreaming with a monarchy surrounded by a council of wise people. However, Calasanz' initiative and work were far away from this utopian conception.

The context of Campanella's apology shows the fierce struggle against all those who considered the Pious Schools a useless and dangerous work. The objections against them came both from lay people and the religious. Those from the lay people could be summarized in the distortion expected in society because the poor were instructed. Which can be explained by the people's mentality in late Middle Ages and early Renaissance regarding society as a stratified community in which social layers are well distinguished, and organized according to their respective roles. If piarists teach the poor and these point to higher studies, who would do the productive work of farming, crafts, army or servitude? The social order, which according to Aristotle placed each class according to its role, would be completely upset. The instruction provided to the poor could result in the multiplication of professors, lawyers and notaries, so that there wouldn't be work for all. Moreover, the Jesuits already are dedicated to teach grammar and humanities to the poor in their schools, and the monks and friars do the same in their convents, so that the Pious Schools are unnecessary and superfluous.

With a keen understanding of contemporary issues Campanella articulates an answer to all these objections. His apology starts from knowledge, considered as a *per se* value which enables an enhancement of mankind, so that princes prefer to rule over educated people and only tyrants prefer ignorant people, as educated people do not tolerate tyranny, nor allows to be deceived by sophists and heretics. Campanella concludes that universal knowledge is not useless as it fertilizes all the professions, and thus he proposes the following examples: "*Would a painter not paint better if he knew Mathematics and other sciences than if he only knew painting? Likewise, land is not kept as well by an instructed farmer or by an ignorant farmer, as the latter doesn't know the nature and advantages of land, arts, stars, farming, as well as the kind and virtues of the seeds and fruits, and their good or bad development*". His conclusion is obvious: the State should ensure the progress of the cultural wealth of its subjects, as the activity of teachers is more important than the craftsmen's work.

Thus, the piarists dedicated to such a work are not idle or unproductive people for the society.

Campanella argues by the way that it is convenient that princes advocate knowledge. Moreover, he later dares to state a revolutionary idea saying that *“plebeians of good nature are more useful than thick and negligent nobles”*. Indeed, when children of poor families are instructed, they will be able to reach higher positions in the public administration, replacing noble people who are dumb and corrupted by wealth and idleness. So, instruction provided to the poor encourages progress of society. In this respect, Campanella uses an example of his time, as Charles Borromeo had achieved in his diocese of Milan excellent results opening his seminaries to the poor, and had created an educated and exemplary clergy. However, Campanella’s reasoning peaks when stating without any scruple that the rights of the poor are written in creation itself, as God has not divided humanity into two species, one for happiness and the other condemned to pain and suffering. If God has created a single human race, to hamper the poor’s access to higher studies contradicts natural law.

There was another set of objections of an ecclesiastical nature that were raised by members of other religious congregations or of the Vatican Curia itself. Some thought that the schools of Calasanz were superfluous, because their field was already covered by the Jesuits, who could thus loose their students. It was true that the Pious Schools were dedicated only to the poor, as was said, but wouldn’t they be tempted to open to higher studies? For this reason, these opponents considered that piarists should be forbidden the access to higher sciences so that they would not desire to teach them if they could. Others criticized the fact that piarists asked alms after teaching poor children, because that would mean to step on the right of the mendicants, who could not be able to claim for the exclusive rights of their charism.

The answer of Campanella to these religious who were concerned with the defense of their territory was to remind them that in the universal Church there was place for everybody: the Jesuits could teach young nobles of the great cities and the Piarists could teach poor children in smaller towns. But this shouldn’t hinder them from receiving

a scientific, philosophical and theological formation of the best quality, as this would attempt against natural law and against the tradition of the Church. Not to be forgotten that the better the teacher's culture, better will also be his teaching. Campanella provides a final and decisive argument, when he requires a strong intellectual formation to contrast the errors of Erasmus, Valla or Melanchton. This argument draws on a consensus among religious of the Counter-Reform in considering the teachings of these philosophers a danger.

The whole reflection of Campanella is based on a realistic perception of the history of the religious congregations and of the rows that accompanied their establishment in Rome, where the environment was excessively congested. At the same time he had met the Pious Schools and remained surprised of the work, courage and enthusiasm of religious dedicated to a heroic activity, as well as of the humility of their poor schools. It's a reflection not limited to supporting a current situation, but it makes the apology of a project for the future with a universal vision. For this reason Campanella advances the idea of the universal right of every child to education, he highlights the principle of the equality of opportunities and looks forward to seeing the work of the Pious Schools incorporated in the future into an organic State in which education is part of its project.

THE UTOPIA MATERIALIZED IN THE PIOUS SCHOOLS

The School that Campanella found hosted more than a thousand poor children from all the districts of Rome and a couple of teachers who provided lessons from morning to afternoon for God's sake. At the end of the day they accompanied the children to their homes, and afterwards they wandered asking alms for the subsistence of their schools. These details were certainly not ignored by the philosopher who did understand all of a sudden that Calasanz' work was a real revolution which he decided to support collaborating with it and defending it against attacks. The great ideas that Erasmus, More or Vives had advocated and shown as utopistic, and that Campanella had figured out in his "City of the Sun", materialized in the Pious Schools. They were not only projects or timid efforts but a huge enterprise that only could be rolled out with the tenacity of Calasanz

and his profound love for God and the children. *“In Rome I definitely found the way to serve God (in the poor children), and I will never miss it for anything in the world”*, as Calasanz wrote to his sister after having started his work in Santa Dorotea. Calasanz had arrived in Rome with the will to solve some issues of his diocese and to obtain a canonry for his future. However, he soon realized that providing education to the children was not a mere act of Christian charity but a right that was deeply rooted in human nature. With the firm idea that human life is called to grow and reach its fullness, he undertook the protection of the poor and the needy, strongly convinced that this was a responsibility of a modern State. We have already seen how Calasanz, before taking the initiative of gathering children in Santa Dorotea, he had unsuccessfully addressed the Municipality of Rome, and discussed with the Jesuits and Dominicans, already dedicated to teaching, who didn't accept his proposal. His itinerary started just after these negative experiences. With scarce resources available and with the parish priest's collaboration, who allowed the use of the sacristy as the first classroom, Calasanz initiated the first popular school.

Calasanz wasn't a philosopher or a humanist as Erasmus, but a practical man. When he faced the challenge and started to see the potential of his work he decided to gather cooperators who would voluntarily help him. Few had the strength and spirit that was needed to persevere. This led Calasanz to the creation, on a merely pragmatic basis, of a religious Congregation which became afterwards a religious Order. The stronger the teachers' commitment, the stronger would the work of the Pious Schools be.

Calasanz was not satisfied with doing all he could to obtain the status of a religious Order. He also wanted to impress in it the virtue of poverty, as it wouldn't be fair to host poor children in his schools if these were not poor as well. This was a radical position that reflected the utopistic attitudes of his times, that wanted the reformation of society harshly criticising its evils. Calasanz wanted to react against the evils of Rome, corrupted by money, business, intrigues and nepotism. The utopias had done the diagnosis of social evils, but Calasanz was the only person that transformed them into reality.

A document whose sign is not known up to now enables us to understand better Calasanz' works and struggles. It has been written in 1645 before the third session of the Cardinals' Commission that was considering the convenience or not of the work of the Pious Schools. Even if its author is not known, the ideas therein expressed can be attributed to Calasanz, as it reflects his opinion on the school for poor children. We must take in consideration that his ideas were revolutionary in this respect and not shared by everybody. Among the members of the commission, his president Cardinal Roma did not share the idea of a right of the poor to education. He had to take the decision regarding the possibility of the Pious Schools, which meant its existence or extinction. The document at issue is written with the necessary zeal to advocate for the right of the poor to education and the need of the institution that makes it a reality.

"Your Eminence,

Of the Institute of the Pious Schools, run by the Poor of the Mother of God for the Christian education of the children, particularly the poor, not only it cannot be said that it is absolutely superfluous but it should be stated that it is necessary, both for the universal reason that youth must be taught and educated in the good and virtuous customs, as abundantly confirmed in the books of moral philosophers, in the Holy Fathers and all the Sacred Councils, but above all for the specific reason that the Christian Republic is mostly formed by cities, lands and poor persons who due to the fact that they need to work for their daily subsistence they cannot easily take care of their children.

These, however, should not be abandoned because they are poor, as they constitute, as has been said, the great majority of the Christian Republic, and have also been redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ and are greatly appreciated by his Majesty who said he had been sent to the world by his eternal Father to teach them: Evangelizare Pauperibus missit me.

Whence it clearly appears far from Christian piety and from Christ's feeling the policy that considers dangerous for the Republic to teach the Poor because, as it is said, they are thus deviated from mechanical arts.

Experience has demonstrated that this is a very false reason, given that here in Rome, after about 50 years that the Pious Schools teach the Poor, no lack of any class of artisans is seen, but on the contrary, most of them, through the benefit of the schools, are able to keep the accounts of their merchandises, not needing to be helped by others as it was before the activity of the schools started.

The reason why artisans are not lacking, in spite of having attended school, is that very few of those poor children go forward to Grammar after reading, writing, and abacus, but stop there and start some craft business. Even if it is also true that some crafts practiced by poor people require some Grammar, as for example to be notary, copyist, surgeon, pharmacist or druggist, or others.

Moreover, no Prince or Republic applies such policy, but allows every place of their domain, though poor, to hire a Teacher with a public wage. Also in Rome, the District Teachers working for the Poor are paid by the Roman people, without any fear that crafts be left aside.

However, even if erudition shouldn't be appropriate for poor people, who could, with a minimum of Christian sense, deny them a good education, which is the principal part of the Pious Schools' apostolate?

Though the work of education and teaching has already been performed by the priests of the Society of Jesus through a whole century with utmost excellence and charity in behalf of everybody, experience shows that they cannot satisfy all the people, due to so many glorious chores they perform. Indeed, according to their charism, they are not allowed to found in small and poor cities and lands, in which the Poor of the Mother of God may found owing to the supreme poverty they profess.

The conclusion is that in such an abundant harvest of the vast field of the world, the Poor of the Mother of God cannot be left without the possibility of collecting the spikes left by the great reapers of the Society of Jesus who daily harvest great and abundant bundles that Your Paternities, according to the Law, must leave for the Poor".⁹⁴

94 An extract from Vicente FAUBELL ZAPATA, *Nueva Antología Pedagógica Calasancia*", Publicaciones Universidad Pontificia, Salamanca, 2004, pp. 69-72.

The text is extremely eloquent and complements the one written by Calasanz to Cardinal Tonti. However, the decision of the commission of cardinals was not favourable to Calasanz who saw his institute deprived of its nature of religious order and even of a Congregation with vows and reduced to a simple congregation as the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri. The schools remained, but seriously damaged, because not authorized to recruit new vocations and many religious went away.

TOWARDS SOME FEATURES OF CALASANZ' THOUGHT

We have already stated that Joseph Calasanz was not a philosopher, in spite of having studied with the Trinitarians in Estadilla, and at the University de Lleida and the universities of Valencia and Alcalà. We have also seen him close to the mystical approach of the Carmelites, and with a special sensitivity for the modern ideas and the new science through Campanella and Galileo. Actually, Joseph Calasanz was a tenacious and practical man, with a humanistic background, who went through a personal conversion in Rome in touch with the poverty of the children of Trastevere. After the foundation of the Pious Schools, an arsenal of ideas started to develop based on years of experiences, eventually resulting in a consistent ideology. We could try to outline them in the form of philosophical ideas.

What encourages us to do so is the large scope of the elements hosted under the concept of philosophy which, according to Montaigne, "*has so many faces*", so that on its behalf even some very contrasting ideas have been defended. In this large sense we speak of the philosophy of Calasanz, understanding it as a reflection based on the experience of the educational activity. The description of his thought enables us to outline the general features which characterize the educational process expected by Joseph Calasanz for each of his students. In this field we could look for complicities among the ancient philosophers and among those of his period, and at the same time we'll try to build bridges towards the philosophical systems of our days. However, Calasanz didn't leave us many paths, though in the Constitutions he states:

"The Ecumenical Councils, the Fathers of the Church, as well as the most learned philosophers unanimously affirm that the

*reform of Christian society lies in the diligent exercise of our mission. For, if children, from their earliest years, are instructed diligently in piety and letters, it must undoubtedly be expected that their whole life will be a happy one.*⁹⁵

Who are these most learned philosophers? In his Constitutions, Joseph Calasanz mentions Saint Thomas among the reliable philosophers that support his teachers' formation and uses texts of Joan Lluís Vives, while not approving Campanella's advice in his Apology regarding religious' access to higher studies or philosophy.⁹⁶ Campanella mentions some philosophers of his time whom he didn't trust in, as Erasmus, Melancton and Valla, arguing that heretics could only be defeated with a higher preparation. We think Calasanz agreed with the widespread criticism against thinking philosophers close to the Reformation, echoing the opinion of the Counter-Reformation Church that considered them detractors puffed-up by their knowledge. He was against their approach, but displeased at the same time with Campanella's text which he did not approve.⁹⁷

The Calasanzian project implies a humanistic background in the sense of a profound appreciation of the individual as an invaluable reality, perceived as a spiritual existence tending to an integral development of all its capacities. The consideration of each person as a unique subject created by God, called by vocation to the development of its own life within a society supposed to be increasingly better as well. This approach includes three dimensions: the personal dimension, which opens each person to its inner development; the social dimension, which impels it to action in the world in cooperation with other individuals in order to build a better future, and finally, the transcendent dimension, which projects it to trust in God who loves it and calls it to life.

95 SINT JOSEPH CALASANZ. *Constitutions, Preamble*, nº 5.

96 GINER GUERRI, Severino, *San José Calasanz*, Madrid, BAC 1992, pag 628.

97 VILÁ i PALÁ, Claudi, *¿Influencia de Campanella en la pedagogía calasanziana?*, Revista. Calasanzia 1 (1959) pag 23-44.

The educational project of Calasanz is, therefore, an integral project. All and each of the human-specific aspects must develop harmoniously in order to achieve perfection. No considerations or interests should favor one aspect at the expense of others. Whatever is of an educational nature, implying an upgrading of human existence, fits into Calasanz' pedagogy. Not in vain he sought the aid of the best grammarians, the best calligraphers and the best scientists for the formation of his teachers. He was always careful to elements which could provide improvements to his schools, and would quickly include them on behalf of the children. He also sought this harmony in the organization of studies by grades, which enabled him to divide knowledge and skills according to the childrens' development in order to avoid shocks. Calasanz hosted this integral vision of mankind in an effort to lead each student to human and Christian maturity.

These objectives were not affordable without a method that would enable a simultaneous and phased education. Calasanz asked his religious to use a simple method that would help to achieve knowledge in an orderly and easy manner, element by element, but had also to enable to work with all the students at the same time. For this reason, the simultaneous method, which the Jesuits applied only for the higher courses, was applied by Calasanz for all the levels. This meant that the same teaching provided by the teacher had to reach all the students of the section at the same time.⁹⁸ The teacher, therefore, needed to be supported by the so called decurions, namely some students who received the lesson and repeated it to the others, dedicating their efforts particularly to those less able. The simultaneous method was complemented by the standard method, by which the same curriculum was followed in all the Pious Schools.

Thus the whole educational process pursued a specific ideal: to achieve that the person present in the child reached the fullness of the adult age, becoming able to integrate successfully in life for his own benefit and that of the society. In the Pious Schools this ideal was sought through the integration of the three dimensions already men-

98 Cfr. SANTHA, *Op. Cit.* pag 275-276.

tioned: the inner dimension, the social dimension and the transcendent dimension. This objective allowed Calasanz to be confident that his students had improved as individuals and were able to improve the society.

What follows will give us an insight of the features of Calasanz's philosophy, which stand in his Constitutions as columns that support his Pious Schools. The first feature is a concise definition of the piarist teacher, figured by Calasanz as a "cooperator with Truth" and the entire educational work as "cooperation with Truth."

Along with this first pillar of the Calasanzian philosophy there are other three notes that have identified the educational work of the Pious Schools, three nuances that typify and distinguish Calasanz's schools: focus on the least ("*a teneris annis*"), preference for the poor ("*praecipue pauperibus*") a mix of science and spirit ("*pietas et litterae*").

THE PIARIST EDUCATOR AS COOPERATOR WITH TRUTH

In the first place we address the original description with which Joseph Calasanz identifies the piarist educator as a cooperator with Truth. We find it in the Preamble of his Constitutions as if it were the paradigm of all his work. After defining the identity of the Piarist Order within the Church, he immediately describes the objectives and content of the piarist ministry (nn. 2 and 5), and he concludes with the profile of the piarist educator (nn 3, 4, 6 and 7).⁹⁹

In the first paragraph (n. 2) dedicated to the Calasanzian educator we read:

"We must humbly hope that Almighty God, who called us to work in this most fruitful harvest will give us the necessary means to become competent co-operators with the Truth. Nevertheless, under the guidance that governs the universe and cautioned by

99 Regarding Calasanzian identity, we use the invaluable work of Fr. José Antonio Miró, who developed some Files on Calasanz's philosophy for the formation of Piarist Juniors.

the example of the Saints, we have judged necessary to protect our Institute with the present Constitutions»

The text shows the high appreciation of Joseph Calasanz regarding the piarist educator's work, as he considers it a gift of God and a vocation that dignifies the educational task. This valuation is far higher than the consideration of the teachers' work that was generally accepted in his times, namely as a simple, rather insignificant, job. In a piarist educator Calasanz envisages a vocation by which God calls somebody with the purpose of implementing his plan of salvation. Then, if the initiative of this work comes from God, He will also ensure the means to implement it. These means are reflected in the daily work of the piarist educators. Calasanz thus justifies the Constitutions as an instrument aimed to help the development of the piarist vocation towards the implementation of the plan of God for the children.

Nevertheless, what is surprising in Calasanz' description of the piarist educator is the title he uses, namely that of "cooperator with Truth". Naturally, the scope of such qualification depends on the idea we have of Truth. At first glance, a cooperator with Truth recalls the Socratic ideal of the philosopher who helps the emerging of ideas in the disciple's mind, but in this case the image recalls a higher and sacred reality. The expression brings back to a sort of Augustinism, which constitutes up to now the background music of the Christian thought. Furthermore, Calasanz applies the figure of the inner teacher, who leads the mind to be illuminated by the divine Truth, to the external teacher who paves the road towards the light.

Actually, this title that is taken from the third letter of Saint John (3 John 8)¹⁰⁰ merits a further consideration. John refers to brethren who have accomplished their mission in other lands as witnesses of the Gospel and have returned as true witnesses of truth; when they approach communities created by him, John encourages to welcome them, to become cooperators with Truth. For a right interpretation of

100 *We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth. Ina sunergoi gignomeqa th aleqeia.*

the paragraph we should start by distinguishing the Hebrew concept of truth (emunah), which we use for interpreting the biblical texts, from the Greek concept (aletheia). The term “emunah” implies the consideration of truth as an attitude of fidelity towards a person, of keeping your word, or of confidence in a witness. Cooperating with truth would thus mean to keep faithful to those brethren who in turn have kept faithful to Jesus. The Greek term ἀληθεια has a more intellectual and cognitive sense, as it means to unveil what is hidden. The interpretation of the Johannine sentence would have no sense in this context, as in the faith area there is nothing else to unveil because the whole Revelation has occurred in Jesus. If we pay attention to three other texts of Saint John’s letters (1 Jn 1, 6; 3, 18-20 and 2 Jn 4-6) we see that the author speaks of walking in the truth when somebody walks in communion with God, meaning that the whole life is enlightened with the light of grace and is manifested mainly in the love of God and the brethren. To walk in the truth is thus opposed to walk in the dark. How could Calasanz’ description be then understood? If we interpret it in the light of the text of Saint John, “cooperator with Truth” would mean to actively collaborate in the saving plan of the Father through a unwavering dedication to the faith in Jesus Christ with the gift of the Spirit for its fulfillment in each person and in the whole history.

If we follow Fr. Gyorgy Santha’s interpretation, that seems to be the most obvious, according to Joseph Calasanz’ mind, the teacher’s task is to disseminate the truth by removing the darkness of ignorance from the children’s minds, thus ensuring a happier life for them. Fr. Santha says:

“According to the Calasanctian idea, the teacher should be an apostle, a missionary of truth, who disseminates the light that removes the darkness of ignorance in order to save men from intellectual and moral slavery and make them really happy. On him depends to some extent the eternal destination, in addition to the temporal welfare of individual people as well as of nations in general”.¹⁰¹

101 SANTHA, *Op. Cit.*, pag 75-76.

This text reconsiders the role of the teacher that modern pedagogies have downgraded. In the light of Calasanz, the teacher achieves all his value and importance in the educational process, to the extent that he must be considered essential. The subject of education is the child, for whom the educational action is designed, but Rousseau's pedagogical thought that humans are considered naturally good and the child is naturally willing to education originates from an idealization of human nature that ignores the obstacles that hinder education unless the subject reacts against them. The external incentives and the presence of a tutor or educator are crucial elements in order to find models, incentives, and the love that is needed to accompany the subject's growth. As a consequence, the teacher is an essential presence in the educational process that cannot be substituted by automatized robots or effective operational programmes, as only such presence provides humanity to education.

Saint Augustine writes a short booklet called "*De magistro*" on the role of the teacher, where he asks if any man can educate or be considered a teacher since only God deserves this title, as it seems that only God teaches and deserves to be indicated with the title of teacher.¹⁰² Faithful to his doctrine on Illumination, by which God shows to the human souls the knowledge of the ideas with his enlightening light, Augustine attributes only to God the title of a true teacher, acting as an inner teacher on the spirit that seeks him. His personal experience performed this long intellectual pilgrimage towards God, author of every light. Saint Bonaventure and Duns Scotus also wrote a work called "*De magistro*", remaining faithful to the Augustinian ideas as to the nature of inner teacher attributed to God. Somewhat different is Saint Thomas' version in his "*De magistro*"¹⁰³ as a discussion on whether teaching is more relevant to contemplative or active life. Saint Thomas is more inclined to consider teaching as an activity rather than a contemplation, by the exterior appearance of the act of educating. We could therefore speak of an exterior teacher, acting in the earthly world of life and history.

102 SAINT AGUSTIN, *De Magistro*, Madrid: B: A: C, 1951, Vol 3, 12^o ed. pp 526-599.

103 SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS, *De magistro*, Madrid, Agape Libros, 2006.

Nowadays a discussion on Truth as the absolute possession of objective statements is unsustainable. Contemporary thought has undergone the crisis of subjectivism, phenomenism, scepticism and relativism, so in philosophy nobody can expect to be in possession of dogmatic affirmations grounded inamovably on truth. Contemporary thought rather understands truth as an horizon towards which we walk well aware of our own limits and of the size of the adventure. However a certain contemporary philosophical approach does not deny the application of the concept of truth to specific attitudes of a person who holds faithful to the word given and manifests a consistent and trustworthy conduct, though in this case we could speak in terms of veracity or authenticity. In this sense, the term “cooperator with truth” would gain a more dynamic scope. It could be interpreted as the person who is open to the horizon of truth and focuses his educational strength towards opening the will of his pupil to its search. The ministry of the cooperator with truth is not so much about training his disciples but about facilitating them the access to the mystery of life and mankind, of the world and its beauty, and to the mystery of God.

EDUCATION FROM THE EARLIEST YEARS

The originality of the Pious Schools lies on the pedagogical criteria applied by Calasanz to the children’s Christian education. The Constitutions and the two memorials to Cardinal Tonti and Cardinal Roma could be considered founding documents, so that we can extract from them some indications that define the piarist ministry: it cannot be substituted and is the main tool for reform; it concerns the good education of the children; *it must undoubtedly be expected that their whole life will be a happy one* ...it can be expected that it paves the way for a happy life; it targets all the children of any status; it helps all the children without making any difference between people; it is praised by all the princes who would like to have them in their countries; it helps children from their earliest years with letters and spirit; and the reform of Christianity relies on it. This ministry is performed by men who are committed to an apostolic life and live in a very poor and simple style. Furthermore, it is a ministry that is completely different from that of all the other Orders.

All these statements enclose a style that could define Calasanz' pedagogy. According to Fr. Santha, they could be synthetized in the following features.¹⁰⁴

1. The originality of Calasanz' school lies on its integral nature. The intuition of Calasanz started from two pre-existing realities: the Sunday School of the Christian Doctrine and the daily school of reading, writing and counting. The new school integrated these two aspects with accurate schedules of both catechetical and cultural areas so that it wouldn't end in a mere charitable work.
2. Calasanz established the free education in his school so that any child, whether poor or plebeian, would have access to education and culture. To achieve his objectives he sought financial sources that were consistent with his times, as many other congregations used to do, and he supported his work through alms. Thus the School of Calasanz gained a popular characteristic.
3. He considered essential to start children's education from their earliest years, so his school became of an elementary and graduated nature.
4. Secondary education intended to prepare students for higher education, but the access to higher schools was not allowed to all the students. So Calasanz created a vocational secondary school that prepared directly for life, so that students got an intellectual, managerial and Christian formation with which they could have access to the craft, trading or curial world.
5. In order to achieve these objectives, Calasanz developed simple and effective pedagogical methods, and he created a new figure of trained and committed educator.¹⁰⁵

104 SANTHA, György, *Op. Cit.* pag 133-140.

105 AAVV *Manual de cursillos calasancios*, Madrid 1992, pag 104-105

Through his educational experience of more than fifty years, Joseph Calasanz always emphasized priorities¹⁰⁶ that were actually specific principles of his idea. To marquis of Ariza he notes that “*this holy exercise ... of helping the poor with such a useful and necessary aid as is the doctrine united to the Holy fear of God and starting from the earliest years, ensures a great benefit as we are able to touch with our hands*”.¹⁰⁷

The conviction that early learning pervades the whole life was already supported in the ancient world. As we read in the second letter of Saint Paul to Timothy: “*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*” (2 Tim 3, 14-16). Also Erasmus states realistically that customs cultivated during childhood become fixed at an adult age.¹⁰⁸ Calasanz is aware of the fact that knowledge and attitudes are acquired from infancy, and bad customs are harder to eradicate later. We read in the Constitutions: “*if children, from their earliest years, are instructed diligently in piety and letters, it must undoubtedly be expected that their whole life will be a happy one*”.¹⁰⁹ For this reason, the education of the least became a priority characteristic of the Pious Schools, in times in which it was not appreciated and, hence, it was neglected. A priority, not exclusive, characteristic, as Calasanz always claimed for the Pious Schools the right of accompanying the students up to the adult age.

106 In 1991, the XLIII General Chapter of the Order of the Pious Schools noted “the priorities of the Calasanzian ministry” in *Las Escuelas Pías hacia el Tercer Milenio, memoria y profecía*, Madrid 1991, pag 50.

107 LÓPEZ, Salvador, *Documentos de San José Calasanz*, Bogotá, 1988, pag 157-158 y 166-170.

108 ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM. *De civilitate morum puerilium*. 1544, Hillenius, Biblioteca Nacional de Baviera. Spanish Translation. Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte. Área de Educación; Edición: 1 (2006)

109 SAINT JOSEPH CALASANZ, *Constitutions*, Preamble num. 5

Every pedagogical action must start by childhood education and continue with the education of adolescents and youth. Calasanz was convinced of this pedagogical principle which leads to lay the foundations of human persons both in intellectual and emotional areas. It's a work on the foundations that remains hidden when knowledge and attitudes become more complicated. In fact, apart from Erasmus' and Luther's works, very little had been written on the education of children. In the Catholic area we highlight two works, the three volumes *Sobre la Educación cristiana y política de los pequeños*, written in 1583 by Cardinal Silvio Antoniano at the request of Saint Charles Borromeo, and *Tratado de la buena educación de los pequeños*, written in 1594 by Saint John Leonardi.

However, in times of Calasanz the terms "child" or "young... least" hadn't the accurate meaning they have now.¹¹⁰ The distinction between childhood, infancy and adolescence was not so clear, so that in interpreting the texts we should admit a certain ambiguity. Taking into account the organization of his schools it can be deduced that schooling formation started at six years old and adolescence was included in his graduated school.¹¹¹ Studying the different scales used in times of Calasanz for classifying the ages, Cubells finds out that from a legal viewpoint infancy reached until five years old and since that age children were equated with the adults. However, infancy was supposed to be a vulnerable age, not only on account of the high mortality rate but because it was commonly thought that children were particularly subject to the influence of the stars.¹¹²

In times of Calasanz the childhood education was left to the women. Fathers Castelli and Casani refer to receiving children in the Pious Schools from the earliest years, apparently understood at five years old, while in the other schools they were received from six years on.

110 Cfr CUBELLS, Francisco, *El niño según Calasanz*, en AAVV Manual de cursillos calasancios, Madrid, 1992 "Concepto de infancia en tiempo de Calasanz", p. 165-170.

111 Declarations on the Constitutions of 1637. Original text in "Archivum Scholarum Piarum" (1990) 27; Spanish translation in "Analecta Calasanctiana" (1983) 50.

112 CUBELLS, Francisco, *Calasanz y la educación de los niños más pequeños*, Revista de ciencias de la educación, nº 172, pag 123-164.

Calasanz doesn't admit children before that age because they cannot keep pace with the school and disturb the others. There has been undoubtedly discussions on the convenience of admitting children from such a tender age. In this respect, Calasanz follows the doctrine of the Fathers of the Church and the feeling and recommendations of the V Lateran Council and the Council of Trent.¹¹³ Calasanz is convinced that welcoming the least couldn't be done without a high degree of humility, as very few appreciated their education and considered incompetent and unworthy the teachers of lower grades. Calasanz struggled to motivate his religious, particularly to avoid that they left the school in search of other more brilliant chores.¹¹⁴ It is said that the least were those preferred by Calasanz who treated them with comprehension and affection. So, the declarations of the witnesses of his virtues in the beatification process include the testimony of Doctor Cristóbal de Antoni who declared: *"I have witnessed the great charity with which he used to teach the children, even the least and the beginners, whom he taught spelling"*.¹¹⁵ His humility is reflected in what he writes in one of his letters: *"Sweeping the schools of the least and teaching the Our Father would be of greater merit than to sing the Hours of the Divine Office"*.¹¹⁶

Calasanz had to struggle indeed, indoors and outside of his Order, to obtain that all the documents submitted for the approval of the Congregation of the Pious Schools mentioned that his religious were dedicated to the teaching of the least. The teaching of humanities, rhetoric and grammar was mentioned alongside the teaching the least. He had to defend this idea even at the end of his life against

113 Fr. Santha agrees that this advice of the Councils is addressed to students who are to enter the Seminary.

114 Es suficiente retener la valoración que Vives hace de la escuela cuando le comenta a Erasmo *"Siento tanta repugnancia por las escuelas que haría cualquier cosa antes que volver a estas inmundicias y tratar con críos"* – I feel such a dislike for schools that I would do anything to avoid returning to deal with kids (Epistola a Desiderio Erasmo V, 113)

115 GINER GUERRI, Severino, *"El carisma de san José Calasanz, según los testigos del procesos de beatificación"*, en *Analecta Calasanctiana*, 39 (1978) 209.

116 JOSE DE CALASANZ, *Epistolario*. Carta 2646.

those who intended to change it, as reflected in the the memorial addressed to cardinal Roma.¹¹⁷

In spite of the emphasis of Calasanz on children education “from the earliest years” we can appreciate a development in the history of the Order regarding the educational practice in the schools. Gradually, Calasanz accepted that the Institute of the Pious Schools extended its activity to higher education, as he didn’t intend to preclude the access to higher studies to the poor children of his schools who were able to face them. This openness triggered the protests of the other Religious Orders that monopolized these levels and asked the Holy See to limit the educational scope of the Pious Schools to the exclusive teaching of the small children. In fact, the work of the Pious Schools was complicated by this and other problems that soured Calasanz’ old age. Before his death, the Holy See had already suppressed the Order status of the Institute and reduced the Pious Schools to the level of a simple congregation without vows. The schools would continue to work, but with a weakened institutional support.

The recovery movement that followed Calasanz’ death implied an institutional reform that can be considered a refounding of the Institute. Fr. General Carlos J. Pirroni must be considered a real refounder of the Order, as he reached to stabilize it and to overcome the antagonism between those in favour of a radical fidelity to the founder and those who were critical and wanted a detachment from features excessively monastic of the Order. Regarding the lower levels schools there has been a certain estrangement, as they were not left but were reduced in number and less piarists were dedicated to the small children, so that a papal brief “*Nobis quibus*” of 1751 had to remind the mission of the Order, pointing out the priority of the elementary education, as the Pious Schools must teach the fundamental principles. However, the document also acknowledged the Order’s right to run high education centers. As we will see, this consolidation of the piarist ministry led the

117 Cfr. Ut supra.

Order to the peak of his expansion so that the eighteenth century may be considered its golden century. The Pious Schools continued their commitment to the education of the small children while opening to the ministry in higher education. The particular track of each school shows that in most of them there were excellent educators of children.

EDUCATING ESPECIALLY THE POOR

The foundation of the Pious Schools emerged as a consequence of the poverty seen by Joseph Calasanz among the children of Trastevere and of his strong desire of eradicating it. From its first steps in the sacristy of Santa Dorotea his work was committed to the exclusive service of the poor children. This explains the style that Calasanz wanted for his school, that had to be free, and for the members of his work, who had to be mendicants. This radical poverty of the first piarists had to be supported by alms, and had to be the testimony offered to the children and youth who were educated in their schools.

That children should never be neglected was an ongoing idea of Calasanz by which he kept faithful to the Gospel and pursued the reform of injustice in society. This is strongly stated in his Constitutions and clearly ratified in other texts. In the Declarations on the Constitutions in 1637, he states: *“Let the Prefect receive with charity the poor, even if they are barefoot or with torn clothes and without buttons, as our Institute has been founded especially for them”*.¹¹⁸ He also writes in 1638 to the Rector of the Pious Schools in Florence: *“As regards receiving poor children, you are acting saintly when you receive them because the Institute has been founded for them. What is done for them, is done for Christ; the same is not said of wealthy people”*.¹¹⁹ Finally, as already seen in the memorial addressed to Cardinal Roma, when the very existence of the Pious Schools as an Orden was in dis-

118 Cfr. LOPEZ, S. *Documentos de San José Calasanz*, Bogotá 1989, pag 301

119 Epistolario de San José Calasanz, carta n° 2812. En D. CUEVA, *Calasanz, mensaje espiritual y pedagógico*, Madrid 1973, n. 1444.

cussion, Joseph Calasanz provides the most complete statement on behalf of the education of the poor children as the most necessary for all the nations of the Christian Republic.¹²⁰

In spite of the firmness of Calasanz, the radicality of this preferential option of the Pious Schools for the poor, which implied the profession of extreme poverty by the members of the Institute, did not find in the Church the appropriate legal language for its formulation or a unanimous position among the members of the Institute. In fact, some of Calasanz' followers considered excessive the extreme mendicity of the Order for such a hard ministry as educating the small children. When Calasanz died, his religious were virtually divided into two groups because of this issue: those who intended to remain faithful to Calasanz' guidelines and those who were critical to the excessively monastic aspects that Calasanz had imprinted in his Order. With the dissolution of the Order and, then, with its rehabilitation in times of Fr. Pirroni, the papal documents found a more reconciliating language to formulate the option for the poor. The papal Brief "*Nobis quibus*" expressed this institutional option with the following wording: "*[The piarists] must accept poor children and may accept wealthy and noble children*".¹²¹ The initial exclusivity regarding the acceptance of poor children was legally amended by the Church in the final approval of the Institute. During his life, even Calasanz had to accept gradually that his schools, that had been founded for the poor, were also open to wealthy and noble children. However, their gratuitous nature remained always a prerequisite to avoid that those who most needed education were deprived of the opportunity of having a school. This open nature of the Pious Schools is indicated in the term "popular school", as a school that doesn't benefit only a certain class and is closed to others, but is open to everybody, respecting the origin and status of each person. Even when he was forced to open his schools to wealthy and noble children, he always remained nostalgic of the education of the poor, as he envisioned in it the reform of the overall society.

120 Cfr. Ut supra

121 AAVV, *Documentos fundacionales*, Salamanca 1979, pag 246.

Joseph Calasanz' charism materialized through the option of the education for all starting with those most in need. As Fr. Santha explains, Calasanz' school is marked, firstly, by a progressive sense of universality, as a school addressed to all people, a "school for all", starting with those who needed most. It is in first place an inclusive school that leaves no child outside, as it acknowledges this universal right to education currently acknowledged by the United Nations System. Secondly, Calasanz' school is marked by a progressive sense of integrality, both temporal, for all the development stages, starting from earliest years, and personal, for all the aspects of human person, starting with its spiritual dimension.¹²²

We follow Fr. Josep Antoni Miró in his comments on the evolution of the education of the poor in the history of the Pious Schools after more than three centuries and a half of Calasanz' death. During this period piarist education has kept on the lines of its founder, considering it not as an assistential work for specific situations but as a structural reformation tool through formation of children and youth for making them able to face their future and to contribute to the society's progress. The presence of a piarist school in small villages has been a focus of spiritual, cultural and material development.

Fr. Miró comments that "perhaps this political and social perspective remained eclipsed when education was not sufficiently valued as a means for a structural reformation of an unjust society. This happened when piarist pedagogy withdrew into itself and was instrumental to the interests of the powerful or forgot its founding horizons".¹²³ However, continues Fr. Miró, this has not been the dominant approach in the piarist history.

It should be acknowledged that in the eighteenth century there were some piarists who flew towards the education of noble and powerful people in the quality of tutors, just in the most brilliant period of the piarist history, when the Empress Maria Teresa of the Austrian

122 SANTHA, György, *L'opera delle Scuole Pie e le cause della loro riduzione sotto Innocenzo X*, Roma 1989, pag 25-45 y 65-89.

123 MIRO, Josep Antoni, *Notas para la formación de los jóvenes escolapios*.

Empire and the Kings of Poland requested the piarists the development of educational plans for their respective states. During the late nineteenth-early twentieth century there has been another rather institutional flight towards the then growing bourgeoisie. But even in these cases the founding orientation was kept, though in ways that could seem non appropriate today -- as, for example, the distinction between free and monitored students, or the charitable catechisms --, intended however to respond to the piarist charism.

Fr. Miró continues: “For several decades, the *hidden nostalgia* of the Order emerged firstly in the growing and greater dedication to the neediest with new works established in their own environments, an open and incarnational attitude towards the third world, and the attention paid to the “new poor” generated by current society. In the already existing educational works, sensitivity to poverty has manifested in a greater harmony with social challenges, in the rolling-out of more popular teachings, and in a general pedagogical focus in favour of the disadvantaged. In fact, the dropout of powerful and wealthy students towards other educational centres is the best proof of this positive evolution”¹²⁴.

However, for the Pious Schools the emphasis on the preferential option for the poor in all their works is an ongoing challenge, focused on a liberating education resulting in benefit of the individuals and peoples most needed. Without this key focus our piarist institutions would loose their specific identity and fundamental purpose.

“PIETY AND LETTERS”

Saint John Leonardi wrote to Paul V that the renovation of the Church had to be done among the first and among the last. The first were the members of the Hierarchy. The last were the children, who “*have to be educated from their earliest years in the purity of faith and in the holy customs. Nothing is more urgent and essential than*

124 MIRO, Ut supra

the teaching of the Christian Doctrine".¹²⁵ This concern was very widespread in the sixteenth century's Church in which Saint Joseph Calasanz was also involved. His originality was to consolidate in a special way the moral and religious education and the teaching of letters in order to achieve an integral formation of the person.

From the very beginning of the Pious Schools "Piety and Letters" has been the motto that summarized this spirit of the integral formation that was provided in the Pious Schools. In his "*Breve relazione*" (1604), Calasanz explains the detailed curriculum of his classes of letters and spiritual formation.¹²⁶ In many of his letters he repeats that the piarist ministry consists in teaching letters together with the Christian doctrine, piety and the holy fear of God.

With this approach, Calasanz acts both as a faithful and a learned Christian, committed with the integration of Gospel and life, intelligence and faith, in the new education he offers. We should remind in this regard the possible influx of the concept of "*pietas litterata*" of Erasmus of Rotterdam.¹²⁷ However, within the integral education hosted by Joseph Calasanz in his Pious Schools there is a clear priority given to piety and Christian doctrine, as expressed with the term "*praecipue*" used in his Constitutions (n. 5), that is repeated in many of his letters, while he tests other formulations that could be clearer: "*teaching the Christian doctrine together with letters*".¹²⁸ Fr. Miguel Giráldez states in a recent article that the motto "Piety and Letters" should be better rendered as "*Spirit and Letters*", a version that he found in some writings of Calasanz and that renders in a clearer way the nature of his work. Fr. Giráldez' thesis implies a new interpretation of the Calasanctian motto not in the sense that "piety" and "letters" were two complementary aspects of the Pious Schools' charism, but

125 SAN JUAN LEONARDI, *Carta al Papa Paulo V por la reforma universal de la Iglesia*, Archives of the Order of the Regular Clerics of the Mother of God. (Cfr. Liturgy of the Hours: second reading, October 9.)

126 LOPEZ, S, Ut supra.

127 CUBELLS, Francisco, bibliography.

128 *Epistolario de San José Calasanz*. Letter 3112, written to Fr. Berro in 1630. In CUEVA, D. opus. Cit.

in the sense that the term “piety” indicates the presence of the Spirit that inspires the overall educational work of Calasanz, without which the education itself would be emptied of all its content.¹²⁹

We have repeatedly quoted the key work of Fr. Santha that explains the objectives, process and resources used by Calasanz to achieve the moral and religious education of the children. We will not analyse all his contributions but mention the statements with which he opens the chapter dedicated to religious and moral formation: “*Notwithstanding the importance of the intellectual education in the Calasanzian educational system, there is no doubt that the moral and religious education of the youth has been the objective and main ministry of the new Pious Schools*”.¹³⁰

We have already ascertained that from the origin of the Pious Schools that mission has been the main reason of their foundation. The same is found in the memorial addressed in 1621 to cardinal Tonti, in which Calasanz outlines in detail the purposes of the Institute. Also the Constitutions, approved in 1622, are not but a confirmation of the same intentions and of the same purpose. Finally, the great number of letters of the Saint always emphasize the moral and religious education of the children as the main target of his Institute”.¹³¹

In the subsequent experience of the religious education of the Pious Schools the clear approach of Calasanz has always guided the educational effort of the piarists. Judging by the traditional organization of the Pious Schools, by the acts of piety practiced in them, by the testimony of public academies and by the publication of catechisms and devotional books, the education of the faith has been the principal objective of the overall teaching, focused towards the consolidation of the synthesis of faith and culture. Finally, the testimony of Christian life of many former students is a further proof of its performance.

129 Fr. Miguel Giráldez extends his study of the subject in his book *El Espíritu que el Señor me ha dado*, published in Madrid in 2015, in Ediciones Calasancias.

130 SANTHA, Gyorgy, *Op. Cit.* pag. 468

131 SANTHA, G, *Op. Cit.* pag 468-469.

It can undoubtedly be objected that the risk of formalism or superficiality has always lurked. Actually, after a deep examination of conscience it must be acknowledged that the intellectual formation of the students has been performed in a more appropriate way than their spiritual formation, to the point that it could be said that it remains a pending task.¹³² The Pastoral Symposium held in Seu d'Urgell enabled the discussion of many initiatives and experiences implemented in the last few years in the worldwide Pious Schools, but it also reflected the gaps and difficulties of the global approaches of the evangelization and education of the faith of the children and youth of our times. This insatisfaction reflects the nostalgia hosted in the heart of each piarist.¹³³

Fr. Miró ends acknowledging that *“if in the piarist works we don't revitalize this main target of our evangelizing educational ministry, the most significant note of their Calasancian identity will be dissolved.”*¹³⁴

BOOKS IN THE PIARIST LIBRARIES

We end this second section with an inventory of the philosophical works contained in the libraries of the Pious Schools of that time. This is a very valuable information on the atmosphere of the hall where the religious used to prepare their courses and to consult the texts for the development of their class notes. As intended by Calasanz, the library had to reproduce the spirit of the old desks of the monasteries, where the monks developed in silence their intellectual activities of reading, reflecting and copying manuscripts.

It is very interesting to have the catalogue of the books of philosophy that were kept in the piarist libraries. Unfortunately, there is no catalogue available of the library of Saint Pantaleon in Rome, but there are catalogues of the libraries of Narni, Fanano, Frascati and

132 Cfr. Fr. Vicente FAUBELL's speech in the Symposium of Gandía. Ut supra p. 383-391.

133 *Analecta calasanciana* (1984) 51, pag 99-402.

134 Ut supra.

Campi, as well as accounting books with the titles of the books that were procured. Also the lists of books under Fr. General's authority are available, as he kept the catalogues of all the libraries.

The first book that was kept in almost all the libraries is the "*Lib-er de pia educatione sive de cultura pueritiae compendio scriptus*" by the Carmelite Juan de Jesús María, published in 1631 and dedicated to cardinal Giustiniani, which contained tips and maxims for teachers and educators. Saint Joseph Calasanz' writings included copies of the memorial to Cardinal Tonti, the "*Apologia delle Scuole Pie*" by Fr. Castelli and the "*Difesa della Scuola Pia*" by the Lawyer Firmiani. The following bookworks were found in the library of Fanano: "*Il giovane cristiano*" by Franciotti, "*De bene ammaestrare gli figli*" by Sadoletto, "*Istituzione di una familia cristiana*" by Saint John Leonardi, published in Rome in 1591, "*De institutione cristiana*" by Joan Lluís Vives, published in Basel in 1538, "*De institutione clericorum*" by Rabano Mauro, published in Paris in 1533 and "*De consolatione philosophiae*" by Boethius.¹³⁵ The library of Narni was somewhat more complete for what regards philosophical literature. It had the "*Organon*" and "*Física*" by Aristotle, as well as "*Dialécticas*" by Boethius and Rodolfo Agrícola, the "*lógicas*" by Jacobo Carpentier, Domingo de Soto and Pedro Hispano and the "*Quaestiones disputatae*" of Saint Thomas.¹³⁶

CONCLUSION AND TRANSITION

We've got to the end of this second section in which we have outlined the development of Joseph Calasanz' philosophical and pedagogical background through his first years and his presence in Rome. We have deliberately omitted his pastoral and legal activity in the diocese of Seu d'Urgell because we consider it a parenthesis between his formation and his mission, in which he was involved in many diocesan matters that don't appear to be much related with his future vocation to education. We may anticipate our feeling that Calasanz has never been a philosopher in a strict sense, he rather mistrusted the work of

135 SANTHA, Gyorgy, *Ut supra* pag 240.

136 SANTHA, Gyorgy, *Ut supra* pag 222-223.

the intellectuals of his time. He rather appears to be a pragmatic man who reacts spontaneously before facts and requirements. He had no time to develop great theories but was able to respond with a keen insight to the emergencies, with great respect for the person and a tenacious evangelical conviction. The following could be a synthesis of his intellectual profile.

1. The spirit of Calasanz starts its formation process with the Trinitarians of Estadilla. At ten years old he left his home for the first time, with the knowledge of a child educated at the household level and in the modest school of Peralta. There he learnt to tell the stories of the Miracles of Our Lady and the elements of Christian faith. During three years in the Trinitarians' school Joseph Calasanz learnt the Latin grammar and syntaxis and might have had a first contact with the Classics. Grammar shaped in his mind the core structure of language and logic, and the Classics gave him the taste for letters. At the same time, however, homesickness due to the absence of his mother might have generated in his heart the love for a Mother who would never fail, the Mother of God. The Trinitarians' inspiration might have helped to create the Crown of the Twelve Stars, the prayer that summarizes in a wonderful way the overall Trinitarian Mariology.
2. In the University of Lleida, Joseph Calasanz has the first contact with philosophy, studying during three years arts and humanities before any further career. But he found a declining university which would hardly excite him. We can imagine a traditional programme of Thomism-oriented Scholastic philosophy which, in spite of its imperfect transmission, might have impressed in Joseph Calasanz' spirit the general guidelines of Saint Thomas' system, his hierarchical classification of beings, the supreme position of the Divine Being, the dualist anthropology of a human being constituted by body and soul, and a world organized according to Aristotle's Physics. Of this adherence of Calasanz to Saint Thomas' philosophy we find signs in his letters and in the special devotion he transmitted to the students of the Pious Schools.

3. Calasanz was Bachelor in Law and had to start Theology. After several years of arid studies, he had the opportunity to undertake a spiritual formation, the search of an affective devotion according to the sixteenth century's fashion. He first went to Valencia, then to Alcalá, to contact the teachings related to interior piety and mental prayer, as was the practice among the Jesuits. In Valencia, Fr. Cordeses had left a movement of affective mysticism that influenced Calasanz, and in Alcalá the ideas of Erasmus had been already cast away when Calasanz arrived, but they continued to influence the spirits. As restless youngster as he was, he surely followed with a certain generational complicity the reformation of the Church that was starting to change the life of Christians.
4. Apart from his acceptance of Saint Thomas doctrine, Calasanz writings leave the sensation that he didn't tolerate so much the philosophers' attitude, as if the intellectual vocation contained the seed of vanity and was inadequate for the docility demanded by religious life. His formation in the University had been mostly practical, as a man of laws, and so his pedagogical approach became also pragmatic. His concern is more about a moralistic than a metaphysical nature: he is more inclined to solve casuistic problems than to scrutinize the sense of things. However, the results obtained are not of an empty thought but of a bright reflection on the students' reality and their personal value.
5. His mystical formation was fortified by his contact with the Carmelites who provided him spiritual support and helped him to find his ministry. The Christological source of his piety and his central reflection on the mystery of the cross enabled him to focus the Pious Schools mission as a redemptive process. His mission regarding the schools is supported by the contemplative life accepted for himself and for his institute. The meditation on the passion of Jesus Christ, which he had learned from the Jesuits, grows into his spirituality with the communal and almost monastic style that shapes the piarist life.

6. The boldness that led him to exercise his apostolate among the poor people of Trastevere enabled him to experience the level of poverty of a large part of the people of Rome. He helped those who had been damaged by flooding, he took care of those suffering the great epidemics that affected the city, and met the children and youth who were wandering on streets and squares. If we add the witness of great contemporary saints as Philip Neri, John Leonardi, Camillus de de Lelis or Robert Belarmino, we can easily understand the fact that he readily found the sense of his mission after establishing the modest school of Santa Dorotea: *“In Rome I definitely found the way to serve God (in the poor children), and I will never miss it for anything in the world.”*
7. As designed by Joseph Calasanz, the Pious Schools define the concept of *popular school*, i.e. a school where no child is excluded for economic reasons. It is not a school targeted only to poor children so that a real exchange between students of different origins would be precluded, but a school in which the poor children would not be excluded. Today we would call it an inclusive school. Calasanz’ school is underpinned by a deep reason, namely his conviction that all the children have a natural right to education, a right that is acknowledged nowadays by the universal institutions of our society. There is still a theological argument that convinced Calasanz: we are all equally children of God, without economic, social, political or religious borders.
8. The feature that shows the keen insight of Calasanz is his openness to science, the announcement of a new world system that was emerging with great difficulties among the scientists of those times. There was the need to overcome resistences that felt comfortable with a system that was disappearing. Calasanz had the intuition that the future passed by the incorporation of the new knowledge, notwithstanding the inertia of the ecclesiastic hierarchy, that delivered its criticism against the new theories in the hands of the Inquisition.

9. Calasanz had reached such a great confidence in the value of his ministry that in the beautiful memorial addressed to cardinal Tonti he didn't spare praises of the work of teaching, qualifying it with superlative adjectives: "*utmost worthy, utmost noble, utmost meritorious, utmost adequate, utmost useful, utmost necessary, utmost natural, utmost reasonable, utmost pleasant, utmost grateful and utmost glorious*".
10. Calasanz not only had words of praise for his ministry of teaching the poor children but had also to answer the criticism of all those who felt uncomfortable with the exercise of his work, once they discovered its potential for changing the society. To upgrade the cultural quality of the youth had the potential of upsetting the social hierarchy. It wasn't conceivable that the poor had access to superior studies. Otherwise, who would implement the humblest services of society? The work of the Pious Schools should be restricted to primary teaching since there were other institutions working in higher schools. However, Calasanz is convinced that the right of learning belonged equally to all persons and may not be restricted by social reasons. He dedicated his life to this mission of advocating this right of the poorest. Actually, his work is not intended to upset society but to favour its evolution.
11. This was the dream of the Renaissance philosophers in their utopistic proposals: a better world where wisdom and justice overcame ignorance and inequality. The Pious Schools might be designed as a *realized utopia*. Joseph Calasanz creates a new narrative, where fiction becomes reality through the availability of his religious, capable to lead towards knowledge the dormant potential of children's intelligence. Calasanz didn't expect to create a world of wise people, but to prepare a new society where people could live by their own with a worthy work and secure a livelihood that would take them out of poverty. The better world pursued by Calasanz is rather a useful than a poetical world.

12. According to Calasanz' idea, the ministry of the Pious Schools reflects the concept of cooperator with truth. Whatever idea we may have developed regarding truth, there are two aspects that can be highlighted: its transcendence, that is offered and can be seen; and the difficulty that human spirit experiments to accept it in its fullness. The process implied in the knowledge of truth is, therefore, hard and incomplete. On the other hand, the concept of truth that Calasanz offers has a dynamic and active nature. It is inherent to truth the initiative of manifesting itself. Therefore, the idea of the cooperator with truth reflects the need of an almost priestly mediation to facilitate the work of the spirit who seeks it. This is the sense that Calasanz finds in the educator's mission: called to be a cooperator with an active truth, in order that it may enter in each spirit and in the whole humanity.
13. As the great pedagogues of his time Calasanz calls to start education from the earliest years, not with the purpose of withdrawing children from their household environment, but to secure the continuity of education. As current psychologists recall, the malleability of the childhood mind has a great capacity of learning, in particular, the core structures of language and habits. Calasanz' common sense and pedagogical intuition made him discover that the admission of the small children in his schools enabled the building of a systematic and graduated education with a uniform and simultaneous approach. The results of this kind of pedagogy would have shown its efficiency as the child grew towards a harmonious maturity. Difficulties emerged when incorporating in the school a grown up student. Calasanz wanted to submit those candidates to a previous intellectual and moral examination before integrating them in a group that had grown up with this uniform method.
14. As the fundamental reason of the creation of the Pious Schools was the education of the poor children, since the beginning Calasanz had clear the principle that in his schools

no child would be rejected because not able to pay his studies. For this reason he never asked anything in change for the service provided, but at the end of the classes he and his religious went out to beg in the streets. The poverty of the students had to be reflected in the poverty of their teachers, in order that all would share the same tightness with a sense of evangelical fraternity. It wasn't easy to keep this lifestyle that actually resulted in divisions within the Order, as it was heroic to keep up with such a hard job with a life in poverty. In fact, religious were not exempt of becoming weak or falling sick as a result of undernourishment. Calasanz lived it to the extreme of his virtue as he was a man of piety and proven virtue, but it has to be acknowledged that for the others this style was very difficult.

15. Such a hard lifestyle couldn't be kept without a strong spirit full of faith and of a steady prayer, in accordance with the Renaissance concept of a devout life. Calasanz was not far from such a lifestyle as he had approached the most important mystical schools of his time, and had benefited from the Jesuit meditation and of the love of Christ of the Carmelites. It could be said that his was the life of a righteous man. It is likely this the sense of his motto *Piety and letters*: the teaching of human matters is impossible without being rooted in the devotion of divine issues. A different sense from that of Erasmus *pietas litterata*, according to which Christian devotion had to be illustrated, based on the knowledge of the Classics and of the Bible.

We have reminded some features that provide us a spiritual outline of Calasanz and his thought. At his death, his thought showed its fertility through his work. The life of the Pious Schools has intended to be, with more or less fidelity, an adjustment of this spirit to each one of the periods of their history. The third section of our work intends to design the great features and the finest times of this transition. It is not expected to define a final model, but to leave suspension points of a narrative in which the last word is still to be pronounced.

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THE THOUGHT OF SAINT JOSEPH CALASANZ IN OUR DAYS

The third section of our work intends to record the history of Joseph Calasanz' thought as it developed in the Pious Schools throughout these four hundred years up to now. How did his work build up as a thought in action, to what extent did it keep faithful through the ups and downs of these four centuries and how did it respond to the demands of each stage. It is a work of interpretation that aims to testify the identity of the Pious Schools throughout their history, as if it were Joseph Calasanz himself who continues to speak trying to translate his work into the languages of each time. Our work will have now a rather narrative style, because apart of the classes of philosophy in which lessons of metaphysics and ethics were provided in some piarist schools and apart of the philosophical approach of some extraordinary piarists, the real thinking of Calasanz is reflected in the daily work of the Pious Schools: in the teachings provided in the schools and in the decisions taken as a response to the challenges of each historical context. This is what we intend to disclose.

We are going to travel through the four centuries of existence of the Pious Schools from their birth in Rome up to their establishment in the far off countries of America, Africa and Asia. We are going to discover how they entered Germany in large areas affected by the Reformation and how at the end of the seventeenth century they had already been rooted in Austria, Poland and Spain, always maintaining Calasanz' commitment to offer a really popular and gratuitous education. We will also see how, in spite of all the hardships,

the Pious Schools introduced the small children in reading, writing and counting, thus improving the life of the citizens. However, this humble service on behalf of the least didn't prevent some religious from reaching a commendable scientific level. The eighteenth century brought about the challenge of Rationalism and Liberalism which the Pious School faced with a dialogical spirit aimed at combining the idea of progress advocated by the learned and the conviction of Calasanz that instruction had to prepare a better world for future generations. Later changes accompanying modern world in the nineteenth century entailed new challenges within an unequal society: technician progress and a more developed life exacerbated the poverty of the disadvantaged. The Pious Schools had to face this new challenge in order to protect the popular nature of education and to prevent the exclusion of the poor. The last stages of this struggle bring us near to our days: problems are globalized and solutions ought to have a worldly dimension as well. The Pious Schools have opened their arms to the wide world offering the Calasanzian work's relevance.

THE DOWNGRADING OF THE ORDER

During the life of Calasanz the Order of the Pious Schools was reduced to the level of Congregation and downgraded to the condition of a pious association without vows. What had happened? The facts had started in Florence because of the conflict of Calasanz with Fr. Mario Sozzi, who had unjustly accused him of having taken from him some papers related to cardinal Cesarini, protector of the Pious Schools. This was followed by the arrest of Calasanz by the Holy Office and the suspension of his charge of General of the Order, being replaced by Mario Sozzi, who was appointed Vicar General. Under these circumstances, the Holy See sent Fr. Agostino Ubaldini as Visitor, who found no problem in the Order; but a second Visitor, the Jesuit Fr. Pietrasanta, decided to rule the Order in accordance with Fr. Mario. All these events were painful and humiliating for Joseph Calasanz who saw how his work was betrayed and devastated. With Fr. Mario's death problems were not settled, as he was replaced by Fr. Cherubini, against the explicit opinion of many piarists. A commission of cardinals was appointed with the purpose of exploring

the issue of the Order. The commission concluded with the recommendation of reducing the Order to the status of a congregation without vows, as the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri. The die was cast. In spite of the pleadings filed to the Holy See by the governments of Poland and Tuscany and of the memorials written by Calasanz to the cardinals of the commission, Innocentius X decreed the reduction of the Order with the Decree "*Ex quae*", whose content could be summarized as follows: the Order of the Pious Schools was reduced a congregation without vows, all the offices were cancelled, the new congregation was to be subject to the diocesan authority, the religious could pass to other congregations and new constitutions would be written by persons not belonging to the Order. The effect was devastating, as the members of the Pious Schools were reduced from 420 members to less than 200 in ten years. Calasanz lived the bitter hours of this disaster, before dying with the resignation of a saint in 1648¹³⁷.

However, which were the real reasons of such a mess? There were undoubtedly internal problems with external impacts that weighed greatly in the adoption of such hard and unjust measures. Some piarists wanted a relaxation of a discipline they judged too severe for an Order dedicated to education, the vow of extreme poverty resulted in life conditions that were too precarious and hard to keep. At the same time the Pious Schools were criticized for the lack of selection of their candidates and their scarce initial formation. It was true that the need of teachers abbreviated the time of study of the sacred subjects. Political issues also interfered, as the difficult relationships between the Holy See and the Médicis family, that protected the Pious Schools at the time. However, there were two substantial matters noted by some dignataries of the Papal Curia and by some members of the Society of Jesus, in particular. The first objection indicated that the emergence of another Order dedicated to education was superfluous as that mission was exclusively com-

137 The same year in which the Peace of Westfalia was signed between Catholics and Protestants, ending a 30 year-conflict in which almost all the European States had been involved. .

mitted to the Jesuits; the second was of a social nature, as it didn't seem appropriate to promote members of poor families. Moreover, it was dangerous for the stability of the society, because if the poor received education, who would do manual offices and take care of the vile works?¹³⁸

Fr. Mario Sozzi's problem was only the occasion for a more serious control of the institution by the Apostolic See and for its irrevocable dissolution as a religious Order. We all know that Calasanz died while his Order had been reduced to the status of a congregation without vows, as the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri. While these measures didn't affect directly the existence of the Pious Schools, these were certainly weakened by the desertion of half of their membership. It is also true that the Apostolic See wanted to amend the excessive austerity of the Pious Schools of Calasanz, after listening the opinion of a great number of piarists who didn't tolerate mendicity and extreme poverty nor the monastic-like structure of the institute. However, the result was that the institute entered a sort of overwintering pending better times that would not fail to arrive soon.

THE RESTORATION PROCESS

When Calasanz passed away, the General of the Pious Schools was Fr. Juan García, one of his more faithful collaborators, who started to work for the restoration of the Order. Pope Innocentius X was followed by Pope Alexander VII, former cardinal Chigi, a friend of Calasanz and a fan of his work, who entrusted to a commission of cardinals the work of reviewing the Pious Schools' issue. In 1656, through "*Dudum felicis*" brief, the Institute of Calasanz had recovered its status of congregation of simple vows and the faculty of electing its own Superiors. It could be said that the path of restoration had started, though the papal document contained some inputs

138 Severino Giner has synthesized very accurately all these adverse...hostile... antagonistic attitudes: «the struggle for the survival of the Pious Schools was also a struggle for the right to education of the most poor and, moreover, for the freedom of education against the monopoly of the jesuits ». *San José Calasanz*, BAC, Madrid, 1985.

intended to adjust the congregation to the new times. The matter of the public alms was revised and the theological and philosophical formation was emphasized. This amendment acknowledged the views of the most moderate current that had emerged among the religious of the Pious Schools and would appear in the discussions of the First General Chapter after Calasanz' death. This group had already shown its will of reformation during his life and intended to change some aspects of the religious life that hindered the school work: the rigour of silence, the accompaniment of the children home and the inflexibility of poverty. On the contrary, there was the tendency of those who were more attached to the memory of the Founder and wanted to keep a faithful observance of the Constitutions. It was during the Pontificate of Clement IX (1667-1669) that the final restoration of the Order took place. As a matter of fact, it was due to cardinal Rospigliosi, who had personally known Joseph Calasanz and had admired his work. So, the Pope signed the decree "*Ex injuncto nobis*", by which the Pious Schools were given the privileges of the mendicant orders, the religious profession with solemn vows and the independence from the bishops' authority. It may be said that from this moment the Order overcame its inner problems and increased its expansion to various countries, as piarist ministry was increasingly appreciated. In fact, foundations had extended to Germany and Poland, where the piarist had arrived in 1642, during the difficult times of the Swedish invasion and after the imperial defeat of the White Mountain. Very soon the King of Poland protected the Pious Schools and prevented the implementation of their reduction imposed by the Holy See. In 1662 it was already an independent province, though after overcoming difficulties.¹³⁹ The terms of Frs. Scassellati, Chiara and Fedele as Superior Generals had passed, and the restoration of the Order gained impulse and peaked during Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni's term. Undoubtedly, Fr. Pirroni

139 Actually, the Polish Piarists complained that provincial charges were appointed from Rome without knowing the country's reality. Fr. Stanisław Papczynski, man of great initiatives and critical with the appointment system was forced to leave the Order. He founded the Congregation of Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and Pope John Pope II beatified him in 2007.

may be considered the second founder of the Order, as substantially the renovation he promoted had the merit of saving the essence of the Institute though sacrificing several important lines that had been stressed by Calasanz.

FR. CARLO GIOVANNI PIRRONI

The figure of Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni excels that of other Generals of his time because of the influence he had in the definition of the Pious Schools as a religious institute. Born in Campi Salentina (Puglia) in 1640, he was attracted to the Pious Schools by the influence of his uncle Fr. Simeone. At fifteen years of age he received the piarist soutane and started a brilliant career. On one side, his communication skills enabled him to master rhetoric resources, but on the other side he was fascinated by the scientific knowledge of his time due to the influence of Fr. Morelli, who had been Galileo's disciple. Fr. Pirroni was ordained priest in 1664 and exercised the piarist ministry first in Chieti and then in Rome, in the Collegio Nazareno. He was appointed Provincial of the Province of Naples, Procurator General and Master of Juniors before being elected General at the age of 36. He exercised this key charge of the Order's Administration from 1677 till 1685.

Fr. Pirroni's concern was to consolidate the institute, after it had been rehabilitated some years before, so he tried with every means to promote the regular observance, encouraging the implementation of the vows, but adjusting them to the new circumstances. He emphasized religious poverty but tried to obtain from the Holy See the acknowledgement of the right of community property, required for the life of the Order. His style was always balanced and respectful of the religious, and emphasized the need that Superiors were always respectful of the dignity of their subjects. Fr. Pirroni emphasized always the virtue of chastity that he considered the column of the order, and sought to establish the Curriculum of Studies, that all the Pious Schools had to follow. This single curriculum for the whole Order would facilitate the adaptation of the students that changed school, and manifested the specific style of the Pious Schools. This concern led him to submit to the General Chapter of 1683 a "Ratio

studiorum” with his criteria, also applicable to the formation of the piarist juniors.¹⁴⁰

Fr. Pirroni materialized the expansion of the Pious Schools into new countries opening eight new schools, including the Pious Schools of Moia, in 1683, and others would be founded later in the Iberian Peninsula. During his term he also entrusted to Fr. Armini the writing of a critical biography of Joseph Calasanz. However, his Administration of Fr. Pirroni has not been easy, including criticism and mistrust on the part of some of his collaborators. His personal friendship with Pope Innocentius XI and his influence in the Vatican enabled him to resist his enemies and silence slanders that would have threatened once more the existence of the Order.

Fr. Pirroni had been reelected General in the Chapter of 1683, but after a year he had to resign because of an illness that prevented him from continuing his roles. The Superior Generals that followed him in the government of the Order had only to continue the lines drawn by him.

THE EXPANSION OF THE ORDER

The restoration of the Order and the new stability acquired after Fr. Pirroni’s Administration marked the launching of an expansion of the Pious Schools that some have noted as the golden century of the Order. The early years of the eighteenth century meant the consolidation of the work and its dissemination in many countries of Europe. Actually, it has been a period of great performance as the Pious Schools drew the attention of many communes and some governments that requested their establishment. The procedure entailed a contract by which the communal authorities undertook to offer board and lodging to the piarist community in return for a gratuitous education.

140 The *ratio studiorum* of Fr. Pirroni was an adaptation of the one created by Saint Joseph Calasanz for young Piarists formation. It was Fr. Juan Francisco Foci who, following the recommendations of the General Chapter of 1692, where he was elected, developed a “Ratio Studiorum for the External students”, that was published in 1694.

In the small villages where the piarists used to reside, an improvement of the intellectual and moral formation of the neighborhood was noted very soon. The Pious Schools' prestige arrived also to some courts of Europe, as in the case of Poland, Austria or Lithuania, where the kings were the first interested in protecting the Pious Schools in their territories and even entrusted to some piarists the national organization of the educational programmes. The work in the Pious Schools resulted in the formation of scholars of undoubtful reputation as grammarians, speakers or calligraphers, but also as scientists in contact with great personalities of the time. It wouldn't be correct to underline only the easy aspects of the work because its expansion had to face the harsh opposition of other religious institutes that badly accepted the competition of the piarists in the education area. The fields were marked, in the sense that the piarists had to engage in primary education and in the small and medium villages, while the other religious orders had higher education and the residence in the large cities. However, these limits could change, in particular because the piarists intended to accompany to higher education the students that were already in their schools and they had the means for it, in particular religious prepared in the scientific area. The dispute continued throughout the eighteenth century, and it extended when education in the large cities came into discussion.

The intuition of Joseph Calasanz followed its course in the schools that were founded everywhere as popular schools in which the students didn't pay anything. However, in these first times of the restoration of the Order the piarist ministry, that was concentrated in the education institution, needed a clear definition. The reason of this requirement came from the fashion of some piarists of accepting the tutorship of children of noble families. The piarist ministry, as designed by Joseph Calasanz, was at stake, as well as its popular nature. The General Chapter of 1671 faced this deviation and prohibited individual classes outside the schools. However, the piarist profile as priest, religious and teacher had to be further fine-tuned as an original synthesis resulting from the idea of Calasanz, for whom the vow of teaching was not an appendix but an essential feature of the piarist's identity. Regarding those piarists who considered that this vow had only a temporal nature, the General Chapter of 1718

confirmed its perpetual nature, in the understanding that the vow of teaching implied the vow of learning. It should be acknowledged that these arrangements were addressed to some piarists who escaped from teaching with the excuse that their pastoral mission called them to preach outside of our chapels or to confess nuns and sisters. Actually, the Pious Schools had chapels where to celebrate acts of worship with the students, but no chapel was to be transformed in a parish, with a pastoral activity independent of the pastoral with the children, because the cure of souls was inconsistent with the school ministry.¹⁴¹

THE PIOUS SCHOOLS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The Pious Schools enter in the eighteenth century with the serenity that the Administration of Fr. Pirroni had succeeded to transmit and with the confidence of being an institution loved and admired in countries that hosted them. In general, the Schools had a communal origin through a contract signed with the municipalities, under which the piarist undertook the work of providing free education to the children of each place. The Order expanded with this approach to large areas of Italy, Germany, Bohemia, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Catalonia, Aragon, Castile and Valencia. Foundations were performed in secondary populations, because the education in the great capitals was reserved to the Jesuits, who enjoyed a certain monopoly. The approval of the *Ratio Studiorum* prepared by Fr. Pirroni gradually consolidated a certain uniformity in all the Pious Schools, as all the Provinces had to adapt it to their respective schools. The uniformity of studies ensured a unity of style that highlighted the value of education. However, piarist education used the vernacular language in the first contact with the students in order to facilitate their access to a reasonable organization of knowledge. In this way, they succeeded to root deeply in each of the countries in which they were established.¹⁴²

141 The declaration of Maria Treu church in Vienna as a parish church by Cardinal Kollonitz identifies it as the first Piarist parish.

142 The establishment of Pious Schools based on foreign teachers was quite difficult, but Superiors were mostly concerned with the learning of the language of each country. Usually, difficulties were over with the first generation of autoctonous Piarists.

The Pious Schools started with primary education, that is reading, writing and abacus or practical arithmetic. This education was accompanied by the principles of the Christian Doctrine, starting by the sign of the cross. For most of the students this elementary process culminated in a preparation for the professional life through the different arts and crafts of those times. The students with accounting skills were particularly qualified as well as those with good calligraphy that could start working as Notaries. However, for some students elementary education had to lead to higher education and preparation for the university. The Pious Schools couldn't refuse to accompany those students, so the piarists were also available for that level. As a matter of fact, among the piarists there were excellent professors both in letters and in sciences, and in many cities the disputes with the Society of Jesus were not long in coming. This lawsuit should not be interpreted as a struggle in defence of personal interests but as the efforts made in order to ensure the right to freedom of education. A claim that the General Chapter of 1698 took further, to the point of demanding the right of teaching Theology in the Pious Schools. Thus, the Capitular Fathers sought to face those who intended to monopolize the higher education, arguing that the Pious Schools had been created exclusively for teaching the children.

The new dynamism imposed on the education replicated some problems that had already emerged during the life of Saint Joseph Calasanz: the consistency between the traditional religious life and the dedication of the religious to education, the definition of poverty and obedience in the light of the mission, the re-definition of the piarist as "priest-religious and teacher", the stable structuring of the formation process of the young piarists and the overcoming of the institutional weakness. Unfortunately, the seriousness of all these issues matched with protracted periods of war in which the European States were involved and which hindered the right holding of chapters and limited the participation of religious other than those of Italian origin.

The will of an accurate formulation of the piarist's status had to face frequent corruptions practiced in those times. The issue of the exclusive dedication to teaching had to be clearly outlined once more, as the importance of the priestly ministry inclined many priests to

work more in chapels than at school. The cure of souls, confessions, preaching and devotions attracted more than the school. It was even proposed to the piarists to take care of some parishes. As the charism of the Pious Schools of Calasanz was the dedication to the school, the General Chapters of the eighteenth century faced this challenge with firmness, though somehow moderately. For example, in the fourteenth General Chapter the perpetual nature of the vow of teaching was reminded because some Superiors refused to continue courses once finished their term. In this same sense should be interpreted the banning imposed to piarists of accepting the episcopal dignity, explicitly mentioned in the Profession form since the time of Fr. Pirroni.¹⁴³ Likewise, in the fifteenth Chapter it was agreed to refuse all those foundations in which the school work had no chance.

The religious life of the piarists had been affected by two corrupt practices that could be considered deviations from the spirit of Calasanz, even though both could be explained and understood. One relates to customized classes provided to students in their homes as tutors of wealthy families. Actually, members of other congregations had been requested for this service and had accepted. Obviously, poor children couldn't expect to have such a preferential treatment, nor piarists who dedicated preferentially to them could accept this ministry without diminishing the charism of the Order. In this sense, the General Chapter of 1718 had banned the custom of practicing this customized teaching. However, social and political pressures on renowned teachers of nobles and of powerful people rendered difficult the implementation of these rules. The second corruption was related to private earnings, that is the amount of money that some religious kept for them to cover their needs. While it was clearly a corrupt practice against the vow of poverty so appreciated by Calasanz, the Chapter authorized it as a potential resource in light of the political uncertainties of the time.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the political and intellectual life changed in Europe. The Enlightenment event started

143 Notwithstanding this prohibition, the Pious Schools provided 33 bishops to the Church.

to impose its influence, in particular in France and England, but the other European states' policies were also affected by the situation. The spirit of freedom of the ideas and the absolute appreciation of the reason would result in the crisis of previous values and strata. Rigour is imposed at the level of knowledge and institutions, and those lacking sufficient rationality had to be reviewed. The absolute monarchies and the Catholic Church were particularly marked by the enlightened, and the Jesuits, who had been the greatest support of the Counter-Reformation, were threatened. The Church was preparing to face this flood of rationalism by increasing piety and devotions. Worship and the cure of souls demanded a greater dedication so that the apostolate with adults in the chapels had reached its peak. In the Pious Schools, in spite of the emphasis of superiors and general Chapters on the priority of the educational ministry, it was also possible to count with a great number of preachers, confessors or spiritual directors, committed to acts of worship, assistential confraternities or simply cure of souls. The 21st General Chapter of the Pious Schools held in 1760 had to acknowledge the relevance of these events.¹⁴⁴ The item of the admission of parishes was discussed again, as since 1719 in Vienna the church of Maria Treu had been transformed in parish.¹⁴⁵ The Chapter considered the item as already assumed and established that the pastoral work should be acknowledged by right as equivalent to the work in schools.

However, the Pious School continued to be faithful to its educational ministry and to offer its schools for a free and generous formation of children and youth. This dedication provided a great number of piarists who excelled for their pedagogical, scientific and literary activity. The name of some of them should be recalled in order to appreciate to what extent the prestige of the members of the Pious Schools attained universal resonances. We must mention in particular the piarists of Moravia, where the disciples of Calasanz met the

144 Cf. FERRER, Enric, *Temas de Historia de la Orden de las Escuelas Pías*, published by the province of Valencia, 1992. pag 58-59

145 Fr. Adolphe Gröll, future General of the Order, had been its first pastor.

work of Comenius, another great Protestant pedagogue.¹⁴⁶ After the initial period in which the Italian piarists in Germany had some difficulties of adaptation and with the language, a generation of Moravian piarists emerged with a great scientific preparation.¹⁴⁷ This generation included Fr. Augustin Thomas Sakl,¹⁴⁸ of the province of Bohemia, an eminent mathematician and a friend of Leibniz, with whom he had some contacts on that subject. Some of his findings are published in the Acts of the learned of Leipzig.¹⁴⁹ Similarly, in Italy there were prominent piarists of Tuscany, heirs of Galileo's tradition, who had a wonderful performance. Fr. Giambattista Beccaria¹⁵⁰ was an excellent Newtonian physician, specialized in electricity. A friend of Franklin, he helped to disseminate the invention of the lightning rod. Fr. Carlo Barletti, a physician specialized in electricity and an advocate of the Franklinian theories of the single fluid. Reportedly, he corresponded with Volta.¹⁵¹ Fr. Gregorio Fontana¹⁵² was professor of Mathematics in Milan and Pavia. His studies on infinitesimal calculus left even Napoleon amazed. Also in Rome, the piarists hosted in Saint Pantaleon the great naturalist Giovanni Alfonso Borelli, professor in Pisa, who had written a work on the animals' movement mechanicism and had published it in Paris with the help of Christina of Sweden. He influenced many piarists and left his manuscripts in legacy to the Pious

146 Saint Joseph Calasanz wrote a memorial to justify the sending of Fr. Casani to Germany in order to ease the tension of the Italian Piarists who had been sent without knowing German. Foundations in Germany had been sponsored by cardinal Dietrichstein who had protected the Piarists and ensured to avoid the failure of the foundation. Cfr. VILA, Claudi, *Memorial de San José Calasanz*, in *Archivium Scholarum Piarum*, n° 11.

147 FISCHER, Karl Adolf Franz, *Die Piariste Mathematiker Mahrens*. In *Archivium Scholarum Piarum*, n° 12.

148 Cf. VILA, Claudio, *Op. cit.* p. 485-486.

149 VIÑAS, Thomas, *Index bio-bibliographicus*, vol. II, Roma Typographia polyglotta vaticana, 1909. Pag 17.

150 Cf. AUSENDA, Giovanni, *Op. cit.* p. 84.

151 BONASTO, Antonella, *Gli studi elettrici nel settecento. Padre Carlo Ba. Barletti*. In *Archivium Scholarum Piarum*, n° 9.

152 Cf. VILA, Claudio, *Op. cit.* p. 234.

Schools.¹⁵³ Finally, the literary field included Fr. Miklos Révai,¹⁵⁴ of Hungary, one of the great language experts of his country, so that he may be considered the creator of the modern graphical symbols of the Hungarian language: besides, as a poet and polemist he may be considered the creator of the first stylistics in the Magyar language.

FR. STANISLAW KONARSKI AND FR. GRATIEN MARX

A particular mention must be reserved to the work of two piarists who had a critical influence in the pedagogical organization of their countries: Fr. Stanislaw Konarski,¹⁵⁵ and Frt. Gratien Marx.¹⁵⁶ The former was born in Zarczyze (Poland) in 1699 and became a prominent figure as he established the pedagogical lines that were appropriate to the needs of his country. His ministry started in Krakow, Rzeszow and Random, and then he taught at the school of nobles that he had created. There he prepared his programme of pedagogical reformation for Poland, that was supported by King Augustus III and obtained the approval of Pope Benedict XIV.

Fr P. Konarski organized in Poland the first Ministry of Education created in Europe in the form of a National Education Commission. Thus he translated the spirit of Saint Joseph Calasanz who was of the idea that schools for all had to be created not only as an act of charity but as a matter of law. Fr. Konarski had the opportunity of doing so through his political influence that enabled him to advocate on behalf of the more disadvantaged and for their access to gratuitous schools. The political and pedagogical ideas of Fr. Konarsky were a combination of the spirit of Calasanz, the philosophy of Locke and the needs of Poland, a country that he intended to lead close to the model of Western Europe's countries and pull out from the foreign powers' slavery. For this reason he planned a curriculum that was based in the compulsory study of the Latin language and of the Polish folk-

153 MORABITO, Wanda, *Borelli*, in *Archivum Scholarum Piarum*, n° 12,

154 Cf. DERVASY, Mihály, *Op. cit.*

155 Cf. BUBA, Innocent, *Op. cit.* p. 315-317.

156 Cf. RODENAS, Angel, *Op. cit.* p. 361-362.

lore, without forgetting French and German. He separated Geography from History, and concluded with Polish Law. Fr. Konarski rejects the Rousseauian concept of the “honest man” that is inconsistent with the supernatural faith doctrine. On the contrary, he emphasizes that the students should communicate with the poor and provide relief, and his Rhetoric subjects always were about social reform and the labour conditions of the people that still lived under a feudal regime. In the Pious Schools, the figure of Fr. Konarski is a model of a learned piarist who attained as far as he could the Calasanctian ideal of transforming an entire country, but for Poland he is the national pedagogue and a Nation’s Founder. His death matched with the division of Poland between Prussia, Russia and Austria, and was the end of its independence.

Another piarist who deserves our consideration is Fr. Gratien Marx, born in Vienna in 1721, as his name is associated to the reformation undertaken by the Empress Maria Theresa from whom he received the mandate to develop an Education plan for all Austria, which was in force between 1775 and 1804.

THE SUPERIOR GENERALS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

It is undeniable that the eighteenth century provided the Pious Schools with Generals of a high intellectual level and spiritual deepness, who have been able to lead the piarist charism within the vicissitudes of a period of profound changes. Fr. Alessio Armini continued the reformist spirit of Fr. Pirroni, accomplishing a fundamentally institutional task as his main concern was about keeping the spirit of observance of the Constitutions and Rules. Fr. Gian Francesco Foci (1692-1699)¹⁵⁷ kept in contact with the intellectual circles of Rome as a member of the Roman Academy of Arcadia. Under his Generalate, the Order expanded towards Austria, Hungary, Lithuania and Spain, with the foundation of the houses of Vienna and Peralta de la Sal.

157 Cf. GINER, Severino, in *Op. cit.*, p. 232-233.

Fr. Gian Crisostomo Salistri (1706-1712)¹⁵⁸, a man of great spiritual wealth, targeted his efforts towards recovering the spiritual life of the piarists and fully undertaking the mission of teaching the poor. However, The Generals of the eighteenth century had also to face religious who abandoned the education ministry to engage in other works as preaching and hearing confessions outside the chapels of the Pious Schools and those who accepted to work as tutors of noble families.

During the eighteenth century the Order experiences a continued growth so that in the first half of the century the houses are already 150, in 11 provinces, including Poland, Austria and Bohemia that offered a great number of flourishing communities. But this wasn't exempt of problems. On the one hand there were disputes, in particular with the Society of Jesus, that defended its monopoly of higher education in such countries as Poland and Lithuania. This emulation was an stimulus for a steady improvement of our own pedagogy, for adapting it more to the children, to whom it was intended to reach with methods that were simple and easy to apply and with texts that were diligently selected.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the Pious Schools were going to celebrate two great events: first, the beatification of Joseph Calasanz in 1748 and, later on, his canonization in 1767.¹⁵⁹ Fr. Paolino Chelucci had already obtained to place his statue before his canonization in the transept of St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican among the founders of religious orders. Undoubtedly, these celebrations meant a lot in the life of the Pious Schools in times in which the States' governments increasingly incorporated education as one of their Ministries and were against the fact that educational institutions relied on foreign powers, as the Roman Church. The Generals of the Order faced increasing difficulties to send their messages to the religious and had to advocate their autonomy from the the interferences of the civil power, as the King of Sicily, the Grand Duke of Tuscany or the King of Poland, which anticipated the painful break-

158 Cf. GINER, Severino, in *Op. cit.*, p. 487-488.

159 In 1767, the canonization of Saint Joseph Calasanz coincided with the suppression of the Society of Jesus.

ings caused later on by Regalism. In fact, these monarchs pressured the religious Orders to dissociate from the Roman authority and to be more manageable within their own states.

The gradual emergence of the enlightened Rationalism and Liberalism throughout the eighteenth century resulted in a defensive attitude of the Church aimed at preventing potential deviations from orthodoxy. In the Pious School, Fr. Odoardo Corsini appears, an excellent philosopher and pedagogue who became General influencin the reformist groups of the piarists. He opposed the probabilistic theory of the Jesuits and sympathised with the Jansenists' ideas. However, his open-mindedness is undeniable when he interprets the Calasanctian love for truth advocating that any philosophy is neither absolutely true or absolutely false. As a result, his system was a kind of eclecticism, very respectful of all thinkers, in particular those with a methodical rigour as Descartes. In pedagogy, he advocated for a simple and easy method as Calasanz intended.¹⁶⁰ Fr. Giuria would protect Christian education against the dangers of Liberalism, so he supports the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas' philosophy and theology, struggling against the 29 dangerous propositions that had entered in the Pious Schools. The irritation of Pope Clement XIII against the teaching of these propositions by piarists led him to threaten the Order with the prohibition of higher education. The end of the eighteenth century was, however, even more demolishing for piarists. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic campaigns would destroy many piarist foundations and stagnate the expansion of the Order. Fr. Giuseppe Beccaria had to face troubled times during his Generalate and had to struggle to save schools and religious from French invasions and from the economic crisis caused by the war. He had to face a group of revolutionary piarists who sympathized with the revolutionary ideas and participated in the establishment of a French-supportive Roman Republic. Though later they were judged and dismissed from the Or-

160 See the two articles on Odoardo Corsini in *Archivium Scholarum Piarum*, n° 53. GIACOBBE, Luciano, *L'influsso filosofico e pedagogico del P. Odoardo Corsini nel Settecento illuministico del Centro Europa* and CIANFROCA, Godoffredo, *La figura del P. Odoardo Corsini insqueti educatore degli scolopi*.

der, Fr. Beccaria had to flee because considered a foreigner as a native of Piedmont. He lost all contact with the external provinces, so the Order started to break up.¹⁶¹ The Provinces of Spain, that had attained a flourishing development, cut off their obedience to the General of Rome, and were grouped in a General Vicariate of Spain.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The eighteenth century entailed the emergence of the Enlightenment phenomenon that intended to change the European society from its roots, its culture, its ideas and its policy. It was a progressive movement started in France and in England with the purpose of upsetting the whole social structure and imposing the supremacy of reason. It started among the intellectuals, who tried to improve society by removing the darkness of superstition and obscurantism and by struggling against the chains of despotism. Its enemies were immediately found in the Catholic Church and in the Absolute monarchy: the Church, because anchored in dogmas exceeding the limits of reason and imposed, therefore, certain beliefs that restricted the autonomy of thought; the monarchy of the Ancien Régime, because its sovereignty was based on the absolute power of a monarch who intended to rule society without being legitimated by the will of the people. The enlightened movement opposed these two obstacles enlightening the obscured minds through the lights of the reason: for this reason the eighteenth century is also called the Age of Enlightenment.

Through Descartes and Leibniz, Mathematics had gained momentum in the research of Physicians. With the *Philosophiae naturalis principia mathematica*¹⁶² of Isaac Newton, the first consistent system of a new science was emerging. On the other hand, the empirism of Locke, Berkeley and Hume had submitted the traditional Metaphysics to a hard criticism in front of an experience-based knowl-

161 GARCIA DURAN, Adolfo, *El P. Giuseppe Beccaria de San Ildefonso. XXIII Preósito General de la orden de las Escuelas Pías* in Archivium Scholarum Piarum n° 63 y 64.

162 Natural philosophy was the name of Physics.

edge. As a result, the enlightened thinkers, who were the heirs of so distinguished philosophers, had developed the strong conviction that nothing could resist the power of human reason. With the reason they were able to fight against the darkness of ignorance, superstition and despotism and build a better world. They, therefore, decided to instruct the minds publishing an Encyclopedia, where all the subjects of philosophy were addressed with a new freethinking orientation.

Immanuel Kant defines Enlightenment as follows: “Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-incurred immaturity.” He argues that immaturity is self-inflicted not from a lack of understanding, but from the lack of courage to use one’s reason, intellect, and wisdom without the guidance of another person. He exclaims that the motto of Enlightenment is “*Sapere aude!*” – Dare to be wise! *Sapere aude Dare to use your own intellect! This is the motto of Enlightenment.*»¹⁶³ From this viewpoint, Enlightenment intends to reach a universal formation only subjected the lights of reason, “*Thus, from the principles of the profane sciences to the foundations of revelation, from metaphysics to matters of taste, from music to ethics, from scholastic disputes of theologians to matters of commerce, from the rights of princes to those of peoples, from natural law to the arbitrary laws of nations—in a word, from the questions that touch us most to those which interest us only mildly, everything has been discussed, analyzed, or at least stirred about.*” This is D’Alembert in his Encyclopedia. The enlightened were convinced that a new world was beginning with them, and that the only thing that was needed was to open it to the people to achieve an undoubtful progress.

Actually, the social drive of this transformation was the emergence of a new social class, the bourgeoisie, which entailed the seed of change. Since the Renaissance, this social group had emerged through a productive business activity and expected to take over a power not yet available. Its strength would peak with the revolutionary spirit already seen in Holland and England before bursting into France with the Revolution.

163 Immanuel KANT, ¿Qué es la Ilustración?, Königsberg 1784.

Indeed, the Enlightenment appeared in *Great Britain* before any other country; however, it reached its highest realization in France, with its most authentic representatives, including Voltaire, *Montesquieu*, *Diderot*, *D'Alembert* and *Rousseau*. Its influence affected also other countries, such as the Italian peninsula, the German spoken countries, Poland, Russia or Sweden. In countries submitted to strong monarchies a cultural merger took place between promoters of the enlightened ideas and the absolute power of the king, who only implemented enlightened formalities but without yielding anything of his power. This regime existed in Spain, in Naples, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in Russia and in Sweden, and was called enlightened despotism. Frederick II of Prussia defined it with a short but accurate phrase: "Tout pour le peuple, rien par le peuple - Everything for the people, without the people's consent".

However, the natural outcome of the Enlightenment couldn't be other than Revolution, as the social change that entailed the destruction of the Ancient Regime was not possible without using violence against those in power. In Europe an equilibrium was maintained until the Independence war in the United States and the proclamation in 1770 of the first democratic Constitution of the world inflamed the spirits and precipitated the events. The end of the Ancient Regime, so desired and announced, was symbolically consummated with the Storming of the Bastille in 1789. The deposition and execution of Louis XVI resulted in the establishment of an ethical authority system, led by the Enlightenment leaders, who in their quality of philosophers criticized institutions such as the Church and the State that hindered free thinking. Hence, they started to condemn the religious dogmas that explained the world and its destination and subdued religion to the lights of reason. The theistic approach to an attitude of confidence in a provident God was rejected and substituted by the acknowledgement of the existence of a God, architect of the world, who doesn't interfere in the human history.

In principle, the enlightened movement was a movement of intellectuals, but supported by a powerful bourgeoisie, that considered the revolution the way to take over the power. However, how did the enlightened movement disseminate? On the one hand, by the publishing of encyclopedias and regular newspapers; on the other hand,

through societies and clubs where the bourgeoisie met, known as Societies of Friends of the Country, and the academies and halls that enabled the organization of the new institutions. In particular, the Freemasonry, a secret association, intended to counteract the power of the Church. Little by little, the figure of the independent intellectual was shaping, identified as having an autonomous thinking without bonds with any authority. This meant that among the enlightened philosophers, in spite of their common struggle against the intellectual coercion and the superstitions of the traditional religion, there were different trends. The property right or the role of society in the education resulted in famous controversies as those between Voltaire and Rousseau. However, all the philosophers agreed in following the light of reason, convinced that only the reason could ensure a much happier future. The idea of progress is the ideal pursued by this optimistic rationalism in search of a more human world. Such rationalism was not the result of a cold calculus of the speculative reason but was inflamed by an emotional and enthusiastic sensitivity.

If we take in consideration that in the second half of the eighteenth century more than 70 percent of the Europeans were illiterate, the educational project appeared as the main challenge that the enlightened society had to face. On one side, science had made substantial progress with the development of the new Newtonian physics, and, on the other hand, the Cartesian method had established the universal doubt as the way to discover clear and distinct ideas. However, these steps had not reached the people. For this reason, the enlightened were eager to learn and to teach what they had learned, so that the *Encyclopédie raisonnée des Sciences et des Arts* (1751-1765) published in France by D'Alembert and Diderot responded to this general aspiration. Through various articles, the work manifests an exceptional confidence in progress when knowledge is guided by the light of reason. Thus man becomes able to discover the natural laws of the universe and, at the same time, the inalienable rights of the person. Just as ignorance cannot obscure the progress of science, the powers of absolutism cannot reduce human liberties. The enlightened as Condorcet considered this progress as ongoing and indefinite.

Society becomes secularized and the existence of God starts to lose the relevance it had once. Most of the enlightened thinkers re-

fused traditional Christianity so they started to develop a secular culture with anti-religious and anti-clerical approaches. New attitudes appear regarding the sense of things: deistic as Voltaire, agnostic as Bayle or atheist as Holbach, but all agree that reason is the arbitrator of all human bonds, so that the French revolutionaries enthroned it as Goddess in the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris, thus associated to the light and to human progress. Adherence to progressivism results in disaffection towards the past, perceived as enclosed in a superstitious tradition that has to be abandoned; on the contrary, the empiric sciences provides a tested certainty which enables to advance towards the future. In spite of this optimism, prudent spirits don't accept the reason without a critical reflection that acknowledges both limitations and potentials. Philosophers as Kant offer a vision by which the reason appears as a human faculty open to infinite horizons but restricted to its own conditions.

Not only theoretical life must be subject to reason but also practical life. Thus, social life must be organized in a rational way, applying policies that honour the general will, through public involvement and popular vote. Moreover, society must be able to develop simple laws supporting a just and democratic governance. The French Revolution tried to summarize in a Republican motto - liberty, equality and fraternity - the ideal pursued by this new society, a secular ideal but inflamed in the fire of Christian spirit. This Republican society had its own theorists who presented it as a democratically organized society. In *The Spirit of Laws*, Montesquieu identified the true foundation of a democratic society in the separation of powers: the legislative, executive and judiciary powers ought to be mutually independent in order to guarantee the freedom of the Republic. This independence ensures a regular work of the political apparatus without the interference of one power in the others and with the possibility of a mutual control.¹⁶⁴

164 In some countries, this policy of separation of powers has caused an undesired effect: the religious power of some national churches demanded independency from the absolute power of the Pope, which resulted in such situations as the Gallicanism in France, the Febronianism or the Regalism.

The concept of social contract, introduced in France by Rousseau,¹⁶⁵ allowed to understand the legitimacy of the public power within society. The philosopher assumes that in the origins of human life there was a natural situation by which human beings possessed peacefully the earthly resources. The disputes and the impossibility of living in harmony started when private property appeared. It was then that they established a fundamental agreement by which they delivered power in the hands of the rulers. Therefore, Rousseau identifies the notion of social contract as the foundation of society, an explanation that the enlightened accepted as their own interpretation. However, the revolutionary ideal was put at risk by the economic liberalism principles that advocated for the rights of the individuals forgetting their social rights. So that the proclaimed liberty, equality and fraternity stood incomplete in their concrete solutions, and remained as a formal universalism.

Why the liberal policy led to individualism and ethics resulted in a utilitarian moral system, as advocated by Jeremy Bentham? For this system, the moral standard that guides human action is its usefulness for society, that is to say for the greatest number of people. If this is true, the educational work consists in selecting what favours a useful conduct and rejecting what doesn't support it. In other words, in recommending what makes us happier and rejecting what hinders that objective. Pedagogy and morality assume a pragmatic bias, since they are evaluated by the results. As educational efforts should, then, target the objective of a life as profitable as possible, it would be very useful to apply the principle of emulating those behaviours that ensured the persistence of good customs and the refusal of vices. For this reason the trend in education would be the narrative of fables, essays and a moralistic theater. As imitation is the way both in education as in art, the models proposed are those that are worthy of replication. Art assumes then an academic bearing and follows the classic rules, in order to influence the creation of an orderly, noble and clear spirit. Every work of art must be an example of good taste. Every reality must be embellished to avoid the appearance of

165 Actually, the concept of social contract is referred to Hobbes and Locke.

the degraded side of life. French language becomes fashionable as the distinctive expression of the enlightened world, and the rules of the linguistic and artistic academies are enforced on artists and people of letters in such a way that creativity is left aside in the educational process.

In spite of this utilitaristic framework, the philosopher who had greater projection was Jean Jacques Rousseau, who believed in the natural goodness of mankind that was perverted when becoming social. The thesis of the noble savage who has been damaged in contact with culture entailed the implementation in pedagogy of certain naturalistic principles, according to which the interests of trainee are to be respected in order that his naturally good personality is not twisted. The art of education is about knowing how to lead these initiatives in order that student may find by himself the answers to his questions and the solutions to problems he may face. According to Rousseau's description of education in *Emile*, the natural goodness of mankind is masked by hindrances of society and religion. For this reason, children must be protected against every ideological influence or prejudice that could damage them. The reflection of the philosopher informs a pedagogy that adapts to the natural rhythms and that J,H, Pestalozzi put in practice. This Swiss pedagogue thought he could solve the social contradictions and poverty through a good education. He was convinced that children were not to be given prefabricated notions, but the opportunity of learning through a personal activity, as the true objective of education is to build an integral "moral person", who puts aside its selfishness. The ideas of Rousseau encouraged a whole lot of educational approaches that call for non directive attitudes at school, so that the focus shifts from teacher to student. Under "new school" denomination they are still proposed nowadays as a challenge for old style schools.

THE PIOUS SCHOOLS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN SPAIN

The piarist foundations in Spain had to wait. After a first unsuccessful attempt in 1638 in Guissona (Catalonia) by Fr. Allachi, due to the reapers war ("dels segadors") and the Italian founder's

illness. Saint Joseph Calasanz, who had dreamt a first foundation in his diocese of Urgell, couldn't see accomplished his desire. The first foundation had to wait until 1683 in "villa de Moià" where Fr. Agustín Passante (Naples) succeeded with a first settlement in the province, followed by foundations in Oliana (1690), Peralta de la Sal (1697) and Balaguer (1700). Fr. Armini connected all these foundations to the province of Sardinia, which was approved in the General Chapter of 1692.

The eighteenth century starts in Spain with the War of Succession to the Crown between the Archduke Charles, representative of the House of Austria, and the grandson of Louis XIV of France, the future king Philip V. However, the war divided the country as Castile aligned with the French pretender while Valencia and Catalonia were with the Austriacists. It was a bloody war that concluded with the surrender of Barcelona in 1714 which ended with the "Fueros" of Catalonia and imposed a painful Law "Ley de Nueva Planta", that submitted it to the laws of Castile. The Pious Schools of Catalonia lived these events with difficulty, though not renouncing to use the vernacular language in spite of the Laws that banished its use. The demarcation's organization will be done in three stages: General Commisary depending on Rome (1706-1711), General Vicariate (1711-1731) and Province of Spain (1731-1742). By that time, the houses of Igualada, Mataró, Zaragoza, Madrid and Valencia had been established. The Provincial Chapter of 1741, held in Madrid, performs a reorganization with the emergence of the Province of Aragon, including all the houses of Spain, with the exception of those in Catalonia. These remained as a Vice-Province, depending on the General until it was established as a Province in 1751. Two years later, the province of Castile was erected.

The school was gratuitous and open to students of all social origins. They were funded with contributions agreed with the municipalities or some Foundation. The pedagogical prestige of the Pious Schools was significant. However, there were always obstacles to overcome, as the secular clergy's competition or the opposition of the Jesuits to the foundation of schools in the major cities, with which the piarists sought to bear their precarious economies.

In principle, the province of Aragon matched with the whole peninsular territory, except Catalonia, which deeply marked the Catalan spirit with a rancid tradition. The separation of the houses didn't favour it, as the religious were too sparsely distributed to constitute an assembled province. Relevant piarists include Antonio Ginés, first Vicar General of the province of Spain, Frs. Antonio Caxón and José Jericó, significant biographers of the piarists, Fr. Benito Feliu, great humanist and reformer, Frs. Melchor Serrano and Basilio Sancho, who became bishops, Fr. Cayetano Ramo, who became General of the Order and Fr. Basilio Boggiero, great preacher and patriot, executed by the Napoleonic army. The province of Catalonia attains very soon a particular personality, in spite of being constituted by schools placed in secondary towns, including Mataró, the most important. The Pious Schools even hosted a study of philosophy, with its preparatory courses certified by the University of Cervera. The first provincial was Fr. Baltasar Toneu who encouraged a scientific and humanistic spirit that was continued by his successor, Fr. Joan Balcells. The Order's historians include Fr. Josep Font.

The province of Castile had been founded in 1751 and had two important schools in Madrid, the San Fernando College and the Pious Schools of San Antón. While the nearness to the Court was an important chance, the Pious Schools didn't take advantage of it, not even after the suppression of the Jesuits. Illustrious piarists include Fr. Felipe Scío, who translated the Vulgate into Spanish.

Fr. Felipe Scío Riaza was born in 1738 in Balsain, near La Granja, where the kings had their summer palace. He studied in the Pious Schools of Getafe, wherefrom he entered the novitiate of the Piarist Fathers, studied philosophy and theology in Villacarriedo, and was ordained priest in Madrid in 1761. Fr. Scío starts his ministry in the school of San Fernando, but the patronage of Prince Luis de Borbón enables him to travel through Europe and to follow theological studies in Rome. In 1772 he becomes successively rector of the community of Getafe, Provincial Secretary and, six years afterwards, Provincial Superior of Castile.

Fr. Scío enforces in the entire province Pascal's method as the standard method for primary school and for reading, as well as the

direct knowledge of the classics for the teaching of humanities. King Charles III entrusts to him the education of his grandchildren and nephews. Having been sent to Lisbon as confessor of the Infanta Carlota Joaquina, he will be called back by the King to teach religion to the Prince, the future Fernando VII.

Acquaintances of Fr. Scío included Campomanes, Floridablanca and Aranda, which enabled him to introduce in the Government of Madrid a plan for the Reform of the Pious Schools. The glory of Fr. Scío is associated with the translation of St. Jerome's Vulgate into Spanish. Charles III made available all the manuscripts of El Escorial for a work that lasted ten years and was published in Valencia. The text provides an accurate translation and manifests a perfect knowledge of Hebrew and Latin as well as of the Fathers of the Church, and of ancient archaeology and history. A very appreciated work, with 68 editions, by an excellent filologist and a better hermeneutician. Fr. Scío was appointed bishop of Segovia in 1796, close to his death, occurred in Valencia that same year.

The attitude of Fr. Scío regarding a national reformation of the Pious Schools reflects the reformation movement that beat in all the piarist provinces of Spain and was opposed to extended conservative sectors. In the province of Aragon, the so called "movimiento de los proyectistas" (designers' movement) intended to dissociate the Pious Schools of Spain from the rest of the Order and associate them to the diocesan bishops for a greater participation in the cultural life of the country. The separation from the General in Rome would entail the appointment of a national Superior in Spain. The "proyectistas" considered that the Schools had to belong to the State and the piarist had to serve in these public centres. They would live with a modest wage in a state house with a small garden to grow their food. It was a revolutionary idea that would materialize a century afterwards. For this reason, the Holy See ordered a Canonical Visitation to the Piarist Order in Spain, that was performed by don Froilán Calixto Cabañas. Fr. Benito Feliu had acquired great prestige in the Society of Friends of the Country where the economic ideas of Colbert were commented and theological subjects were focused more critically. Actually, Fr. Feliu, Superior of the Province, was surrounded by a small group of religious who shared his position in front of an immense majority of

traditionalist piarists. He decided to stay in Valencia where the environment was more supportive of his ideas and where he could collaborate in the reform of the University.¹⁶⁶

In Catalonia, the opposition had also a particularly national bias as the innovative ideas were supported by piarists with a deep sense of the country, as Fr. Ildefonso Ferrer, while the traditionalist sectors wanted to recover the unity of the province of Spain. Fr. Ferrer was a key element in the conflict that broke out in Mataró, and had clear philosophical implications. Fr. Ferrer was the lector of philosophy when he was dismissed and substituted because of his ideas. He used to teach Saint Thomas' philosophy with an innovative and free spirit, but he replaced Aristotelian doctrines with experimental physics, the study of history and the establishment of a critical approach according to the enlightened ideas. His destitution resulted in some pressures from the municipality before the General and the King for his reposition in the charge.¹⁶⁷

The most promising moment of the Pious Schools was tinged by a dynamism of ideas that would break out in the nineteenth century when the circumstances were not the same. In fact, the ideal society that was only dreamt in the eighteenth century, would materialize in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries under many, often painful, aspects. The publication of the uniform method of the Pious Schools should be noted as the work of greater pedagogical value of the eighteenth century, as, according to Fr. Florensa, it shows the seal of the piarist methodology. Fr. Jericó had established it for the province of Aragon and Fr. Felipe Scío for the province of Castile. In Catalonia it was published in 1789, apparently by Fr. Ildefonso Ferrer. It is a real *ratio studiorum* that articulates the graduated knowledge of all the levels of the school, but is not intended to result in a detailed uniformity that hinders the free organization of each school. It rather es-

166 Cf. FLORENSA, Joan, *El documento proyectista presentado en 1798 ante la visita del Dr Cabañas*, in *Archivium Scholarum Piarum*, nº 7 y 8.

167 FLORENSA, Joan, *El projecte educatiu de l'Escola Pia de Catalunya (1683-2003): una escola popular*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans i Escola Pia de Catalunya, 2010, pag 112.

establishes a style aimed at aligning teachings with the objectives of the Pious Schools, that is, to have persons prepared for professional life. It recommends methods that are easy to apply so that the students feel comfortable learning and teachers are encouraged to work as a team when preparing and revising texts and the lessons of each subject.¹⁶⁸

BALANCE OF A PERIOD OF GREAT INVOLVEMENT¹⁶⁹

As indicated above, in this last period of the eighteenth century Europe suffered a great political and ideological shock, with the political model of the Ancient Regime marked by regalistic authoritarianism shifting to liberal patterns and the triumph of the bourgeoisie. In France it resulted in a revolution and forged the Republican spirit that would spread all over the countries of Europe. The other countries were more or less conditioned by the same events, estimating the possibilities of a liberal government with an intermediate sense of horror and sympathy.

The Church was deeply involved in this traumatic situation, and the religious orders as well. Indeed, while secular states were in search of the ideal of a secularized and autonomous society, apart from the Church that was considered a stop to progress and liberty, the Catholic regalistic governments monitored all the activities of the Church, education in particular. The different European governments, particularly those of countries under Borbonic monarchies, aimed at creating a Church that was docile to royal designs and acted independently from the Pope's power. Little by little they reached their objectives that passed through forcing first the expulsion of the Jesuits from their states and eventually their dissolution. Other orders were also left behind, so the Pious Schools didn't miss this hardship. According to Enrique Ferrer, they innerly suffered a crisis

168 FLORENSA i PARES, Joan, *Reglamentos escolares de la Escuela Pía de Cataluña*, in Archivum Scholarum Piarum 76, pag 76-95, Roma 2014. The original text in APEPC 05-20, caja 1, num. 1 published by Claudi VILA i PALA in *Escuelas Pías de Mataró. Su historial pedagógico*, pag. 887-900.

169 Cf. FERRER, Enric, *Op. cit.* p. 59-60.

of formalism, routine and lack of involvement, especially regarding the vow of poverty, when they had to face regalism in the countries where they were established. Thus, if in the seventeenth century they had to struggle for the freedom of education against the monopoly of the Jesuits, in the eighteenth century they had to undertake an even harder battle, against secular governments that integrated the education in their political state-centered programmes. However, the Pious Schools could benefit from the tolerance of some enlightened governments that appreciated their educational mission and had no other means to replace them, with the condition to dissociate from the obedience to Rome and remain dependent on the national governments. This was sufficient to move many piarists to leave the Order.

THE CRISES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The French Revolution had raised in France a new society where the enlightened and liberal spirit had developed with the support of the bourgeoisie. With the arrival of Napoleon to the power, things followed a nationalistic and imperialistic direction. The young general incarnated the revolutionary spirit, but his military genius transformed that spirit in an expansionist will that inflamed the whole country. The years of his government helped to catalyze forces around a universal project and cover them with a patriotic enthusiasm. The values of a new nation were developing under the banner of the revolution. The fact that these values were really universal is proven by the sympathy with which Napoleon was accepted in many countries of Europe before its imperialistic side was unmasked. In fact, the invasion of most of the countries of Europe by his troops changed this sympathy towards the revolutionary ideals in a sense of resistance to the invader. So the Napoleonic armies that exported the French nationalism inflamed other nationalisms in other countries, that would persist throughout the nineteenth century. Actually, Napoleon reaped the opposition of the citizens of all the countries he had invaded, and inflamed the nationalistic feeling in each of them, and even resulted in the birth of new states formed by old nationalities.

The Congress of Vienna ended the conflict that had virtually involved all the countries of Europe and established a new European

order, in which bourgeoisie would rule over the world. After Napoleon's defeat it seemed that a reactionary and restorationist thrust would have triumphed in nearly all the countries, however the liberal spirit succeeded, though with great difficulties, so that the end of the century witnessed a constant struggle that eventually culminated with a progressive establishment of liberal ideas. As a result, all the countries in Europe that had experienced the Napoleonic Wars introduced, with more or less difficulties, a new model of Parliamentary State. France continued with the Parliament established during the revolution, though initially dominated by conservatives who restored a constitutional monarchy. The subsequent victory of the liberals enabled the restoration of the Republic, whose presidency passed to a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, who with the name of Napoleon III wished to restore the Empire during some years till his defeat in the Franco-Prussian war and subsequent exile. Among the German countries, Austria and Prussia were powerful monarchies that couldn't hinder the emergence of liberal regimes that would result in a new German state project. Italy will experience a confrontation between small traditional states and partisans of a national unity that propose the romantic project of a new Italian state. In Spain, this moment was sealed by the proclamation of the Constitution of Cádiz in 1812, which imposed on King Fernand VII a short-lived liberal launch. However, a series of political vicissitudes would start during his kingdom in which conservative and liberal governments would rotate in power, against the backdrop of a civil war. In fact, the painful struggle between conservatives and liberals will result in a dynastic confrontation between Carlists and Elizabethans. The background of the three wars were two opposite conceptions of state: the traditional and Catholic state and the constitutional and liberal state. Times of truce alternated with times of confrontation, so that the emerging democracy hanged in the balance between the excesses of each other or the interventions of the armed forces as saviors of the nation.

Romanticism is the movement of this time that characterizes the passionate struggle for personal and social freedom. It's a bourgeoisie movement resulting from the discovery of the history of the own country and the inflamed admiration of its heroes. Its referrals are found in the medieval origins of each place, with an emotional

adherence to its language and history, but it also reflects the freedom of an individual conduct not limited to the accomplishment of rules. Romantic behaviours are fanatic and excessive: in the case of libertines, to transgress the law; in the case of Christians, to defend with passion the religious sense. No wonder if it also leads to an exclusive nationalism, nourishing a worrying particularism against the other nationalities. The bourgeoisie world found in Romanticism the language and feeling that reflected its identity. The concept of nation led the bourgeoisie society to find its original epic, which helped to raise institutions and symbols that became the crucible of a renewed national culture. The development of its own features, as language and history, was encouraged by will and feeling. From a philosophical viewpoint, the system that best interpreted the Romantic movement was the German Idealism, that left aside the limitations of the finite reason and preferred a thinking that was open towards the infinite. Fichte, Schelling and, in particular, Hegel, represent the progress towards an infinite fullness that human spirit can reach. Fichte creates it from the dialectic of the will, Schelling finds it as an oceanic Infinite through feeling, and Hegel gives a rational nature to this Divine Infinite that develops dialectically including the whole reality. This totality eventually coincides with itself as Idea, Nature and Spirit, with the State as its objective manifestation. The influence of Hegel in the German world was very significant, as his thought incarnated in the Prussian State, but reached further, becoming an interpretation of History.

This romantic and bourgeois conception of the early society of the nineteenth century reflected the power of the emerging Bourgeoisie that had succeeded to raise the flag of liberty and democracy; however, the revolution of equality and fraternity was still pending. The liberal society expected to establish liberty in all the areas of civil life: political freedom, liberty of thought, liberty of expression and economic liberty, but the latter was based on two principles that regulated the market, namely the principle of free competition and the principle of supply and demand. The combination of both resulted in an enormously unequal situation, because everybody could equally compete but the value of individuals and things didn't rely any more on themselves but on the vicissitudes of supply and demand, which di-

vided the citizens into two antagonistic groups by the power of money. The bourgeois society was an industrial society and, as a consequence, two classes emerged as opponents in roles and capacities: capitalists and producers. The social and political development gained by the French revolution was insufficient to solve the challenge of the opposition between bosses and workers. Some started to think that a new revolution was needed: a proletarian revolution. In fact, among the early revolutionaries a group of dissenting had emerged advocating the creation of a communist society, where people would hold all their goods in common, so that injustice would come to an end and equality would be imposed: Saint Simon, Owen, Fourier, Blanc or Proudhon were the philosophers of this movement that was known as utopistic socialism. However, the emergence of Karl Marx and the Communist Manifesto in 1848 channelled the revolutionary burst. From this moment, Marxism had the lead and was erected as a Utopia to be materialized through the class struggle. The Communist Party, that according to Marx wasn't anything else but the working class transformed into a political force, should be the manager of the new humanity. With the elimination of the private property of the means of production peoples would eventually reach equality within a just society. Of course, Marx doesn't understand the new society as a society of nations, for nations are only a bourgeois invention to deviate from the true issue. In his conception, only two nations exist: the one of the owners and the one of the workers. And the objective is the creation of a new communist society, where all the differences would have disappeared. To attain this purpose, a previous and radical stage had to be accomplished, namely the proletariat's dictatorship. That is to say that once power is conquered and the private property of the means of production is abolished, the bourgeois recovery must to be hindered and, consequently, all the reactionary elements that alienate human conscience must be uprooted. The latter include political parties, ideologies and religions, described by Marx as the "opium of the people". Thus Marx and the Communist Party gave wings to the workers' revolution that broke out in 1848. While the revolutionary claims regarding the seizure of power were not accomplished in that date, Marxism continued its course seeking to assemble worldwide workers under its flag. Obviously, with the opposition of the bour-

geois class, but also of the Church, which condemned its Materialism and Atheism.

A third element must be still taken into consideration for a comprehension of this nineteenth century so convulsed and full of promises: the vertiginous progress of science. Physics, chemistry, biology, medicine, psychology, history and human sciences progressed dramatically. The scientific findings came one after another and built an unprecedented world, where communications would be faster and more frequent and there would be light even during the night. Technics started to impose its pace, and progress nourished the conviction that only science had the key of truth. The positivist philosophy claimed the abandonment of all metaphysical thought that was built on empty concepts, as well as every religious faith that was only the fruit of a childhood stage of human conscience. This positivism, with all its nuances, became widespread in the intellectual field and was a further obstacle to a humanistic conception of life and to the religious thought.

In the first half of the nineteenth century the German and French universities provided the main figures of the universal philosophy. Some became epigones of Schelling or Hegel, others tried new and unexplored paths, with scarce academic impact. However, two schools seemed to excel, namely the Rationalistic Idealism of a speculative orientation, and the Antimetaphysical Positivism that enthroned science. Neither offered a concept of human being advocating its spiritual value. On the one hand, Hegelianism considered it a member of a state from which it received its truth and *raison d'être*; on the other side, Positivism reduced it to a mere fact, to a phenomenon that could be explained through a scientific discourse. Neither the totalitarian spiritualism of the former nor the materialism of the latter could be a satisfactory response, from a humanistic viewpoint, for an education that honours the person.

THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In spite of all the difficulties, overall the Pious Schools had held true to their charism and found an easy way to integrate with the

simple people. In populations that required their service and provided them with security, piarist religious accepted to exercise their ministry. As a matter of fact, their establishment in Italy, Spain and Central Europe increased and their assistance was appreciated. The restoration that followed the Congress of Vienna sought in the past, in pre-revolution times, an inspiring element of a Christian civilization. A mention should be done in this sense of Chateaubriand and his work *The genius of Christianity*, in which the piarist mission is praised and proposed as model of a future world.¹⁷⁰ However, the boom of liberalism and the triumph of the bourgeois carried a rather anticlerical and secularist brand. In countries where liberalism managed to dominate, it imposed a programme of secularization of the ecclesiastical means, with a widespread disentanglement of properties of the Church and of the Religious Orders, and at the same time it established an increasing statalization of the education. In all these vicissitudes, the Church chose the option of confrontation, which resulted in an increasing physiological divorce from the modern world. The challenge of laicism and secularism was not assimilated by the hierarchy, which remained shut up in its castle of dogmatic certainties and anathematized the struggle for liberty and justice with condemnations issued by the high instances of the Vatican.

Placed by its popular approach between the Church and the people, the Pious School suffered this tight situation. In particular, throughout the nineteenth century it had to bear the break-up of its

170 CHATEAUBRIAND, *The Genius of Christianity*, book VI, ch. 5, Flammarion, Paris 1966. The text reads as follows: “*The Benedictine, who had studied every thing, the Jesuit, who was acquainted with the sciences and the world, the Oratorian and the professor of the university, are perhaps less entitled to our gratitude than those humble friars who devoted themselves throughout all Christendom to the gratuitous instruction of the poor. “The regular clerics...clergy of the pious schools undertook, out of charity, to teach the lower classes reading, writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping. They likewise taught not only rhetoric and the Greek and Latin languages, but in the towns they also kept schools of philosophy and theology, scholastic and moral, mathematics, geometry, and fortification. When the pupils have finished their lessons, they go in troops to their homes under the superintendence of a religious, lest they should waste their time in playing in the streets.”*”

institutional unity, when Spain obliges the Pious Schools to constitute an Vicariate independent from the General in order not to be submitted to the orders coming from another country.¹⁷¹ However, the Pious Schools grew weaker in Italy, Poland, Germany and Bohemia, resulting in the disappearance of some provinces, as Sicily, Lithuania, Rhineland and Bohemia-Moravia. Notwithstanding all these vicissitudes, Fr. Enric Ferrer states¹⁷² that the nineteenth century has not been an overall failure of the Pious Schools, as in spite of its reduction in numbers until mid-century they greatly recovered before the starting of the twentieth century.

Which were the most relevant events? We must analyse them in each of the three areas in which the Pious Schools had been established: Italy, Central Europe and Spain. The events have a common denominator, with different nuances. Italy will be conditioned by the process of national unification that peaks in 1870 with the surrender of the Pope and the crowning of the first King of Italy. Overall, the ideologists of this process were liberal, more or less anti-clerical. Though the priests Rosmini and Gioberti intended to instill a religious spirit in the unionist claims, the official Church's resistance to changes favoured the movement of the Carbonari and the radicals. From 1870, the Pope remained confined in the Vatican, considering himself a prisoner of the Italian State, thus promoting among Catholics a conservative attitude which lasted long. Some piarists had an active participation in the "Risorgimento italiano" and had to endure the persecution of the Church. Noteworthy is the involvement of Fr. Venanzio Pistelli, who had joined the Pious Schools after having been dismissed from the army for his liberal ideas. He was considered a patriot piarist when announcing the end of the temporal power of the Pope, even after the proclamation of the dogma of the infallibility of the Supreme Pontiff by the Vatican Council I. The ideas of Fr.

171 Organization of the religious orders in General Vicariates was not exclusive for the Pious Schools, but for all the religious orders. The Holy See had difficult times with the occupation of its territories by the French troops, and accepted this imposition of Spain under the guarantee of a Catholic King.

172 FERRER, Enric, *Op. Cit*, pag 62.

Pistelli were too advanced for his time, whereby he was persecuted and refuged in Urbino, where he was suspended a divinis by the local Archbishop.¹⁷³ The General, Calasanz Casanovas, preferred to calm the situation and to wait for time to settle things. Actually, Fr. General's power had been restricted to a few premises in Saint Pantaleon, mostly occupied by the municipality of Rome.

The Central European countries lived various processes: under the influence of liberal and secularist governments, Bohemia and Austria separate from the Roman obedience and the Pious Schools loose the influence they had exercised in the previous century. Poland suffers a deep crisis due to the division resulting from the occupation of Prussia, Austria and Russia, so that the Pious Schools loose a lot of its members and are forced to close several schools. In contrast, in Hungary the Pious Schools become identified with the nationalist cause, and their influence will be critical in the flourishing of the Magyar language and culture.

Once finished the Independence war, the Pious Schools of Spain witness a period of expansion through some foundations, including the San Antón College in Barcelona. Afterwards, however, they will have some complicated times, with its separation from Rome and its establishment as a General Vicariate within a centralist and secularist State. The work of the enlightened of the previous century was already a sign of the intention of a control of the Church by the State, but in the nineteenth century those liberal ideas were fully implemented with the secularization of the ecclesiastical goods. The Church and the Religious Orders were twice alienated from its properties and goods. First, the decrees of the Minister Mendizábal in 1836 decided the expropriation and sale of the goods of the religious orders that had been extinguished the year before by the liberal government;¹⁷⁴ later, the

173 QUATRINI, Ilvano, Venanzio *Pistelli, lo scolopio patriota*, en *Archivium Scholarum Piarum* n° 79.

174 Public finance was exhausted, so the disintailment and sale of the non productive holdings of the Church were aimed to enrich the emerging bourgeoisie. Unfortunately, not the bourgeoisie but the great landowner bought the holdings, thus increasing social inequalities.

plan of Minister Madoz in 1855 culminated the disentanglement process. Two years later, in 1857, the so called Moyano Law would regulate for the first time the Spanish education, acknowledging the public and gratuitous nature of the Primary education and establishing the creation of Secondary schools in each provincial capital. The law allowed the religious education; however, the economic restrictions rendered impossible an education totally free. The piarists had to adapt to the new situation extending the time of study for those requesting it, asking in change a payment for funding the entire educational work. This started in piarist schools an irritating distinction between gratuitous and monitored students. As this distinction couldn't be implemented secretly, the difference between students became flagrant. Nevertheless, the Pious School could benefit from the assignment by the local governments of new premises for its schools, that were old convents provided by the State for charitable works.¹⁷⁵ The assignment of these buildings could be interpreted as a favourable treatment of the liberal governments towards the Pious Schools because of the usefulness of their mission, but it wasn't a completely disinterested action, as the public authorities hadn't sufficient schools for a self-management. However, it should be said that the liberal focus of the Pious Schools was acknowledged and this was the reason why, in spite of the persecutions and uncertainties of those times, their work grew in Spain.

THE LIBERAL STYLE OF THE PIARISTS

The Spanish thought wasn't emerging. Spain languished in an irrelevant thought that extended the topics of a scholasticism just renewed. The philosophy of Balmes or of Donoso Cortés interpreted the common sense of the tycoons' class ruling the country. Little developments were to be expected in the educational world, when in Europe new systems were starting to be tested. Just the figure of Francisco Giner de los Ríos who had created and directed the Free Institution of Education and promoted other projects as the National Pedagogical

175 This assignment cannot be considered a privilege but a normal routine. Many old convents became squares, theatres or civil institutions in the urbanization plans of many cities.

Museum or the School camps. Little can be said of the piarists who remained stuck to their traditional methods, with the exception that their teaching was very respectful of the person of the students. We can mention at least the contribution of Fr. Francisco Ferrer in the teaching of arithmetic, and the work of Fr. Jacint Feliu in the transformation of the training curriculum of Baccalaureate teachers, with an emphasis in the study of mathematics. All this interest for education resulted in the publication at the end of the century of a good edition of texts for the different grades of the Primary school.

As we have said, the liberalism of the nineteenth century rolled out notwithstanding the opposition of the Church that saw in this ideology a rationalistic and anti-clerical component, capable of demolishing the Christian Faith's principles. In this sense, Pope Pius IX didn't hesitate to include it in his *Syllabus* among other perverse ideologies. However, nothing is more human than the love of liberty as without liberty the human being cannot become a person. As a result, a humanistic school could not disdain the education of liberty. Not in vain, a century later the II Vatican Council would proclaim its necessity and would acknowledge it as core right of politics, economy, thinking and religious option. When Pius IX wrote the *Syllabus*, it is interesting to note that Rosmini wrote his *Saggio sull'unità dell'educazione* (Essay on the Unity of Education), where he asserts that there are no lasting models, as specialized knowledge fractures the unity of knowledge, however salvation only can come from education. Rosmini says that there is an order outside the spirit that education must transform in an order of knowledge and of emotional life. Rosmini found this unity in the Christian faith, considered as a true enlightenment.¹⁷⁶

It should be recognized that the Pious Schools have always treated its students in a spirit of great respect for their capacity of choice, without violence, but rather reflecting a great confidence in the person that is emerging in each student. For this reason, piarists have always shown a liberal style through an education that always respected

176 GIANFROCA, Godoffredo, *Un omaggio a Antonio Rosmini revisitando l'opera giovanile*: "Saggio sull'unità de l'educazione", in *Archivium Scholarum Piarum*, n° 58.

the person of the student. This doesn't mean that all the piarists of all the communities were liberal with the same enthusiasm: some were more or less conservative; others, more or less progressive, but the latter excelled.

This is confirmed by the following fact. Fr. Eduardo Llanas, a piarist from the Province of Catalonia, had dared in this polemic time after the pontificate of Pius IX to publish a book entitled: “¿Es pecado el liberalismo?” (Is Liberalism a sin?),¹⁷⁷ in reply to the conservative preaching of Mossén Félix Sardá y Salvany, who in 1884 had published a booklet entitled “*El liberalismo es pecado*” (Liberalism is a sin). Actually, Fr. Llanas' work is a commentary of the Enciclical of Leo XIII “*De libertate humana*”, in which the condemnations of Pius IX's *Syllabus* are nuanced. A distinction must be made between liberalism understood as the acknowledgement of the human liberty infused by God in nature, which is the foundation of the person's dignity and the source of moral life, and liberalism understood as an evil use of this liberty resulting in secularist and anti-clerical attitudes. It is, therefore, possible to speak of liberalism and of liberal politics aimed at common good, fully consistent with Christian faith, even if criticized by the conservative faction of Catholics. Fr. Llanas showed the boldness of this liberal practice in education, as he himself encouraged multiple initiatives as cultural trips with the students, targeted to the study of Geology or Paleontology, moved by topics discussed at that time on the origin of mankind. Ricard Vela, author of the preface of the book entitled *Guia literaria de Catalunya* (Literary guide of Catalonia) describes Fr. Llanas, then superior of the School of Vilanova y la Geltrú, as a passionate reader of Darwin, Spencer and Hegel. During Lent, he used to substitute sermons with scientific conferences in which, for example, he demonstrated that the earthquake in Andalusia had been the result of vulcanic causes and not sent by God in punishment for the sins of the people.¹⁷⁸ As Vicar General he promoted the renovation of the schools with the creation of libraries, laboratories,

177 LLANAS, Eduardo, *¿Es pecado el liberalismo?*, Librería-Bazar de Juan Pujol, Barcelona 1888.

178 Ricard VELA, *Guia literària de Catalunya*, Barcelona Àtic dels llibres, pag 151.

museums, gymnasiums and different areas for specialized studies. In any case, his religious profession and Christian faith did not withdraw him from the challenges of his time.

THE BOOM OF THE NEW BOURGEOISIE AND THE SOCIAL QUESTION

The last third of the nineteenth century was marked by the boom of the bourgeois class that had become wealthy with the industrial revolution in most of the countries of Western Europe. Industries were flourishing and with them the economic and business activity. Cities embellished with new urbanistic plans that anticipated a happy future and social welfare, there was light during the night and communications became faster and safer, shortening distances between cities and increasing relationships and trading among peoples. The economic wealth of some families resulted in a new lifestyle, without renouncing any progress of modern technology. A new world was emerging in which the cities opened up to more breathable areas, with tree-covered streets and walking parks, while multistory buildings constructed with iron and concrete changed the sight of the cities. Also in the outskirts and in large river basins, industrial areas were established with large communities of working families engaged in mining, siderurgical or textile production, which resulted in an increase of consumer goods and in the production of wealth that, however, was not well distributed. Thus, the apparently happy society of the late nineteenth century was shocked by a long-lasting confrontation that didn't find a just solution by that time.

We can, therefore, say that the might of the enriched bourgeoisie had its counterpoint in the workers' class situation. A crowd of households had abandoned the rural areas and searched their livelihood working in factories. They assembled close to large cities or industrial areas. As a matter of fact, the life of the proletarian class was harder, as working conditions were dictated by the law of supply and demand which resulted in imbalances and the natural stress between two opposite classes. This situation had initiated the issue known as "social question", which violently broke out in 1848. In all the industrialized countries of Europe, workers raised with social claims fuelled by

the communist party. However, the revolutionary fever ceased soon and conservative regimes prevailed in all the countries, as the regime of Napoleon III in France. This failure deeply concerned Marx who thought a more in depth reflection was required to amalgamate the working class. An Assembly of the First International was convened in London for all those who shared the idea of a revolutionary change. The meeting, however, didn't reinforce the wishes of unity, as besides Marxist communism there were other ideologies that encouraged a direct action against all kind of power. The anarchists, with a lack of party discipline and with an assemblyist style, focused their actions against the owners' interests and lives.

The Pious Schools that were present in several countries lived this situation in different ways. While the provinces in Spain lived a strong creative thrust that led them to establish new schools and to launch foundations in Latin America, those in Italy and Central Europe lived less enthusiastic times. Only Hungary was different, with a stronger impulse than the other provinces. Undoubtedly, the division of the Order affected greatly the implementation of major joint projects. The scarce communication between the Vicariate of Spain and the General restricted manoevrability of the Order and weakened its management ability to re-create its specific charism, while on the contrary other congregations multiplied their projects.

THE PIOUS SCHOOLS ADAPT TO THE NEW TIMES

How, then, could the Pious Schools keep faithful to the Founder's charism against the challenges of the nineteenth century? How did the preferential option for the poor and the least allow to work according to the spirit of letters and piety?

The new foundations seemed to follow standards dictated by an increasingly demanding bourgeoisie that preferred to dwell in open and bright areas. The size of aired classrooms and the height of their ceilings were established by the pedagogical guidelines of that time. The new buildings were constructed in the outskirts of large cities, in cleaned up areas and with extended horizons, and they looked magnificent. Specialized classrooms were built in all the new schools, such as laboratories, museums and gymnasiums, so that the bour-

geoisie's children could receive a careful formation. Not in vain many of the notables in each country would pass by the piarist schools. The Pious Schools' prestige was also associated to the good reputation of some of their educators who excelled in some particular science. The teachers of the provinces of Bohemia-Moravia and of Tuscany attained a well-known reputation. It is worth mentioning the discovery of the combustion engine by Fr. Barsanti or the work of Fr. Pendola, founder of the Institute for the education of the deaf and dumb in Siena. We should also note that next to the schools there were boarding schools, which allowed education to the students of rural areas who in those times had no resources. The children of landowners were educated in these boarding schools, thus integrating with the customs of the bourgeoisie.

However, the challenge of poverty continued to call at the Pious Schools' doors claiming for fidelity to their charism. Due to destitution many children and youth had to start working in factories to improve their household livelihood and, as a result, they abandoned school at an early age. Young workers were not supported by a society that had become inhospitable. The awareness of this issue awakened many new founders of congregations who found their charism where Calasanz had found his. Don Bosco founded the Salesians with the purpose of tackling the disorientation of the youth in the modern city extending the education to the professional area. Actually, Don Bosco was inspired by the Pious Schools, but he perceived a different aspect of the charism of Calasanz, hosting the children and youth of the working class and qualifying them for work. However, let's mention those congregations that explicitly acknowledge to be inspired by the charism of Calasanz and can therefore be considered part of the Calasanctian Family. The Cavanis Institute, founded in 1802 by Fr. Antonangelo and Fr. Marcoantonio Cavanis in Venice, pursued the same educational objective of the piarists. In 1820, the congregation of the Sisters of the Christian Schools of Vorselaar was founded in Belgium. Paula Montal founded in 1829 in Figueras the Daughters of Mary, sisters of the Pious Schools (piarists), for the education of the girls that up to that moment had been neglected. In Sabadell she had the support of Fr. Agustí Casanovas who encouraged her to adopt the same Constitutions of Saint Joseph Calasanz.

In Marseilles, Fr. Timon-David founded the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1852, inspired by Saint Joseph Calasanz, whose biography he wanted to write. Later on, Fr. Faustino Míguez founded (1855) in Sanlúcar de Barrameda the Institute of the Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess. In 1889 Celestina Donati founds in Florence the Institute of the poor daughters of Saint Joseph Calasanz (Calasancians). In 1830, Fr. Antonio Provolo founds in Verona the Company of Mary for the education of the deaf and dumb, known as Provolo Institute. Finally, in 1889 Anton Maria Schwarz founds in Vienna the Congregation of the Kalasantiner, for the formation of Christian workers.¹⁷⁹

Apparently, the calls to keep alive the piarist charism come more from outside than from inside of the Order. However, it would be unjust not to recognize that the Pious Schools continued to host a certain number of gratuitous students as far as it was possible to each school. As a matter of fact, the possibilities were precarious without the help of the local governments. Piarists managed to find the resources that were required to maintain the schools and to have a handful of gratuitous students in every class. It has been commented above that this amount came from a supplementary hour provided to the students who wanted to receive it and paid for it. It was an hour not regulated in the educational plans of the State in which it was allowed to study or to perform special formative activities with these students, called “monitored” students because they stayed at school an additional hour. In exchange, the schools could accept a certain number of gratuitous students whose teaching was covered with this complement: the distinction between each other was visible and eventually became uncomfortable.

The actions undertaken by the Pious Schools to respond to this new challenge of serving the popular classes included the opening of new ways of formation with the purpose of integrating better the

179 The multiplication of religious congregations with the same charism explains this innovative spirit, but it also explains the scarce confidence in the religious orders, that were too complex and distant to guarantee the full accomplishment of their objectives.

students most neglected. The society had changed its records and the schools focused their objective on training the students for the jobs that the society offered. With this purpose, accounting was introduced as a subject, and business studies started to emulate literary and scientific studies that had been so appreciated to that moment. Calculation and calligraphy continued to be appreciated in the Pious Schools because of their commercial usefulness. The decision of valorating commercial studies marked a new style in the piarist schools, as next to the museums and scientific laboratories there were classrooms prepared for the study of trading goods.¹⁸⁰ A simulation of businesses was already practiced, and many of them were visited in collaboration with the entrepreneurs.

The end of the nineteenth century was marked by the figure of Pope Leo XIII, an intelligent and very bright man with a great capacity of analysing the time he happened to live in. His Pontificate was innovating in the social area with his Encyclical *Rerum novarum* and encouraging of many associating initiatives among Catholics. Many priests and religious became interested in their intellectual formation. The Benedictines and Capuchins were in the lead, but piarists didn't lag behind. Fr. Llanas created the Calasancian Academy to welcome these concerns and Marian Congregations were created in the Pious Schools with the purpose of interesting the youth in their personal formation through study circles.

THE JUMP TOWARDS AMERICA

Without any doubt, sensitivity towards the poor raises also a missionary sensitivity, as sowing the piarist seed in other continents reflects the decision to extend the spirit of Calasanz to other Trasteveres that need culture and evangelical spirit. Throughout the nineteenth century there were some attempts of foundations on the other side of the ocean. These were ephemeral foundations because performed through the action of solitary religious who escaped from the political

180 A commercial science that studies trading goods, objects made by man for covering his needs.

situation in Spain.¹⁸¹ In 181, the Calasanctian Academy was founded in La Habana, and from 1835 on in Montevideo (Uruguay), Camagüey and Bayamo (Cuba). Though these first foundations didn't take hold and the religious who had started passed to the secular clergy or went back to Spain, some tracks had remained that would facilitate the institutional foundations that were performed as of 1857.¹⁸² Significant is also the testimony of Ignatius Domeyko, former student of the Polish Pious Schools, who emigrated to Chile after his expulsion from Poland by the Russian authorities that ruled the country. In Chile he undertakes an educational work inspired by the Pious Schools of his homeland and requests the piarists to go to Chile to found the Pious Schools in Latin America. The lack of personnel hindered the implementation of the project.

The General Vicariate of Spain had founded the Normal School of Guanabacoa and the school of Camagüey in Cuba, the schools of Buenos Aires, Tucumán and Córdoba in Argentina, those of Concepción, Copiapó and Santiago in Chile, in Panamá, depending on Colombia, and in Puerto Rico. These American foundations had been implemented by the Vicariate through the Generalate's religious, that is a group of piarists who from the first profession had chosen to depend on the General Vicariate of Spain. It was an idea of Fr. Calasanz Casanovas that materialized during the generalate of Fr. Manuel Pérez. In this way the General provided the Vicariate with religious willing to go to America and with formators prepared to integrate the Central Houses where the piarist juniors studied. This initiative of the Generalate's piarists had started in 1885, but the experience lasted only twelve years until they were dissolved in 1898 when they integrated into their respective provinces.¹⁸³ The schools in Cuba were entrusted to the Pious School of Catalonia, maybe because of the great number of "indianos catalanes" (Catalonian Americans) that had transferred to the island

181 In Spain, the Toreno Administration had dissolved in 1935 the religious orders that would be restored in 1851 under the Concordat with the Holy See.

182 Cfr. FERRER, Enric, *Op. Cit.* pag 78.

183 The figure of the Generalate's piarists generated a juridical issue because they didn't belong to any province, which was not normal according to piarist profession.

for business or perhaps because of the influence of the bishop of Santiago de Cuba, Saint Antonio Maria Claret, who had known them in Barcelona. The schools in Argentina and Chile were entrusted to the Pious Schools of Aragon. So, all the foundations that had been done on behalf of the Vicariate of Spain were transferred to the provinces.

The jump towards the American continent entailed a new challenge for the Pious Schools that started a development that would last throughout the XX century till they reached full maturity. The American populations welcomed the presence of the piarists who ensured a quality education as the one provided in the peninsula and helped the development of youths eager of preparation. However, the American foundations suffered from the same weaknesses of the peninsular schools. In their great schools built in the style of those of the peninsula, the American Pious Schools formed a great number of “criollos” (creoles), Spanish descendants who had attained power with the Independence, but were far from the poor and the indigenous.

THE CONFLICTS OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The twentieth century started full of promises for Europe, for the Church and for the Pious Schools. For Europe, because apparently a time of stable peace was starting, notwithstanding the underlying conflicts. The cities grew with a romantic impetus, under the influence of “l’art nouveau” and lived fascinated by “la belle époque”. However, the social problems that had already emerged in the previous century became more articulated in various ideologies – socialist, anarchist, republican, democratic – with a Christian background, and ultraconservative. This organization of the political life radicalized the attitudes and their confrontation resulted in attacks, violence and general unrest.

Conflicts erupted with the First World War which included the whole Europe, except Spain and the Nordic countries and the United States of America. The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917 marked during about one century the life of the whole country and exercised great influence in the European politics. In fact, the armed conflict was extremely bloody and resulted in an ephemeral peace,

as the harsh conditions imposed on Germany encouraged its thirst of revenge. Indeed, at the end of the war the European countries' borders were revised and the Austro-Hungarian Empire was broken-up into the nations that composed it. So, Czechoslovakia and Hungary recovered their independence and Romania and Bulgaria emerged in the Balkans, next to Yugoslavia, as a synthesis of the Southern Slavic countries. In the North, Poland reemerged independent and the three Baltic Republics gained personality. However, in 1929 the New York Stock Exchange was threatened by a great world economic crisis that revealed the fragility of the moment. The crisis challenged the democratic systems of the whole world with the emergence of several dictatorships, including Primo de Rivera's in Spain, or of authoritarian ideologies, as Fascism in Italy and National Socialism in Germany, which nothing good anticipated. In Spain, the dictatorship resulted in the proclamation of the Second Republic and in a harsh confrontation between the political parties, which led to a civil war. During this period, in the so called red area a terrible persecution took place against priests, religious or lay people of renowned Catholic conduct, who were sacrificed for that reason. At the end of the war, the defeat of the Republican forces paved the way to a protracted and obscure dictatorship that lasted more than 35 years. In Europe, the authoritarian ideologies of Hitler and Mussolini raised the spirit of the citizens leading them to an unprecedented confrontation. The countries of the old continent, divided into two blocks, faced a devastating war and their alliances extended to countries in other continents, as the United States and Japan, which extended the war to the borders of the Pacific Ocean. The conflagration became clearly a world war. When the war finished, the malignancy of Nazism came out with the macabre discovery of the extermination camps where more than six million of Jews and Gypsies had been exterminated. On the other hand, the division of what had been Germany and the occupation of Europe by the victorious countries left the East European countries under the Soviet Union as popular republics subject to a Communist regime. They were separated from the rest of the countries by an iron curtain and by an ideological and police control that deprived them of freedom. So, the twentieth century that had started with the lights of a happy life was becoming a century with black clouds and ruins.

THE PIOUS SCHOOLS SUBJECT TO SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN SPAIN AND IN EUROPE

The Church of the twentieth century was overcoming the unfortunate Vatican events and with Pius X's pontificate a period of moral rearmament was starting. Notwithstanding all the hardships, the Pious Schools had closed the General Vicariate of Spain in 1904, thus filling the gap between the General in Rome and the General Vicar in Spain, and were ready to consolidate the projects that had started in the late nineteenth century. However, a conflict emerged between the General, Fr. Tomás Viñas, and the Roman Province because of a disputable sale of a building in Rome which caused the intervention of the Pope. The General was removed and a canonical visitation of the whole order was announced, to everyone's surprise. The Visitor was the capuchin Fr. Passetto, who during five years contacted all the religious and came to virtually insignificant conclusions. The Order had been humiliated, but it came out with the appointment of a new General, Fr. Giuseppe del Buono. Despite this painful situation, the Pious Schools continued to open schools in Spain with a reinforced will of meeting current requirements. Some of the schools reflected the social awareness of the Order, as they responded to the request of some industrials who wished to provide education to their workers' children. The generosity of the province of Aragon enabled the emergence of the new province of Vasconia, including the houses of the Basque Country and Navarra, though its first provincial, Fr. Pantaleón Galdeano, was considered an adopted Catalanian.

The Pious Schools also suffered the attacks of uncontrolled mobs, such as the fire set in the college of San Antón de Barcelona by the rebels in 1909, during the Tragic Week.¹⁸⁴ These were events that already reflected future uneasiness. However, notwithstanding this painful parenthesis, the Pious Schools of Catalonia actually continued their American expansion, sometimes in difficult conditions,

184 Actually, the reasons of the Tragic Week are to be found in the malaise of the workers after the war in Morocco where their children were called to fight. After the disaster of Cuba and the Philippines, people were shocked by the anarchist propaganda against the bosses and the Church as responsible of the situation.

as in the starting of the piarist presence in Mexico, where Fr. Joan Figueras has been a heroic pioneer who died infected serving the sick people during Chaves' revolution. The Spanish Pious Schools have been also attentive and ready to help the province of Poland in its difficult circumstances caused by the weakness of its schools and the lack of vocations. Five piarists from the Spanish provinces, including Fr. Joan Borrell's activity, provided a new and lasting impetus. Unfortunately, during the war Fr. Borrell died by the effect of a bomb while he was assisting the sick in Szczuczyn, in Belarus. This first part of the XXth century has been also a period of pedagogical and pastoral renovation for many piarists who were open to the spirit of the new times. In fact, in Europe there was a pedagogical innovation encouraged by the methods of Claparède, Montessori or Decroly, and their experiences had arrived also to Italy and Spain. The innovation reached our schools through the work of lively and tenacious piarists that welcomed the methods of the new school, such as Fr. Joan Roig, who in 1902 applied them in Calella, Fr. Josep Guanyabens who worked not only as kindergarten teacher but also published a program for primary school along with the publication of selected reading books, and Fr. Joan Profitós, excellent kindergarten teacher, who to knew personally Maria Montessori.¹⁸⁵ The outdoor education also gained momentum, with the encouragement of summer camps and the organization of mountain trips. Pius XI had launched the project of the Catholic Action in parishes and schools, and many piarists supported with enthusiasm the creation of the youth branch or, in the case of Catalonia, the organization of FEJOC (federación de jóvenes cristianos – Federation of Cristian Youths),¹⁸⁶ which grouped a great number of young people committed with faith and country.

185 According to Fr. Joan Florensa, Maria Montessori had opened a school in Barcelona and some piarist had contacted her and learned about her pedagogical ideas. Fr. Ferran Martínez, Fr. Miquel Altisent and Fr. Joan Profitós. *El método Montessori: la catequesis y los escolapios*, in Archicum Scholarum Piarum, nº 63.

186 A youth movement promoted in Barcelona in 1931 by Albert Bonet i Marrugat, a Catholic activist, without any reference to political parties. Inspired by the doctrine of the bishop of Vic Dr Josep Torras i Bages. The movement was suspected by the "rights" as Catalan nationalist and by the "lefts" as Fascists.

However, all this great momentum had to pass through its baptism of fire. In Spain, with the arrival of the II Republic, a period of repression started, in which the schools had to become public schools, avoid religious teaching and remove every Christian symbol. The empowerment of the Popular Front entailed the radicalization of the public instruction laws. When the war started, repression became persecution. In the Republican area, schools were closed and confiscated, some were burned, as the college of San Antón de Barcelona for the second time, the communities were dispersed and the religious were persecuted. Many of them were killed in Catalonia, Aragon, Madrid and Valencia, and others were imprisoned or were exiled. On the contrary, those in the National area could continue their activities so-so. The end of the war brought the end of suffering and the recovering of the piarist schools which gradually were reorganized with the survivors. During the long dictatorship of Franco the religious education was restored and the schools started to live with the vitality of new vocations. The number of the students also increased, but the burden of restrictions imposed by the new regime, the widespread control exercised by the so called National Movement on the training of the new teachers and the ideological repression of the Francoist system removed liberty and joy in the schools through the difficult post-war period.

Similar hardships have been experienced by other peoples in Europe with the II World War. The European historical context would certainly affect much more the life of the Order. The Pious Schools of Italy shifted from the exalting environment of Mussolini's fascism to the German occupation and to the subsequent progress of the liberating armies of the Allied countries, and suffered five years of anxiety. After the war, the four Italian provinces could only recover from the damages they had suffered. The schools in Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, Rumania and, in particular, Poland had suffered the attacks of the German armed forces and, later, of the Soviets that came to stay. Through the large period of the Soviet domination the piarist provinces of Eastern Europe were limited by the Communist governments that controlled their activities and the entrance of new vocations. Many piarists were imprisoned, others dispersed and others silenced. The Province of Poland, that reflected a great vocational vitality,

couldn't exercise its school ministry and only could teach Catechism in the parishes. Slovakia was reduced to a handful of piarists who lived as clandestines and incommunicated, Rumania had virtually disappeared and Hungary, that had a limited number of vocations, could only teach in two schools, in Budapest and in Kecskemét. The surplus of the Hungarian and Polish vocations fleeing from the communist regime departed to the United States to start a new presence.

TRYING TO CLARIFY THE IDEAS

Hegel says that philosophy resembles Minerva's owl that takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering and takes home what remained in the ground after the day battle. That means that philosophy runs after history with the purpose of a later interpretation. I would dare to say that the beginning of a joyful, careless and happy century recalls the romantic and Wagnerian thought of Nietzsche, who places in the pleasure of the will of power the justifying element of life. On the contrary, the emergence of the ideologies that have marked the first half of the twentieth century rather recalls a wrong version of Marx and a worse version of Hegel. The totalitarian thought that puts the party or the Arian race over the concrete reality of men or women and forces their sacrifice in the altar of an abstraction is a deeply dehumanizing project, resulting in destruction and ruin. For most of the Europeans, the years of the war have been a nightmare, as battles have punished not only the armies but civilian populations above all. Millions of people killed by air raids, millions of prisoners, millions of displaced people, millions of destroyed households, and millions of annihilated people in the extermination camps created by Hitler's Nazism. Scorn of mankind also in the countries occupied by the Soviet Union and separated from the rest of the world by the iron curtain, horror of the concentration camps of men deported to the Gulag of Siberia by the Soviet Union's government. The atrocities of the twentieth century were unprecedented. How is human understanding challenged after events as those of Auschwitz or the Gulag?

It is not surprising that a nihilist and despaired thought has resulted from the conflagration. The post-war Europe produces a philosophy that is marked by anxiety and emptiness. Nothing to be done.

We are nothing else than a project towards death, towards nothingness. In different keys we often heard at the universities in the fifties and sixties philosophical referrals to Heidegger or Sartre. An atheist thought had actually been imposed leading to absurdity. An atheism that mostly reflected the emptiness of a world without God, who actually does not appear though expected, as the two characters of Samuel Becket's drama.¹⁸⁷ But also a world in which the existence of evil, in particular regarding the innocents, seems to deny the existence of God.¹⁸⁸

However, not everything in this century has been darkness, there are some lights of hope as well. While nations clashed in wars, they were at the same time organizing for peace, first in a Society of Nations with its headquarters in Geneva, later on in the United Nations Organization that held a meeting after proclaiming the Human Rights in San Francisco's Chart. Likewise in the Church, by the middle of the twentieth century a rush of fresh air infused hope in the faithful. Pope John XXIII announced the celebration of an ecumenical Council aimed at encouraging dialogue within the Church. During many years theologians, sociologists, philosophers, anthropologists, exegetes, liturgists, ecumenists and politologists had secretly developed the foundations of a Christian Humanism not well seen by Vatican authorities. Eventually they could emerge freely within the space created by the Pope. The Council was the time in which the new ideas materialized and new horizons began to disclose for the Church and for the world. Ultimately, it seemed that a Christian humanism was reemerging, and that it enabled to dream in a free society that was respectful of people regardless of their race, faith or country. The personalist movement supported by Mounier had paved the way to a new revolution and it seemed that the Church also supported it so that a dialogue-centered thought started to materialize in society. Theologians opened to a dialogue with modern world based on a firm

187 *Esperando a Godot*, where Becket outlines the dialogue of two individuals who expect the salvation from a Godot that doesn't arrive.

188 Albert Camus is the author that best expresses this rebellion. A world in which evil damages innocent people is not compatible with the existence of God.

return to the sources, and this dialogue equally opened many doors towards the youth, the women, the separated brothers, the faithful of other religions, in particular the Jews, unbelievers and, above all, the emarginated. Emblematic figures of this new humanity had emerged, such as Mahatma Gandhi and his non-violent struggle on behalf of the liberty of India, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the president of the United States, who inspired hope for his young age, and the Protestant pastor Martin Luther King and his defense of the equal civil rights of the black Americans.

For a moment, the young people was enthusiastic for something; the new generation that had not lived the war was full of hope of living a new world, that they imagined with the colours of the rainbow and led by the hippy naiveté. The triumph of the Beatles was the symbol of the cry for living in other imaginative system. In the month of May of 1968 was the explosion of this protest, with barricades in Paris as times before, to call for the youth's empowerment: *ask the impossible*, they shouted. However, all this dream faded away when the Russian tanks entered in Prague and put an end to what was called Czechoslovakia's spring. A hard wakening that recalled that the powers of this world were not ready to allow liberty attempts. After that, the burden of the systems fell over a generation that was increasingly surrendered to the immediate satisfactions provided by a neoliberal society.

Once more the western society clashes with life because it doesn't find exits, though in the midst of this widespread discouragement the voices of the last dissidents appear through Nelson Mandela, whose liberation put an end to the apartheid in the South African Union, or Vaclav Havel, president of the free Republic of Czechoslovakia. His triumph wouldn't have been possible without the fall and breakup of the Soviet Union. In fact, the fall of the Berlin Wall symbolized the end of the communist narration and the starting of a new history of Europe and of the world.

DAWN... DAYBREAK FOR THE PIOUS SCHOOLS

After the war in Spain and the end of the second World War, the Order seems to stabilize with the election as General of Fr. Vi-

cente Tomek, from the province of Hungary, who obtained the Vatican's placet. The new General encouraged the material growth of the schools of the Order, favouring the promotion of the large colleges to the detriment of the small establishments, and fostered the moral rearmament of the order. New generations of piarists filled the Central Houses of the provinces of Spain. Little by little the gaps left by the civil war victims were covered and elements were available for the houses in America. Moreover, new foundations were promoted: Catalonia founded in Mexico and California, Vasconia founded in Venezuela, Brazil and Japan, Castile founded in Colombia, and Valencia founded in Nicaragua and Costa Rica and, later on, in the Dominican Republic. The provinces of Hungary and Poland also started the Pious School in the eastern coast of the United States and in Canada. Piarist life in America progressed with ups and downs, tailoring the educational work to the characteristics of the American children and young people. Little by little vocations started to emerge. Special hardships were experienced with the Cuban Revolution of 1959, when Fidel Castro's government confiscated all the piarist schools and expelled from the island the foreign religious.

We have referred to Vatican II as an enlightened time for the Church. The same should be said regarding the Pious Schools. The return to the evangelical sources resulted as well in a deep reflection on the Calasanzian charism. The joy of a renewed Christian life became something natural in the life of piarists. Fr. Tomek assisted, as General, to the Council sessions and participated in the discussion of the documents that shaped its doctrine, including "*Gravissimum educationis momentum*", on education and the Christian school. This document supported the traditional principles, acknowledging the universal right to education and the right of parents to choose the school for their children. As a consequence, it requested the governments to recognize the liberty of the Church to create its schools and it helped to highlight the educational ministry within the Church's ministries.

The consequences for the Pious Schools were reflected in the creation of an Institute of Educational Sciences with the purpose of preparing a distinguished group of excellence piarists. Thus, many young piarists who had studied pedagogy, psychology, sociology or pastoral,

went to the Calasanctian Institute of Educational Sciences (Instituto Calasanz de Ciencias de la Educación (ICCE)), designed as a Higher School or a Resource Center for all those interested in Education.¹⁸⁹ On the other hand, a new initiative of extracurricular activities was promoted, such as the creation of Scout groups. During the Francoist period, for example, the Piarist Mountain Centre was created under the direction of Fr. Octavi Fullat, as an application of Baden Powell's scouting in the Pious Schools¹⁹⁰. The initiative, started in Barcelona and in Catalonia's schools, spread very soon in other schools of Spain. Formation of young people was thus completed with the forge of their character and sense of responsibility in a community context and in close connection with nature. Leisure education continued with the creation of summer camps for the students, following practices that were done before the civil war. A House in the Pyrenees, in the Pineta Valley, has been a place of unforgettable moments for many promotions of children and youths.

One of the consequences of the Council was the renewed impetus to live the mission in a continent that the Pious Schools had not reached: Africa. The missionary institutes were already there since the mid-nineteenth century and had started the Christianization work and obtained the first fruits. However, when the decolonisation process began in the sixties for most of the African countries much had still to be done. Assistance in education and health was required to cover the gaps in Subsaharian countries. The first piarist foundation in that continent took place in Oussouye, in Senegal, in 1963, and was followed with enthusiasm by the piarists of Catalonia. Later on, the piarists of the province of Castile founded in Equatorial Guinea and the Catalanian, the Aragonese and the Polish piarists coincided

189 Institutes of Educational Sciences had already been created in many countries but not in Spain where ICCE was the pioneer and acted as a model for the IEC of Spanish universities.

190 Francoism was against the creation of juvenile groups out of the control of the Youth Front, the juvenile version of the Spanish falange, of political and nationalistic orientation. For this reason, the emergence of the piarist scout group had difficulties that were afterwards overcome under the patronage of the Church with the creation of the Diocesan Delegation of Scouting.

in Cameroon. The piarist missions' feature was to open schools for the least and the neediest.¹⁹¹ Vocational training through farm schools or workshops in mechanics, cooking and sewing aim to provide young people with the means to have a job. We can say that these seeds have become today a thick forest, so that two recent provinces have flourished in Central Africa and Western Africa.

The return to the origins also enabled the return to the poor. The spirit of Calasanz was a stimulus for some piarists that wished to keep this prophetic availability. Institution and prophecy seem to match with difficulty, but several piarists of the Pious Schools launched with a prophetic spirit personal projects on behalf of the most disadvantaged, particularly in slums of great cities. Fr. Liñan with a group of young people had launched the initiative of teaching catechism to the children of Mina Pekín, a slum close to the sea, in the outskirts of Barcelona. Most of the population were of gypsy race. This effort triggered the requirement of opening a school and of sharing the life of the people, by living in a hut in their midst. This was the origin of the first community based on Fr. Francesc Botey and Fr. Antoni Maduell. Similarly, Terrassa had witnessed in 1962 disastrous floods that swept away the village of Arenas and many of its members had disappeared. Firstly, the Pious Schools' college hosted the affected people, but when life had normalized the idea emerged of accompanying the population. This was the origin of the community in Las Arenas, led by Fr. Alejandro García Durán. Other initiatives towards the most poor were hosted in other provinces, as in the quarters of Santiago I, in Salamanca. Fr. Botey and Fr. Alejandro García Durán met again in Mexico, where they were sent, with the same spirit of an evangelical and piarist radicality. The former designed an extreme community in Maconí, to which he has been faithful until his death in an accident with his pickup. Fr. Alejandro, who became a Chinchachoma¹⁹², had

191 It is worth mentioning the Ekkol Kalasans in the neighborhood of Sam Sam 3 in Dakar (Senegal). It's a non formal educational project to teach primary studies to children who do not attend school, using their working language (wolof). The school works with utmost precarious resources thanks to the tenacity of the piarists.

192 Chinchachoma is a word of the Mexican argot that means bald head, that Fr. Alejandro readily accepted as a sign of identity.

the initiative of accompanying the street children of Mexico and providing them a home in the institution that he called “Hogares Providencia” (Providence Homes). These are some samples that show how the Calasancian charism has not disappeared from the memory of the piarists, but rather continues to be alive in other initiatives and in the spirit of many who feel these works as their own heritage.

However, this dawn of the Pious Schools witnessed as well dark clouds in the postconciliar era. The moving sand of the society of the end of the XXth century brought to Europe some airs of secularization that affected the religious institutes. In theory, the idea of secularization provided by the theologians of God’s death reflected a world where the existence of God was not visible and hence we were invited to live in a secular world, as if God did not exist. This theoretical concept of secularization was factually accompanied by the external removal of Christian signs and by a reduction of the sacramental practice, a reflection of the laicization of customs and of an increasing loss of religiousness. The faith crisis resulted also in a flow of desertions of the religious life. All the religious congregations, including the piarists, witnessed continued exits. Little by little we have understood that changes were required in the school pastoral, as it became clear that schools were not appropriate for proselitism, nor the classes of religion could be exchanged for classes of catechism. Increasing awareness regarding human rights had to be translated into respect for the student’s person, mostly of those not sharing the same faith. History and current times had provided witnesses of the defense of human rights: Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Mandela reflect courageous human attitudes that invite to an imitation without religious connotations. However, their pastoral use could be preambles to the knowledge of Jesus. Not an abdication but a strategy.

THE CHALLENGES OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The end of the XXth century presented new conditioning elements, both ideological and practical. Tecnological changes continued to be revolutionary and transformed world and life. All the fields of knowledge had made progress, with the most significant development being microelectronics, that resulted in a revolution in commu-

nication and information areas. For better or worse, the micro chip has placed huge amounts of information in the hands of all people having a computer. As a consequence, the information processes do not need to be provided by a teacher, because they have their own programmes and databases for that purpose. At the same time, communications once very difficult and slow through a mailing system which depended on the means of transport have become very quick and accessible by electronic means. Each one of us can, therefore, contact any person in the other side of the world just by writing his address in a computer or mobile. World is thus interconnected as well as reduced through the electronic mail.

This communication between so distant points of the globe results in a rapprochement of human beings that become aware of living in a universe where each problem impacts the whole. Things that once could only be thought, today can be lived. We call it globalization, in the sense that all the issues emerging in the terrestrial globe affect each one of us, as nothing is far thanks to communication. Our universe is becoming increasingly interconnected: an event in the Congo can impact the life of a citizen in Berlin, because every event regards us as human beings. In this sense, fraternity may reach its real universal dimension. However, evil is globalized as well. Selfishness exploits the least, so that monetary crises in the New York Stock Exchange can exacerbate the impoverishment of vast areas of the African continent. Everything is interconnected, and unfortunately hoarding connections are more powerful and effective than generosity networks. The ambivalence of globalization calls us to a reflection and to a firm action on behalf of the disadvantaged people of the planet. Many piarists are committed with this positive globalization that includes meetings and the search of a global culture. Suffice it to mention the intellectual work of Fr. Ernesto Balducci in the European University in Badia Fiesolana; the cooperative school inspired by Lorenzo Milani's Barbiana School as promoted by José Luis Corzo; the draft foundation of a youth city in Costa Rica, designed by Iñaki Arriola as "Ciudad Calasanz"; the reality of Ekkol Kalasans for the most disadvantaged of the village of Sam-Sam in Senegal; the defense of conscientious objection by piarist Fr. Bulanyi against the Hungarian government pressure; the participation of young people in the

international meetings of Taizé accompanied by so many piarists; or the participation of piarists among the brothers of the ecumenical community of Taizé.

Besides these particular examples that are related to the spirit of selected piarists, it should be highlighted as a more institutional initiative the opening to the Asian continent. The province of Argentina took the first step with its foundation in India, in Aroor. This foundation emerged out of nothing and it soon multiplied with the arrival of vocations. Fr. Alfaro was in charge of multiplying also the foundations, reaching the most remote areas of the Himalaya. In the fifties there had been a foundation in Japan, but the response of the Japanese society to the piarist work was not too enthusiastic. A country too wealthy and too self-centered to receive the collaboration of foreign piarists. A foundation in the Philippines was in the mind, as the ground was prepared to receive and support the piarist work. The arrival of the piarists sent by the General was productive, so that a great group of Philippine vocations soon emerged that resulted in a dramatic expansion of this new Asian establishment. Moreover, candidates from all over South East Asia soon arrived, so that Vietnamese, Indonesian and Chinese piarists were welcomed. A great promise for a fruitful and not distant future in the Asian continent.

However, the beginning of this century has been also marked by ideological conditions that have not been supportive of a happy expansion of human kind in this global world. The crisis of the great ideologies or end of modernity with its dogmas of indefinite progress and clarity of the rational system gave rise to a cycle known with the name of post-modernity. The tiresome experience that had been witnessed and the conviction of the weakness of ideas barely resistant paved the way of the post-modern society, orphan of great actors and forgetful of the great narratives. No stories, no salvation, no hope. As Gilles Deleuze states, the best would be to disappear. We cannot rely but in the small certainties of daily life, without questioning beyond. The statements of science are there, like the old positivism, as dogmas of faith for a provisional, liquid world: mere probabilities barely able to support us. The great securities have ceased in favor of a weak thought that doesn't find strong support. These ideas shape the western society in which we dwell. God doesn't appear in the horizon, and

the principles of a strong morality vanish as had happened already with the firm ground of metaphysics. The fragility of existence outlined by Heidegger, only destined to death, joins Nietzsche's idea of the will of power as a dramatic affirmation against inconsistency. Western society is surrendered to consumption and to the tiny securities offered by the on the rise neoliberalism, with scarce horizons to bet for for. Some may search religious refuges in impersonal spiritualities deprived of God and of any commitment, while others return to old idols that they defend with the obstinacy of a blind fanaticism.

Nevertheless, other societies are competing today with western society to have the monopoly of protagonism. We refer to the societies of emerging and promising countries, each with their own peculiarities. China, India, Brazil or South Africa are the new giants that grow in the midst of structural or historical contradictions. Other reflections would fit to Latin American societies, with a growing sense of liberation in the popular classes against a dominant oligarchy submitted to the influence of the United States; or the Black Africa's societies that are slowly awakening after centuries of prostration. Marked by Islam, the countries of Afro-Asian Middle East struggle to death for a political and moral domination underspinned by an anachronistic fanaticism. Post-modernity appears, therefore, to be unable to meet our world's complexity, in which peoples are placed in different squares of the chessboard.

THE RESPONSE OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS TODAY

Which would Calasanz' response be if he had to live in our times? It is not easy to answer to this question given the complexity of our present world. However, the Pious Schools, both at general and provincial level have had to adapt to the new times with their available luggage.

The institutional luggage of the Pious Schools has humanly impoverished in the last few decades. The lack of vocations in the old provinces of Europe, with the exception of Poland and Hungary, is the cause of the progressive ageing of the religious, who once retired have to leave the schools. Communities have ceased, or the number of their members has declined, while schools continue working. On the

contrary, in some provinces the option has been to take over schools that were going to be abandoned by other congregations or to extend the academic offerings in order that no child or young people would be left without school. In spite of having inherited sizable colleges, the option has been to emphasize, as possible, the social approach.

Challenges not only result from the amount of the works but also from the complex educational legislation of most of the countries. Creativity and educational experience are hindered at times by the changing curricula and the excessive interference of official inspections. The Pious Schools are aware of the need of being faithful to their foundational charism regarding letters and piety. However, this charism should be interpreted in terms of a pastoral action that needs to be different from that of Calasanz. Under the strong secularization crisis, the western society's countries do not allow pastoral activities other than value education, which can be implemented through tutoring, or in extra-curricular activities, such as camps, trips, cultural visits. Evangelization becomes difficult, and Catechesis is on demand. In recent establishments, pastoral activity depends on the level of religiosity externally expressed in each society: clearly confessional in Latin American and Philippine schools or discretely respectful in Islamic or pluralistic environments.

Challenges are mixed and piarists are scarce. The work would have been impossible without the strong collaboration of lay teachers in our schools. The future of our mission will depend necessarily on the collaboration of lay people that are convinced of the importance of the piarist charism so that their work becomes not only an effective teaching but also the irradiation of an educational spirit. The Pious Schools' mission is articulated through a province-specific collaboration system, in which the lay membership work in an organized and effective way to meet actual challenges. Lay groups integrated by teachers, parents or simply supporters of the Pious Schools are organized in fraternities or mission teams closely related to the Calasanzian spirit. This spirit is clearly reflected in the School Vision, a sort of ID Card defining the model to be followed.

In 1980, the Province of Catalonia created the Secretariat of the Pious Schools as the focal point of all the schools of the country. It

works under the leadership of a Secretary-General appointed by the Provincial Congregation and supported by a Management Team to facilitate, shape and coordinate the work of the School Directors. This organization enables the promotion of joint activities and the common definition of all the Pious Schools' style, so that the spirit of the uniform method is corroborated by a more participative educational community. Students, parents and educators programme and review together the implementation of the works. The Pious Schools' policy on solidarity action is built on this practice. In his doctoral thesis Fr. Carlos Mascaró presented the implementation of the work and its theological interpretation. In his opinion, a school that becomes an educational community exercises an educational irradiation of its witness to faith.¹⁹³

In parallel, social action finds its place in the general organization of the Pious Schools by serving the most poor and weak, that are the immigrants of today. Doors are open to their assistance for the obtention of personal documents, learning of the language, literacy and training for employment. These are some of the ways of meeting the challenge of "*praecipue pauperibus*" established by Saint Joseph Calasanz in the Constitutions.

We likewise find that the ageing witnessed by piarist communities in Europe is offset by the development of young demarcations emerging in Africa and Asia. A human development with great poverty of resources, which helps to recover the deep sense of the Calasanzian work. These Pious Schools discover new fields for their future mission. The expansion of the piarist work in the world counts with the collaboration of plenty of young people from the European countries, who contribute their grain of sand for the development of those populations and receive in exchange the grateful friendship of Asian, African or Latin American youngsters. It's a new globality based on the solidarity among peoples rather than on the economic exploitation of the poor by the rich.

193 MASCARÓ I BUYREU, Carles, *Educació i Fe cristiana*, Escola Pia de Catalunya, Barcelona 2011

The General Chapters of late 20th and early 21st centuries have worked on the adaptation of the Pious Schools' spirit to the new times in view of a fruitful future. A first requirement was the adaptation of the Constitutions to the reality resulting from the Second Vatican Council. In 1970-1971, a first revision "*ad experimentum*" was developed, that substituted the edition of 1906. However, the renovation of the Code of Canon Law called for a final adaptation, including some changes, in 1987. In 1983, the Pious Schools celebrated the four-hundredth anniversary of the priestly ordination of Saint Joseph Calasanz which culminated in the Pastoral Symposium held in la Seu d'Urgell, the diocese in which he exercised his first ministry. In the same year, the Pious Schools of Catalonia commemorated the tercentenary of the foundation of the school of Moiá, and in that occasion the Government of Catalonia delivered the Creu de Sant Jordi to the Pious Schools, for the first time to an institution. The Capitular Fathers of the XLII General Chapter of 1985 had developed a document containing a deep reflection on the reality of the Pious Schools, the background of what the next Chapters have offered later.¹⁹⁴ In 1997 the four-hundredth anniversary of the creation of the first school of Calasanz in Santa Dorotea was celebrated, which enabled the launching of the motto that identifies the reality of the Pious Schools: *A School for everyone*. This is the fundamental purpose that moved Saint Joseph Calasanz to create them and that should continue in the future until it becomes a universal reality.

FINAL CONCLUSION

After having traced the history of the Pious Schools with their multiple vicissitudes, we can try to draw some conclusions regarding the most outstanding features of the piarist thought throughout the four hundred years of their existence. These features that stand out from the mixed picture of history are elements that articulate the identity of what we could call the piarist thought. We hope that final profile translates the model to be followed by future Pious Schools.

194 Memoria al XLII Capítulo general 1979-1985, General Curia of Piarist Fathers, Rome 1985.

1. The downgrading of the Order during the life of St. Joseph Calasanz was a hard blow for the project of the Pious Schools, which could have sunk in that moment. However, the restoration implemented according to the spirit of the Founder outlined the structure of future Pious Schools. Fr. Pirroni maintained fidelity to the Calasanctian charism, but under the supervision of the Holy See, he moderated monastic features impressed by Joseph Calasanz. The Pious Schools remained as an Order, but left the mendicant style and adapted to the challenging practice of education.
2. From the beginning of their history the Pious Schools were open to welcoming all kinds of students, regardless of their beliefs. In times in which religious differences were persecuted, the Pious Schools were open to Jews and Protestants, with a spirit of respect towards the religious attitudes of each student. Schools were not open with a proselytising purpose but with the spirit of helping the students to grow up as persons and, in any case, to feel questioned by their educators' example. The presence of the Pious Schools in Germany – Nikolsburg, Stranitz y Leitomischl – reflected this strategy.
3. The first Pious Schools were very popular. They were founded in places where the civil authorities supported their establishment. A contract was drawn up with the piarist community by which local students were freely educated in exchange for board and lodging. As a consequence, a really public and gratuitous school was created that ensured a quality education by way of its method and the dedication of the religious.
4. Not to forget the cooperation of great monarchs, as the Duke of Tuscany, the King of Poland or the Empress of Austria, who wanted piarists in their courts, not only for the education of their family members but also to design the educational plans of their countries. In the midst of the eighteenth century the work of some piarists as Fr. Stanislas Konarski in Poland or Fr. Gratien Marx in Austria, left an significant trace in the educational system of these countries.

5. The list would be long if we mentioned all the piarists who excelled in the science world, from the disciples of Galileo, who created an environment of great interest for modern sciences, to the disciples of the naturalist Borelli, who influenced many piarists on the knowledge regarding the animal movement mechanism. Mathematicians among the Moravian piarists should also be mentioned, some of whom had frequent correspondence with Leibniz. Not to forget the Tuscan piarists who cultivated Mathematics and Physics, becoming prominent in the areas of electricity and magnetism, where they left multiple experiences, as the creation of the lightning rods by Fr. Beccaria. A century afterwards, the famous invention of the internal combustion engine by Fr. Barsanti took place as well as the work regarding the sign language by Fr. Pendola.
6. This popular rooting led piarists to try to identify with the culture and the language of the countries where they established. At school they used the vernacular language as the only way to communicate with the students and their families. At times this implied adaptation difficulties that were overcome with efforts and good will. We have in mind the Italian piarists who went to Germany and Poland, or the Neapolitans in Catalonia. Among native piarists, soon many linguists emerged who promoted the national languages, as Fr. Miklos Revai in Hungary or Fr. Josep Rius in Catalonia. This rooting led many piarists to share the dark periods of each country as well as their ruinous wars, to the point that many notable patriots emerged who struggled for the independence of their homelands.
7. St. Joseph Calasanz would have desired a simple and common method for his schools: a standard and progressive method that allowed a staggered and grouped teaching easily performed. This method has always been a target for the Pious Schools that marked the style of the Order. So, every school started with the teaching of first letters, accompanied by the Catechism, the four rules of Arithmetic and Calligraphy. This elementary education enabled the students to reach a level

that was fit to earn a living. This level was followed by higher teaching including the study of grammar, rhetoric, syntaxis and mathematical calculation, which gave access to the university. With different variations this was the curriculum implemented in the Pious Schools till the establishment of the educational plans required by the Ministries of Education of each country.

8. How did the Pious Schools react to the emergence of Enlightenment and to the new ideas that revolutionized the religious, political and economical world? It is easy to assume that all the Church's entities rallied in favour of the Christian ideal promoted by the Popes. However, apart from the rationalistic and illuminist spirit of the Enlightenment, new ideas were emerging in the line of defending the rights of the citizens on behalf of liberty: political liberty, religious liberty and economic liberty. The enlightened ideas entailed an educational challenge. Was it not necessary to educate free citizens who would be critical people in a world that had become competitive? There were piarists who understood the time they lived in and joined associations that encouraged the progress of society. Fr. Odoardo Corsini was an excellent philosopher, Fr. Benito Feliu was part of a Society of Friends of the Country and collaborated in the reform of the University of Valencia, and Fr. Felipe Scío, who participated in the enlightened circles of his time.
9. The School remained popular until liberal governments started to oppose religious education refusing the public support that was established by contract. In almost all the countries where this law reform was implemented the schools suffered a precarious situation. In Spain they could only survive thanks to the economic contribution of some students who, to be monitored, paid an extra hour in the school. This practice allowed the school to be gratuitous for some students, but marked the difference between free and monitored students. While poor children continued to be received in the schools, these started to shift towards students coming from the bourgeoisie that financed the schools

and consequently required an improvement of school areas and educational tools. Thus the schools were saved, but the Calasanctian spirit became blurred.

10. However, the Calasanctian charism continued in the spirit of the piarists and in the whole Order that, in spite of hardships, continued to hear the call of those in need. In late nineteenth century and early twentieth century the poor people were found in the working households that had moved to industrial areas for earning their livelihood. The urgent call coming from these situations was clearly perceived by Don Bosco, but not by the Pious Schools that in that time were lacking responsiveness. Only in the late nineteenth century some requests of schools for workers were met, as an anticipation of a social concern that would develop later on.
11. The twentieth century started with a call to modernity, which entailed an improvement of lifestyle in general and a special care for education, including by the bourgeoisie that tested new pedagogical initiatives. Schools applying new student-centered methods were emerging here and there. Summer camps and cultural trips were part of the students' usual activities. The public school ran by the State as a lay school supported this approach that harmonized with an anarchist and libertarian style of education. Multiple initiatives regarding the implementation of the new pedagogical methods were also promoted in the Pious Schools. However, these hopeful experiences were cut-off by war conflicts.
12. The Pious Schools and the whole Church had to suffer in this twentieth century the trial of martyrdom and personal testimony of religious and students who were persecuted and killed for their faith. In the Spanish civil war, the leaders of the Popular Front were responsible of countless unjust executions against piarist religious for the only reason of being Catholic priests. At the same time the schools were destroyed or seized during the regime's period. This martyrdom of the Pious Schools in Spain was followed by the Second World War and by the Soviet occupation of the Eastern Europe's

countries. All the Central European Pious Schools, with the exception of Austria, were restricted by the imposition of marxist ideas and the banning of any Christian promotion. Years of darkness and of testimonies that would result in the flourishing of a new springtide after a long winter.

13. St. Joseph Calasanz had dreamt a school for all, in which no child would be excluded, for reasons of religion, lacking of resources or different race. This universal mission of the Pious Schools encouraged the searching of other countries where the children had no schools. The missionary dimension of the Pious Schools starts with the arrival in Cuba, followed by the foundations in Argentina and Chile, and later on in Colombia and Central America, in Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela and the United States. The foundations in America were followed by those in Japan and California. In 1963, the African presences started with the foundation in Senegal, and later on in Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire. In the last decade of the twentieth century the Asian foundations started in India and the Philippines. The Pious Schools extend throughout the world in search of new Trasteveres, with the purpose of collaborating in the promotion of mankind in every culture where the Calasanctian charism wants to incarnate and open itself to the whole world.
14. We are at the end of our journey through Calasanz' thought that we have undertaken with the purpose of collecting its most mature fruit – the Pious Schools project – for our globalized world. Before the risks of individualism, incommunitarianism, climate change, ferocious neocapitalism, the Pious Schools cannot offer but their educational community at the service of people. Each child and each boy that comes to school is a human project to be developed, assuming his capacities and addressing his efforts towards the commitment for a best future. We need to recover this humanistic project in which a free and responsible person is the focus of all the values. Not an island of an archipelago but a knot of the huge web of humanity as a whole. This person that the gospel defines as a son of God, reflecting in its face the presence of

a hidden God. From the fragility of our limited outlook we believe that the Pious Schools are containers of the hidden pearl of the gospel, convinced that its charism is still alive where children are the first in a new fraternity.

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