Students and Society in Early Modern Spain

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Secondary education in Habsburg Spain was represented by the grammar school or colegio or escuela de gramática. Here Latin grammar was the key subject and the use of the textbook written by Antonio de Nebrija in the late fifteenth century almost universal, particularly after 1598 when the Royal Council of Castile ordered that no other be used. Reading was largely confined to Latin literature, and the authors who were read are common to generations of schoolboys: Caesar, Cicero, Horace, Livy, Virgil, et al. Instruction also included Christian doctrine as well as geography, history, mathematics, philosophy, and rhetoric, although here too, classical sources were preferred. Pedagogical techniques differed little from those employed in primary schools, except that discipline was much more severe. Sixteenth-century writers urged that physical punishment by the schoolmaster should not be applied to pupils under the age of eight. Thereafter, restraint was advocated, but the cane seems to have been liberally applied nevertheless.

Normally, Latin education did not begin much before the age of eight or nine, or at least not until the child had mastered the basic skills of literacy in the vernacular, and would last from four to six years. Thus Martin Pérez de Ayala and Antonio de Covarrubias, both noted sixteenth-century scholars, and Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, a famous seventeenth-century bishop, each began to learn the “rudiments of grammar” at the age of ten and completed their study of Latin at about the age of fifteen. Latin training, however, did not always follow on the heels of primary education, particularly during the sixteenth century. Judging from boys well into their teens and young adults about the age of twenty who were just beginning to learn the language, clerical, military, or vocational training interrupted their school careers. Only in the eighteenth century, when adolescence began to be identified with school, did Latin education come to represent a stage of growing up, with pupils of more or less

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1See E. Esperabé Artega, Historia Pragmática e Interna de la Universidad de Salamanca (Salamanca, 1914), 1: 631.

the same age advancing in orderly fashion from class to class, year by year (Fig. 1).

This long, difficult, and rigorous education was mandatory for students seeking to enter the church or to pursue studies in one of the higher disciplines of law, medicine, philosophy, or theology at the universities. In this sense Latin belonged to a vocational tradition that dated from medieval times, but it was not until the late fifteenth century that Latin also became an end in itself, the mark of an educated, cultured man, and of popular interest to the ruling classes in Spain. Why Latin became so important is a story in itself.

"ARMS VERSUS LETTERS"

A common generalization frequently applied to Europe in the Middle Ages is that the landed, military aristocracy was hostile to learning of any sort and regarded these “bookish” skills as suitable only for monks and low-born clerks. While it is uncertain whether this scornful attitude applied to literacy in the vernacular, Latin, the technical language of the church and jurisprudence, acquired this stigma if only because the nobility had little need to learn it. When the occasion arose to write or interpret some Latin clause or contract, there was always a clerk in the magnate’s house-
hold or a nearby ecclesiastic to do the necessary work. In Spain, the nobility's aversion to the language was also deepened by the association of Latin learning outside the church, that is, among physicians, university professors, and translators of Arabic texts, with scholars of Moorish or Jewish extraction, an alliance which undoubtedly placed Latinists in an uncomfortable social position. However, the opening of the fifteenth century brought the beginnings of change to this tradition, and the barriers between the men of letters and those of the sword began to fall, opening an extended debate over the question of "arms versus letters" which lasted nearly a century.3

Outside of a native tradition in Latin located within the church and the famous translation schools of Toledo, interest in the classical literature and the pure Latin of antiquity was brought to Spain, as it was to northern Europe, from Italy in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Following the reconquest of nearly all of Iberia by the Christians in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, economic, cultural, and religious ties between the two Mediterranean peninsulas drew close. These were further strengthened by the rise of the Aragonese-Catalan trading empire in the fourteenth century, and once the Aragonese gained a foothold in southern Italy, Alphonso V's (1416–58) humanist court at Naples provided Iberia with a window open to the ideas and customs of the early Italian Renaissance.4 Furthermore, the famous studios of Italy, largely as a result of difficulties faced by Spain's own universities in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, attracted significant numbers of Spanish students. The Spanish College of San Clemente at Bologna, founded by the Cardinal Gil de Albornoz in 1369, served both as a response and a stimulus to this tradition.5 Many of Spain's leading scholars, including Antonio de Nebrija, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, and Antonio Agustín, were graduates of this institution.

By the opening of the fifteenth century a steady stream of Spanish ambassadors, merchants, prelates, scholars, and statesmen were in a position to carry the teachings of Renaissance Italy back to their homeland. This was a society steeped in a military, crusading tradition where, as one contemporary humanist critic wrote: "The courtiers of the time praise blasphemy and despise grammar; the latter a crown of glory, and the former, an abuse. None of them know any Latin let alone good Cas-


4See Andrés Soria, Los Humanistas de la Corte de Alonso el Magnánimo (Granada, 1956).

5See Berthe M. Marti, The Spanish College at Bologna in the 14th Century (Philadelphia, 1966); J. Beneyto Pérez, "La Tradición Espanola en Bolonia," RABM 50 (1929): 174 ff. One of the most famous Spaniards to study abroad was Fernando de Córdoba (1425–86?); see A. Bonilla y San Martín and M. Menéndez y Pelayo, Fernando de Córdoba y los Orígenes del Renacimiento en España (Madrid, 1911).
Slowly, hesitantly, a “Latinizing” movement gained momentum, and by the early sixteenth century the Italian tutor at the Spanish court, Peter Martyr d’Anghiera, could boast that “Castile follows me with honor and with love; almost all of the Castilian princes drew their love of letters from my store.”

Spain’s supposed transition from “medieval barbarism and ignorance,” a characterization exaggerated by contemporary Latin scholars, to “Renaissance learning and culture” occurred in much the same way as in England, France, and the Low Countries. Drawing mainly upon the ideas of the Italian humanists, who preached the virtuous, noble qualities of Latin learning put to public, civic use, a campaign was begun by a handful of noblemen and prelates who, surrounded by a following of paid scholars, demonstrated and propagated the joys of learning to their peers. Spain in the fifteenth century saw a succession of these poet-patrons: the Marquis of Santillana, Juan de Lucena, Alfonso de Cartagena, Enrique de Villena, and others who complained vehemently in their writings about the “ignorance” of Spanish noblemen, exhorting them to complement the life of arms with the study of letters. To emphasize their point of view, the Marquis of Santillana in 1437 wrote Prince Henry, the future Henry IV of Castile, that “knowledge does not blunt the iron of the lance nor weaken the sword in a knight’s hand.”

Of course, “knowledge” to this enlightened group signified only a familiarity with Latin grammar and classical literature, and a man could be called ignorant even though he was literate in the vernacular and versed in the classics, through the numerous translations then being produced. But in spite of the propaganda of the poets and the patronage of classical scholars by Juan II (1406-54) of Castile at his supposed “proto-Renaissance” court, the small, isolated body of Latin scholars did not, in one author’s opinion, “succeed in creating a class of nobles either literate in Latin nor favorably disposed to learning.” Based upon the stigma of tainted lineage, chivalric prejudice, and a hierarchical conception of society which placed the scholar and the knight in separate social categories, opposition to the “new learning” of Italy apparently remained strong. The turbulent reign of Henry IV (1454-74) probably did little to erase old attitudes or alter the existing tradition of military education among the aristocracy; that era of chronic civil war offered little inducement for the grandees to eschew arms for the pleasures of the classics.

Under Ferdinand and Isabel, the Catholic kings (1474-1504) Castile gradually returned to peace and a climate more favorable to the develop-

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7 Epistle no. 622 translated in Caro Lynn, A College Professor of the Renaissance (Chicago, 1937), p. 111.
8 Quoted in Rusell, “Arms versus Letters,” p. 49.
ment of literary tastes was created. The royal court itself served as a source of scholarly patronage, rewarding men of learning with offices and jobs. Internal order, economic growth, administrative reorganization offering new positions for the learned, and renewed cultural and diplomatic contacts with the Italy of the mature Renaissance, all contributed to heighten interest in the study of Latin. Moreover, the introduction of the printing press into Spain in 1473 and, after 1480, the free importation of books printed abroad for “the improvement and glory of the nation” gave a new immediacy to the art of learning how to read and write. Spain's own presses, active in twenty-five towns by 1500 produced over 500 titles by that date, and in the following two decades another 1,307 items were printed, of which 18 percent represented texts of classical authors. The coming of the book, coinciding with an era of peace, prosperity, patronage, no doubt served to popularize interest in literacy, both in Latin and the vernacular.

So in comparison with earlier decades, the Spain of the Catholic kings was alive with interest in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, even Arabic, and classical scholars and tutors, many imported from Italy, abounded. New chairs devoted to Latin grammar and literature were added to the universities, while lectures on humanist topics drew great crowds of students. “Armas y letras” in the course of this reign became fashionable ornaments for a grandee to display, and the rather lackadaisical crusades in Granada and North Africa afforded ample opportunities to cultivate both.

As in much of Europe, individual patronage, by monarch, nobleman, or prelate, was the focal point for initial interest in the study of Latin and the writings of the ancients among the nobility. Queen Isabel, a Latinist herself, wished to instruct not only her own children but those of her leading courtiers in the humane letters. Through the influence of Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza, a great patron of learning and a member of the noted literary family to which the Marquis of Santillana had belonged, the Queen in 1492 invited the Italian Peter Martyr, himself a living embodiment of the “arms and letters” ideal, to begin a Latin academy at the royal court. Several years later Martyr's academy was joined by a second palace school under the tutelage of another Italian, Lucio Marineo Siculo, a well-known scholar who had previously taught at the University of Salamanca. The message of these two famous teachers to their aristocratic students was:

11 Cortes de Toledo, 1480, ley 98.
13 See Anghiera's account of his reception at the University of Salamanca in 1488; Opus Epistolarum Petri Martyris Anglerri Mediolanensis (Parisisis, 1520), i. 57.
14 For Martyr's reactions to this proposal, see Lynn, A College Professor, p. 110. J. H. Mariejol, Pierre Martyr d'Anghiera: sa Vie et Ses Œuvres (Paris, 1887), is the best biography of this noted scholar.
15 See Lynn, A College Professor, pp. 112-13.
The educational system of Habsburg Spain was common to that of other European humanists: chivalry when combined with Latin eloquence and the study of the liberal arts and then placed in the service of one's prince would bestow upon an individual the highest attainable fame, merit, and virtue. Queen Isabel, according to the chroniclers, rewarded only such men, and the aristocracy, anxious to remain in their inherited positions of leadership, began to adapt to the new learning.

What this did, however, was help to overturn the character of Latin schooling in less than a century. Previously, the church, as the primary guardian of the knowledge of antiquity, had monopolized the field, teaching Latin to cleric and laymen alike in monasteries and cathedral schools. Though this tradition survived and was strengthened by the subsequent establishment of seminaries specifically designed for the training of priests, church schools in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were obliged to compete with a growing number of educational institutions, each of which aimed at bringing Latin to an important and growing segment of Spain's population. The church, fearful that children might be entrusted to irresponsible teachers, reacted with an attempt to bring all of Latin education under its direction and control. This effort began in earnest when the Council of Trent ordered that masters of grammar, laymen included, be licensed by ecclesiastical officials. In Spain, the church continued its fight as the dioceses, one after another, ordered that schools could only be opened with the bishop's consent. But these rulings met with no more than partial success. The church had failed to recognize the changing place of classical studies within Spanish society. During the Middle Ages, Latin had predominantly been a specialized idiom, the language of scholarship, diplomacy, and religion. And while Latin's usefulness in this respect was not to be diminished for hundreds of years, in the course of the sixteenth century it was rapidly becoming an established part of lay culture as well. Accordingly, its instruction passed frequently to secular masters who stood beyond the jurisdiction of the church.

The Education of the Aristocracy

For the privileged classes, Latin education followed the custom established by instruction in literacy and remained within the home. Again, the private tutor, first popularized during the reign of the Catholic kings,

16 On seminaries, see Vicente de la Fuente, Historia de las Universidades (Madrid, 1884-89), 3: 176, and Domínguez Ortiz, La Sociedad Española en el Siglo XVII (Madrid, 1963, 1970), 2: 10-11. The history of one pre-Tridentine seminary is presented in Francisco Martín Hernández, El Colegio de San Cecilio, de Granada (Valladolid, 1960). And on the general state of clerical education in the early eighteenth century, see the reports of Spain's bishops assembled in the AHN: Cons. leg. 7294.

17 See Domínguez Ortiz, Sociedad Española, 2: 182-83.
was the preferred medium of instruction. Generally a young university graduate, the tutor's duties went well beyond the teaching of Latin grammar, or, as one author suggested, his major purpose was "to teach virtue and good habits, using for this the doctrine and precepts of Moral and Natural Philosophy." In addition, the tutor was supposed to teach modern languages, mathematics, history, and astrology, along with the chivalric and martial arts: horsemanship, the use of arms, courtesy, eloquence, poetry, dance, etc. The overall aim of the program was to create the cultured "gentleman," skilled in Latin and literature as well as war, the archetype immortalized in Castiglione's *The Courtier*.

Whatever advantage instruction before the hearth may have offered, the use of a Latin tutor did not win universal approval. Pedro López de Montoya, recognizing that only a very few tutors were equipped for their tasks, advocated that young nobles leave home and attend organized schools: "It is very important for nobles to study and to learn in communal schools in the company of other students ... because the masters who ordinarily teach in such places are much more advanced in erudition and in virtue since they have risen to the positions they hold as a result of their talents. They have also gained public approval for exercising their office of master with dignity." He also suggested "that it would be advisable for sons of nobles to go to universities and take advantage there of the wisdom of the great masters which they cannot have in their own homes."

The degree to which Spain's aristocracy preferred private tutors to organized Latin schools is a matter for debate. Literary evidence and travelers' reports indicate that tutors remained the most popular and certainly the most fashionable means of instruction for young grandees from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. Even the renowned colleges of the Jesuits failed to attract them. These schools, competitive and austere, where the sons of the rich mingled with those of the poor, were more successful with children of lesser ranks than with those of the grandees. Similarly, only a handful of the titled nobility attended university, and those who did went not to study Latin but the law.

If Spain's aristocracy never rushed headlong into formal institutions of learning, there is ample evidence to suggest that the grandees gradually overcame much of their earlier disdain for literature and culture. During the sixteenth century nobles and other wealthy Spaniards began to amass large private libraries, although it remains uncertain whether these col-
lections were used for didactic purposes or mere display. The grandees’ active participation in the literary academies and informal tertulias which flourished in the seventeenth century also points to their growing taste for culture. Indeed, learning as such became so ubiquitous among the aristocracy that it stirred complaints about their growing distaste for a military way of life. One critic wrote: “that which is most noble is now reputed as the most vile and low . . .; . . . those who would have once led armies, now are content with a place on one of the [royal] councils.”

These remarks, exaggerated to be sure, nevertheless describe the evolution of Spain’s warrior aristocracy into a genteel class whose life revolved around the royal court.

This evolution, moreover, attracted the attention of the rulers of Habsburg Spain. Ironically, the crown, though initially an advocate of the education of the aristocracy along humanist lines, began to lament the new program’s eventual results. The Spanish grandee was a courtier, soldier, statesman, and royal councillor, often a financial official, provincial governor, viceroy, admiral or a trade official in Seville. Moreover, despite his largely urban existence, he was a landowner involved in countless legal suits and financial dealings. In many respects, the informal, Latin, typically “Renaissance” education obtained from his tutor and from his books failed to fit his many roles, a problem of which the crown was soon well aware. Philip II worried especially about the failure of the aristocracy to take an active part in Spain’s local militia, considered the importance of educating this class for its presumed “natural” tasks on the battlefield when he organized a court academy in 1583 under the direction of Juan de Herrera. The curriculum, in addition to Latin studies, included practical, technical subjects: architecture, artillery, fortifications, hydraulics, cosmography, and navigation; a program, in other words, designed to train the technicians Philip needed for war.

Forty years later, Philip IV and his energetic minister, the Count-Duke of Olivares, with the aid of Jesuit instructors, established a similar academy, the Colegio Imperial or Reales Estudios de San Isidro. Their stated aim was to educate the sons of the nobility, particularly the eldest sons who rarely attended university, in order to prepare them for the important roles they would have to play as the “natural” leaders of the nation. The college offered a diverse course of study which included politics, economics, geography, history, mathematics, navigation, and military sci-

25Cited in Domínguez Ortiz, Sociedad Española, 1: 177.
26AGS: DC, leg. 25, f.l., cedula of 6.1.X.1572.
27See Simón-Díaz, Colegio Imperial, 1: 47; Rafael Altamira, Historia de España (Barcelona, 1906), 3: 545.
28Simón-Díaz, Colegio Imperial, 1: 64-66.
ence. 29 Opened in 1629 amidst elaborate pomp and ceremony, the Colegio Imperial was a near fiasco. Five years later the Cámara de Castilla, noting that only sixty students were enrolled in the upper division of the college, went so far as to suggest that the crown end its annual subsidy of 10,000 ducats to this “useless” institution. 30

One of the reasons why the nobles had failed to appear was a bitter campaign launched against the Colegio Imperial by Spain’s leading universities, all of which regarded this institution as a threat to their own existence. 31 Another was that the Jesuit instructors were asked to teach subjects in which they had little or no competence. This objection was raised by a Jesuit resident in Rome who claimed that the material covered in one year by the friar who taught in the Chair of Fortifications “would be read amply by a soldier from Flanders in three months.” 32 This critic also inferred that the building in which the college was housed was not of a suitable standard. Court politics was yet another reason why the nobles stayed away; many grandees, in protest against Olivares and his policies, left the royal court for their country estates.

Olivares, himself a former student at the University of Salamanca, was haunted by the necessity of training the aristocracy in a proper fashion. So even as the Colegio Imperial floundered, he put forward another educational scheme in 1636 that was designed to train nobles for military and political careers. 33 Based upon a network of special academies, in Madrid as well as the provinces, the plan allowed for a number of free places and hoped to attract noblemen from foreign countries. But again these plans came to naught, and until his death Olivares was plagued by his belief in the “lack of military leaders” (falta de cabezas) in Spain, scapegoat for his disastrous military and political ventures. 34

With the accession of the Bourbon monarchy, the crown renewed its effort to reorient the education of the aristocracy. This began in 1714 with a plan to establish schools expressly designed for this privileged class. In a letter to Spain’s universities asking them to comment on the merits of this scheme, the fiscal of the Royal Council of Castile had noted that “One of the most serious problems which the Monarchy faces is that the nobility of the first and second ranks who do not follow the road of civil or canon law or theology have neither colleges nor equestrian schools in which they are able to learn rhetoric, mathematics, and the other arts. The situation is so prejudicial that if any caballero wishes to educate his sons, it is neces-

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29The purpose of the Colegio Imperial was in many respects similar to a “Faculty of Political Science” proposed in 1619 by Sancho de Moncada, Restauración Política de España (Madrid, 1746), discurso VIII. Also see Maravall, Oposición Política, p. 208.
30Cited in Domínguez Ortiz, Sociedad Española, 2: app. xxviii.
32For details of this controversy, see AGS: GJ, leg. 972; Simón Díaz, Colegio Imperial, 1: 66–67.
33BUS: Ms. 2064, folio 8, Memorandum of the Junta de Educación, 12.1.1636.
34G. Mariáñez, El Conde-Duque de Olivares (Madrid, 1936), app. xx.
sary to send them to colleges in Bologna, Rome, Florence, and other regions."

In the proposed schools the fiscal envisaged a program which encompassed music, dance, lawn games, and the use of arms, in addition to more academic subjects. Nothing came of this project until Philip V revived the old Colegio Imperial as the Seminario Real de Nobles in 1725, but even this privileged institution, in and out of existence for nearly fifty years, failed to alter the educational habits of Spain's aristocracy. An English traveler, Major William Dalrymple, explained in 1774 that "The nobility educate their sons at home, under the tuition of some pedantic or artful priest, who, wishing rather to please than instruct, employs his pupil's time in agreeable trifles." Other visitors to eighteenth-century Spain criticized the aristocracy for their backwardness and lack of education, and one, striking an ironic note, hinted that titles and rank were more important to this class than intelligence and culture.

Such opinions are exaggerating the truth, but it is certain that Spain's aristocracy, secure in lands and titles, given over to lives of luxury and ostentation, and still at the top of the social hierarchy, did not seriously alter their educational habits in the course of three centuries. Their instruction, evolving in such a way as to include not only the traditional studies in the classics but also history, natural sciences, political philosophy, and practical tracts of various kinds, began and usually remained within the home. School attendance and foreign travel remained at a minimum. This reluctance to leave their palaces should in part be attributed to a desire for social exclusiveness, but it must also be recognized that the curricula of Spanish schools and universities failed to appeal to the special interests of this class. These institutions were censored by an intellectually conservative church and administered either by a schoolmaster's guild neither exceptionally innovative nor competent or by clergymen whose aims often differed from those of the nobles. In the classroom books on estate management, military affairs, modern history—an euphemism for the deeds of great men, i.e., nobles—and other subjects of special interest to the aristocracy were never taught. In the end, the crown's attempts to reorient the education of the aristocracy served only to aid the interests of new noble families of administrative backgrounds who associated the special academies with social status and prestige; the older aristocracy, able to educate themselves as they saw fit, simply stayed away.

**GRAMMAR SCHOOLS**

For less privileged families, the grammar school was the most popular means of Latin education. Though a number of these dated from medie-

35AHN: Cons. leg. 7294, no. 4, letter of 29.XI.1713.
val times, most were created out of private and municipal funds in the years following the reign of the Catholic kings in response to growing demands for Latin-trained clergymen and officials and to the new prestige accorded to gentlemen skilled in the classics. One of the first towns to subsidize such a school was Madrid. There are references to an institution of this kind as early as 1346, although it is doubtful whether this school was offering regular instruction in Latin much before the middle years of the fifteenth century.  

By 1480, however, Madrid was paying a regular salary to a bachiller de gramática and a year later ordered that “no person be allowed to open a school of grammar except for the bachiller paid for by the city without the express license of the town council upon pain of 10,000 mrs. fine and exile for two months from this city and its district.” A decade later the town council referred to its school as the place “where all of the sons of caballeros and the leading residents of the city learn,” but competition was growing and by the early sixteenth century the town council was having to order local residents to send their boys to the municipal school; apparently, a number had been learning grammar at the not too distant and newly founded university at Alcalá de Henares.

Alcalá de Henares, Burgos, Cuenca, Guadalajara, Jérez de la Frontera, Murcia, Soria, and other towns too numerous to list, were other municipalities which established grammar schools of their own. The task of selecting teachers was generally given to the town councillors or to the royal corregidor, and this was often done after a public competition known as an oposición. The masters were then given contracts which lasted anywhere from three or four years to life. Monthly fees paid by students supplemented their regular salaries, but qualified, capable instructors were always in short supply, and this tended to drive salaries and stipends up. Taking advantage of the situation, many instructors, including the noted grammarian Baltasar de Cespedes, moved regularly from town to town.

38A. Millares Carlos y J. Artiles Rodriguez, Libros de Acuerdos del Concejo Madrileño (Madrid, 1932), I: 156. See also AVM: 2/482/29. Murcia was another town which had supported a Latin school in the Middle Ages. In 1374 its concejo was paying 300 mrs. annually to a “maestro de gramática” who taught the “hijos de hombres buenos”; cf. Julio Valdeón Barngue, “Una Ciudad Castellana en la Segunda Mitad del Siglo XIV: El ejemplo de Murica,” Cuadernos de Historia 3 (1969): 230.

39Millares Carlos, Concejo Madrileño, I: 120.

40Ibid., I: 120.

41Ibid., I: 227.

searching for more profitable contracts, more students, and higher fees.\textsuperscript{43} Naturally, this situation created havoc for the towns, although a number of them, including both Logroño and Oviedo, attempted to minimize the problem by offering subsidies to a religious convent or a local cathedral chapter in order to have classes formerly reserved for members of the clergy opened to the general public and thus guarantee instruction on a regular, orderly basis.\textsuperscript{44} Private charity also helped towns to establish schools of their own, and in many instances these gifts determined which localities would have Latin schools and which would not. Thus Juan Pérez de Cabrera, archdeacon of Toledo, established Cuenca’s College of Santa Catalina early in the sixteenth century; Haro, a town in the province of Burgos, acquired a school in 1608 thanks to a former native then resident in Peru; a local widow gave Vivero, a town in Galicia, a Latin school in 1583; and a physician, Juan Martínez de Población, endowed a school in his native Frómista, near Palencia.\textsuperscript{45} Benefactions such as these were crucial to the establishment and support of Latin schools, but it also meant that the distribution of these schools often had little to do with the size, prosperity, or educational concerns of a particular region or town.

In sum, municipal and popular willingness to contribute to secondary education in the sixteenth century led to a sharp rise in the number of Latin schools, a record not repeated in Spain until the nineteenth century. By 1600 these existed in hundreds of communities, large and small; Fernández de Navarrete estimated their number at 4,000.\textsuperscript{46} Although the accuracy of this particular figure may be in doubt, it is certain that almost every town of substantial size, that is, those with 500 vecinos or more, possessed a Latin school of its own. In smaller communities organized schools were less common, but independent preceptors, supported by student fees, and, occasionally, parish priests, took up the slack.

Open to question is the number of students studying Latin grammar in any one year. Existing documents make occasional reference to a school with 200 pupils or a preceptor with 25, but the only continuous series of matriculation registers for the sixteenth century are those for the faculties of grammar attached to Castile’s universities. Benefiting from the general

\textsuperscript{43}Despite a contract worth 102,000 mrs. a year, Baltasar de Céspedes left his teaching post in the town of Medina de Rioseco for a more lucrative position in the faculty of grammar in Valladolid, only to switch a few years later to the University of Salamanca. Such wanderings were commonplace among teachers in the sixteenth century. See Gregorio de Andrés, \textit{El Maestro Baltasar de Céspedes y su Discurso de las Letras Humanas} (El Escorial, 1965), pp. 58–59.

\textsuperscript{44}For Logroño, see F. Bujanda, \textit{Historia del Seminario de Logroño} (Logroño, 1948), pp. 18–19; for Oviedo, see G. Miguel Virgil, \textit{Colección Histórica-Diplomática del Ayuntamiento de Oviedo} (Oviedo, 1889), p. 458. Less successful in providing regular instruction was the town of La Guardia; cf. E. Enciso, \textit{La Guardia en el Siglo XV} (Vitoria, 1959), p. 110.

\textsuperscript{45}These schools are listed in the AHN: Cons. leg. 13183. See the reports of the provinces concerned.

\textsuperscript{46}See Navarrete, \textit{Conservación de Monarchías} (Madrid, 1621), discurso XI.VI.
enthusiasm for Latin studies, these faculties in the middle decades of the century taught as many as 5,000 to 6,000 students a year, nearly half of whom were enrolled at the famous universities of Salamanca and Alcalá de Henares (Figs. 9 and 10, pp. 213–14). But this was their apogee; thereafter, the proliferation of municipal schools and local colleges deprived the universities of their clientele, since most parents, for reasons of economy and convenience, preferred to have their children study close to home. This also helps to explain why so many towns in the sixteenth century established grammar schools. Like Medina de Rioseco, they did so in order that “fathers would not have the obligation to spend their money sending their sons to study outside of the town.”

Outside the universities, it is impossible to arrive at any accurate estimate for the total number of boys studying Latin, although it appears certain that a peak may have been reached around the year 1600. A figure of 70,000 schoolboys has even been suggested for this date. This estimate is way out of line, but it can serve as an indication that Latin education at the opening of the seventeenth century was by no means uncommon. In fact, its popularity was such that it engendered the criticism of contemporaries who were looking for solutions to the economic and political problems which Castile then faced. Latin, as widespread as it was, quickly became a scapegoat for the monarchy’s many ills. Would-be reformers, known commonly as arbitristas (literally, “economic projectors”), began to question the purpose of educating so many boys in Latin, asserting that its study served only to encourage youths to abandon economically productive careers for those in the parasitic cadres of government and the church. Furthermore, the arbitristas, anxious to return Spain to prosperity and to restore her former glory, advocated a reduction in the number of Latin schools and a reorientation of education in favor of craft skills, mechanical trades, farming, and other “useful” occupations which they believed had fallen into neglect. Typical of their criticism is a remark written by Pedro de Valencia in 1608:

“Nowadays every farmer, trader, cobbler, blacksmith and plasterer, each of whom love their sons with indiscreet affection, wish to remove them from work and seek

47. A certain Doctor Gallego told the University of Salamanca in 1584 that one reason for the decline of its faculty of grammar was that “many of the students who used to attend no longer do so because all of the towns are teaching grammar with more harmony and order than the University”; cited in Andrés, Baltasar de Céspedes, p. 58.
50. Much of this literature has been summarized in Zarco Cuevas, “Miguel de Leruela”; this article was also published separately. Other references may be found in Navarrete, Conservación de Monarchías, discurso XLVI; Saavedra Fajardo, Principe Político, empresa LXVI; and M. Alvarez de Ossorio y Redin, Apéndice de la Educación Popular, ed. P. Rodríguez de Campomanes (Madrid, 1775–77).
for them a more glamorous career. Toward this end, they put them to study. And being students, they learn little but they become delicate and presumptuous. Consequently, they remain without a trade or are made into sacristans or scribes.51

On the surface, this unprecedented campaign against Latin schooling was a straight-forward effort to redirect the aims of early education. But it also entailed what could be called an "aristocratic reaction," an attempt on the part of the nobility and those who aped noble status to protect the interests, jobs, and even the unique culture of the social elite.52 During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the spread of Latin education had allowed many commoners access to important positions in government and the church; in other words, Latin had served, directly and indirectly, as an agency for upward social mobility. However, in the seventeenth century, when Castile's faltering economy endangered the financial security of the elite, unlimited instruction in Latin appeared as a threat, since it was thought to allow more and more commoners to qualify for positions customarily reserved for the upper-class. Implied in the arbitristas' criticisms, therefore, was an attempt to fix a status quo in society and, especially, to seal off access into the elite. Such attitudes were consistent with the conceptions of a fixed social hierarchy in which every person from birth was destined for a certain task, presumably, the occupation of his father. Ideally, education would serve only to make each person a Christian, obedient to his king and social superiors, and equipped to handle his inherited tasks, but nothing more. Latin was to be taught to the wealthy, noble, "naturally superior" members of society and consequently beneficial to the nation as a whole, since its leaders would be instilled with the high moral qualities that a classical education was thought to bestow. But, if extended to the masses, it would only encourage aspiration to jobs above their natural station and thus weaken the nation and threaten the place of the ruling elite.

Furthermore, it was no accident that this criticism was contemporaneous with large-scale sales of office by the crown and the award of hundreds of new patents and scores of new titles of nobility—Castile's version of the "inflation of honors"—which made noble families, particularly those of recent vintage, all the more insecure. Latin, though connected with these developments only in a marginal fashion, conveniently served as a target upon which part of the blame could be affixed.

The campaign against Latin, recurrent throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was first translated into direct action early in the reign of Philip IV. The Junta de Reformación, charged to recommend solutions for the manifold problems of the Castilian government and society, made the following proposal in 1621 to the young king:

52To prove this assertion, more detailed biographical information about the social origins, careers, and aspirations of the arbitristas is necessary. Unfortunately, little is currently known about these writers although one awaits in this regard the publication of Jean Vilar's thesis, Les Espagnols du Siècle d'Or devant la Crise: l'Arbitrisme.
... it would also help to reform some grammar schools newly founded in villages and small places, because with the opportunity of having them so near, the peasants (labradores) divert their sons from the jobs and occupations in which they were born and raised, and put them to study from which they benefit little and leave for the most part ignorant because the preceptors are not much better. It would be sufficient to have such schools in large and well-known towns, where they have been located for a long time, and also in the capital of each district.  

Philip responded in 1623 by deciding that only towns with a royal corregidor would be allowed to have grammar schools, and then, only one apiece. Since Castile had approximately seventy such towns, this decree was obviously intended to bring about a drastic cut in the number of Latin schools. Outside of these municipalities, only those schools which had an endowed income of 300 ducats a year would be allowed to continue, but this was something which very few possessed. Philip also stipulated that classes in Latin in foundling homes and orphanages were to stop and that the wards be taught more "useful" skills.

This decree, promulgated anew by ecclesiastical officials, had uncertain results. If effective, it would have brought an early end to the study of Latin in all but a few selected towns. But like most royal orders of the antiguo régimen, the proclamation and the enforcement of a law were two different things. Though a number of schools may have been forced to close, countless private preceptors continued to teach on the sly. The most this decree probably achieved was to slow the century-long spread of Latin education, though it could not even have managed this without increasing upper-class suspicion toward popular education. The outcome was that the years following the promulgation of Philip IV's edict coincided with a sharp drop in the foundation of new grammar schools. Simultaneously, financial difficulties obliged many municipalities to reduce and sometimes to end their subsidies to local schools. Uncertain finances caused teaching at many schools to be interrupted, sometimes for years. Disruptions of this nature occurred in Sanlúcar de Barrameda when the town council ended its payments in 1663 to the local Jesuit college, and schools in Guadalajara and Logroño were suffering from problems of a similar kind.

Such difficulties would seem to have been widespread, and this makes it easy to believe that the later seventeenth century marked a period of
regression and decay not only for the teaching of literacy but for Latin as well, a situation which Spain's first Bourbon king, Philip V (1701-46), endeavored to correct. An inquiry into the state of the kingdom's Latin schools in 1714 revealed a common set of woes: a shortage of school revenues, a lack of schoolteachers, and a scarcity of pupils.59 In the decades that followed, conditions improved slowly as many schools, benefiting from the general improvement in the Spanish economy, began to receive new or increased subsidies from municipal governments. Private benefactions were also on the rise, and a number of towns, thanks to this largesse, acquired Latin schools for the very first time. By mid-century, Latin schooling was well on the road to recovery, but this prosperity served only to revive the monarchy's old fears about the efficacy of such training. Consequently, on June 26, 1747, Ferdinand VI (1746-1759) reaffirmed Philip IV's decree limiting the number and distribution of Latin schools in Spain, although on this occasion, no new schools of any kind would be permitted in communities with less than 300 vecinos.

The following year the royal corregidores were asked to report on schools in their districts, presumably to determine which ones ought to be suppressed. Their responses, available for thirty cities, illustrate the mixed and somewhat chaotic nature of secondary education in eighteenth-century Spain.60 The amalgam of tradition, charity, municipal subsidies, and time had left behind a confusing patchwork of schools, teachers, and preceptors with the costs and the quality of education varying widely from city to city, region to region. But in spite of this apparent confusion, the crown continued its stand against the unlimited instruction of Latin. A century before, increases in the number of schoolboys were held partly responsible for the decline of Spain, since educated youths were accused of abandoning fields and workshops to the detriment of the national economy. Now, for much the same reasons, Latin was regarded as a check upon Spain's recovery. Primary education was permissible since it was believed to encourage better discipline, religious orthodoxy, and social order among the population and, perhaps, even to be of some practical utility to the poor. But when the reformer Pablo de Olavide designed his new colonies in the Sierra Morena in southern Spain, the program expressly stated that "schools of grammar and other higher faculties will be prohibited in these towns since their inhabitants are to dedicate themselves to agricultural labor, stock-raising, and mechanical trades."61

The Intendant of León said much the same in 1764 when he remarked that if

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59See AHN: Cons., leg. 7294.
60See AHN: Cons., leg. 13119.
Agriculture, Skills, Industry, and Commerce are to flourish in proportion to the fecundity and fertility of the land and the excellence of its fruits and products, it would be wise to reduce significantly the number of schools in the district of [León]... since having them near at hand encourages many fathers to devote their sons to study and to direct them into ecclesiastical careers, secular or regular, without examination or proofs of vocation, separating them from the offices and exercises that they [the fathers] have professed and that are of such importance to the population, to the strength, and to the wealth of the State, and with very grave harm to Society, and to the general public good and utility.  

Implied in these statements and others like them is the idea that Latin is suitable only for society's middle and upper ranks, while the laboring classes should be educated only so far as to encourage work, obedience, and religion. Spain's "enlightened" leaders, in other words, sought to limit instruction in Latin in the hope of checking upward social mobility among the lower orders of society and thereby assure the monarchy of an abundant and docile supply of labor which would restore the nation's ailing economy.

In 1764 the crown, at the initiative of the Count of Campomanes, ordered an educational census of Castile that was presumably designed to be used in future royal policy toward Latin schools. This inquiry, undertaken by royal corregidores and intendantes, took several years to complete. Unfortunately, only part of the materials collected for this census are extant but enough survives that it is possible to estimate that approximately 25,000 boys were enrolled in Latin schools in 1767, a figure that is roughly equal to 4 to 4.5 percent of boys between the ages of seven and sixteen. Castile, obviously, was training only a small minority of her young in Latin, yet in the crown's opinion, they were still far too many.

The census indicated that a relatively high percentage of boys from rural towns were studying Latin, and this undoubtedly reinforced the

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62 AHN: Cons., leg. 13183, report of León, 1764.
63 Materials for fourteen provinces have been assembled in the AHN: Cons., leg. 13183.
64 I have dealt with this census at length in my article, "Latin in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Castile," Revista Storica Italiana 85 (Giugno, 1973): 297-320. The estimate is no more than a crude doubling of the 12,180 listed as studying Latin in the provinces which the census surveyed. The justification for this maneuver is a simple one; the fourteen provinces accounted for approximately one-half of the land area of the kingdom of Castile, and together they had a population of 3.1 million, approximately one-half of Castile's total population as listed in the Count of Aranda's census of 1768. Therefore, if one can assume that the scattered fourteen provinces (they embrace nearly all of Lower Andalucia, Extremadura, and Galicia as well as large parts of León, Old Castile, and La Mancha) are fairly representative of the kingdom as a whole, it might not be unreasonable to expect that the total Latin school population of Castile was roughly double that of the census provinces, perhaps even more since major cities like Córdoba, Granada, and Madrid would have added a substantial number of schoolboys.
65 A rough estimate of the total number of boys aged seven to sixteen is provided in Aranda's census of 1768. This is summarized in Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, La Sociedad Española en el Siglo XVIII (Madrid, 1955), p. 60.
crown's position. Though small villages (100 vecinos or less), which in parts of the kingdom housed more than one-half of the total population, contributed less than 10 percent of Castile's schoolboys, nearly half came from large villages and rural towns (100–1,000 vecinos).\textsuperscript{66} The remainder (about 44 percent) hailed from cities with 1,000 vecinos or more, although this does not mean that boys in the city had more of an opportunity to learn Latin than their counterparts in the small, rural towns.\textsuperscript{67} Actually, it was just the other way around. Seville, for example, had only 620 boys enrolled in Latin schools in 1764, a figure equal to approximately 6 percent of boys of school age. In comparison, La Bañeza, a town of 2,000 inhabitants near León, had two masters, paid by the municipality, who together taught Latin to over 150 pupils, 60 of whom were local boys. This means that approximately one third (37.5 percent) of La Bañeza's boys were in school. Similarly, Villadiego, a village of about 1,000 inhabitants in the province of Burgos, had an endowed preceptor with 100 students. This figure suggests that boys came from elsewhere to study in Villadiego, but it also indicates that a large proportion of its own children were in school. Large numbers of schoolboys in other towns this size means that contemporaries were probably correct when they said that Latin schools worked to the detriment of farming and the crafts. The city may have led to a concentration of preceptors and schools, but its large population, its reluctance to invest heavily in public education, and its strong demand for unskilled workmen, apprentices, and domestics actually inhibited the spread of secondary education. Indeed, it would appear that urbanization, at least in the eighteenth century, worked against rather than for the rise of the popular secondary school. On the other hand, the small, agricultural, less stratified, and possibly more paternalistic community appears to have encouraged the study of Latin, since this skill, much more than those in the crafts, provided a means of equipping those surplus youths the town's restricted economy could not absorb to strike out on their own, even if this only meant to enter the church.

One other fact of importance underscored by the census was the disproportionate distribution of Latin schooling about the kingdom. Regionally, Old Castile was the best educated part of the kingdom, and parts of New Castile and Extremadura among the worst (Table 1). And in general the kingdom was less educated in the south than in the north, with the exception of the provinces of Cadiz and Seville. However, too much should

\textsuperscript{66} The figure for the percentage of the population living in villages with less than 100 vecinos refers to areas in Old Castile and León; cf. \textit{La España del Antiguo Régimen}, ed. Miguel Artola (Salamanca, 1967). Presumably, this figure would be lower in Andalucia.

\textsuperscript{67} Communities this size accounted for a small minority of Castile's population except in Andalucia, a region noted for a plethora of large- and medium-sized cities. On the other hand, only 10.28 percent of Old Castile's population lived in units larger than 500 vecinos and in the province of Salamanca cities with over 1,000 vecinos accounted for no more than 11.9 percent of the population. These figures have been drawn from \textit{La España del Antiguo Régimen}. 
Table 1. Educational Census of 1764–67: Schoolboys by Province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>% Boys in school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valladolid</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgos</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zamora</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seville and Cadiz</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>León</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palencia</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badajoz</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciudad Rodrigo and Salamanca</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soria</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ávila</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuenca</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plasencia</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AHN, Cons. leg. 13183.

not be read into this distribution, since the availability of schools, and, consequently, of the number of boys studying Latin, had much more to do with the charitable bequests of the sixteenth century than with patterns of wealth and population in the reign of Charles III. Nevertheless, the prevalence of Latin learning among the small, rural towns typical of Old Castile served only to stiffen the crown’s resistance to the spontaneous and unchecked development of Latin schools. Without controls, it was believed Latin would serve only to undermine the recovery of Castile’s economy which, by the 1760s, was already well underway.

Latin throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries played many roles. It was a practical tool for the learned professions and the church, a distinct but ancillary part of high culture, and a filter through which a small minority of the young destined for universities, careers in the liberal professions, and important religious and secular posts were allowed to pass. Of course, this filter was imperfect. At all times, it allowed through a small number of the poor, many of whom were sponsored by charity and...

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68Curiously, in regional terms, the educational patterns of secondary schooling in the 1760s correspond well with those of a century later (cf. Informe sociológico Sobre la Situación Actual en España. Fundacion Foessa [Madrid, 1970], maps 14.2, 14.3, 14.7). Despite the continuing economic decay of Castile in relation to the prosperity of the “periphery” of the peninsula and regardless of the educational policies of different regimes, each with programs designed to equalize educational opportunities by region if not by class, Valladolid in particular and Old Castile in general remained the best educated regions of Spain throughout the nineteenth century. Even in 1932 this situation holds true, a phenomenon which might lead to the conclusion that the utilization of various public services, such as schools, by different regional populations operates independently of politicians, governments, and their reforms. The cultural baggage of the past, local customs and traditions, and the parental attitudes toward children that they foster would thus seem every bit as important as wealth and population patterns in determining the causes for one region’s “knowledge” and another’s “ignorance.” But for the historian, working without the benefit of modern survey information, it is almost impossible to measure the influence of such cultural factors upon the social phenomena of the past.
the church, but most of the popular classes were excluded. The reasons for this were partly cost, partly the investment in time which Latin education required, and possibly because most people regarded Latin as foreign to their interests and irrelevant to their daily material needs. Thus Latin, though never the exclusive preserve of the rich, the well-born, and the ecclesiastics, was designed for and moulded to suit their particular vocations and careers. In the long run, classical education in early modern Spain may have served only to set further apart the elite from the rest of society, and consequently lessen possibilities of mutual understanding between the literate and the nonliterate, the rich and the poor, the rulers and the ruled, divisions which parliamentary governments in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Spain found so difficult to bridge.

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

With the rise of municipal schools in the sixteenth century, the role of the church in secondary education was seemingly on the wane. But even before the crown launched its attack upon the teaching of Latin, many of these local institutions were encountering difficulties on their own. Runaway inflation, sustained in part by the massive importation of bullion into Castile from the New World, was cutting into fixed school revenues and precipitated in countless cities the interrelated problem of insufficient funds and unqualified teachers. In Guadalajara, for example, the College of Santa Catalina, a school financed jointly by the town council and a legacy left by a local citizen, faced chronic disorders. Troubles began in 1553 when “Master Cueva, reader of grammar,” complained that his salary of 8,000 mrs. was too low and threatened to leave town. Matters were settled temporarily when his pay was raised to 11,500 mrs., but in the following decades, the city, heavily in debt, skimped on its obligation to contribute both firewood and funds to the college. Consequently, difficulties in securing competent teachers arose. One rector, Licentiate Antonio Millán, was dismissed because he went home at night to his wife, leaving the students who boarded in the college alone and undisciplined. His replacement, a priest, proved no better. Problems of this nature continued, and in 1619 the city was considering a recommendation from one of its aldermen that the college be turned over to the Society of Jesus “inasmuch as students benefit the most in cities and districts where the fathers of the Society govern and teach instead of preceptors, ‘foreign’ to the city, who do not care about anything but their own comfort and salary.” After years of sporadic negotiation, the Jesuits were invited in 1631 to assume control of Guadalajara’s troubled college. Under this arrangement, the college prospered, and Latin grammar was taught regularly in the city until the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain in 1767.69

69The above is adapted from Layna Serrano, Guadalajara, 4: 21–24.
Guadalajara's troubles and their eventual solution were far from unique. Oviedo and Pontevedra came to similar arrangements with the Jesuits, while other towns, among them, Huete and Logroño, unable to organize schools of their own, also looked to them for aid. Spain's universities did the same, since the shortage of qualified masters to teach in their faculties of Latin grammar was particularly acute. The University of Valladolid was the first to do so, and its 1581 contract with the Society of Jesus stated that "because of the great shortage of readers and masters of grammar that exists in the university and because of the serious problems this situation causes among the students, the Fathers of the Society of Jesus... have been commissioned for four years to read grammar and to teach good customs to the students." This agreement, approved by the Royal Council of Castile, stipulated that the Society would receive 300 ducats a year to teach grammar, rhetoric, and Greek and that this instruction would be gratis. Apparently, the Jesuits turned out to be a great success, and the number of students studying grammar at the university was said to have risen from less than 200 to over 700 in the space of a few years. With this example before them, five other universities—Granada, Lérida, Santiago de Compostela, Toledo, and Valencia—followed Valladolid's lead and turned to the Jesuits.

On the other hand, those universities which attempted to teach Latin on their own ran into serious trouble. With skilled masters wanting, the faculties of grammar at the universities of Alcalá de Henares and Salamanca, both of whom were staunch enemies of the Jesuits, lost students at a spectacular rate (Figs. 9 and 10, pp. 213–14). In part, this decline was the result of competition from the municipal schools, but the colleges of the Jesuits, expanding rapidly in the late sixteenth century, dealt the decisive blow. The faculties of Latin grammar managed to survive at these universities by attracting students from the local population, but this was not enough to halt a progressive decay. One had to await university reforms

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71AVU: Lib. 517, folio 8.

72AVU: Lib. 517, folio 11. In spite of this success, the university broke its contract with the Jesuits in 1588 on the grounds that the Society had refused to let anyone but its own members teach grammar at the university. Instruction was subsequently suspended for a number of years before other instructors were named, but by 1597 the university turned once again to the Jesuits for help, "since one has seen the improvement they bring to the habits of students as well as to the teaching of grammar." See Andrés, Baltasar de Céspedes, pp. 63–79.

73The Royal Council of Castile approved the turnover of Granada's faculty of grammar to the Jesuits in 1583 after it heard of "the great shortage of grammar preceptors and that the sons of Granada's residents are going outside of the city to learn this subject at great cost to their patrimony"; cited in Montells y Nadal, Historia de la Universidad de Granada (Granada, 1870), 1: 116.

74See below, p. 43.
in the nineteenth century, however, before these faculties were suppressed.

With Castile's major universities out of the picture, the Society of Jesus quickly became the leading organizer of secondary education in Habsburg Spain. Interested in awakening religious fervor among the populace through teaching and eager to take up where other schools had failed, the Jesuits developed an extensive network of colleges and schools. And in sharp contrast with municipal schools, independent preceptors, and the universities, all of which charged their pupils monthly fees, the Jesuits offered free instruction except for those few students who were housed and fed within the college in the internat. The Jesuits, moreover, had a pedagogical program superior to that of many other schools. Municipal and university classes of grammar had often been irregular and uneven owing to the shortage of qualified teachers, while many preceptors and tutors were ill-trained and incompetent. The Jesuits, in contrast, offered a well-organized four- to six-year course of graduated study in grammar and philosophy, with additional training in theology, mathematics, geography, history, and astronomy, not to mention instruction in morality, self-discipline, and religion. Furthermore, in many of their colleges the Jesuits taught primary letters as well as Latin, affording families the opportunity to educate their children cheaply but thoroughly at a single school: a service no other scholarly institution in Spain could offer. Jesuit teachers, though often young and inexperienced, were dedicated, well-educated clerics interested as much in the moral development of their pupils as in their formal education. Such attention, institutionalized in the Ratio Studiorum, the credo by which all Jesuit schools taught, won for the Society broad and long-lasting popular support.

The hallmark of the Jesuits' teaching was the internat, the program administered for those few wealthy students who boarded within the college. These pupils, a minority of the students in any one college, lived under a strict pedagogical routine which lasted twenty-four hours a day nearly eleven months a year. In this cloister, cut off from the evils and temptations of the outside world, the isolation was almost complete. Latin was the only language allowed to be spoken; only classical authors (in the original) were read; and even a subject such as geography, smacking too much of the contemporary world, held a diminishing place in a curriculum devoted to creating a mythical world of classical heroes and great deeds which the students were admonished to emulate. To make this pedagogical environment more secure, vacations were short and parental visits were curtailed. Meanwhile, constant surveillance regulated behavior and ensured proper discipline day and night. The students were even

75An excellent discussion of Jesuit education can be found in Georges Snyders, La Pedagogie en France aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles (Paris, 1965). Much of the following two paragraphs is drawn from this valuable work. The best history of the Jesuits in Spain is Antonio Astrain, Historia de la Compañía de Jesús (7 vols., Madrid, 1912-26).

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52 THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF HABSBURG SPAIN
asked to spy on one another in order to make sure the rules were enforced when the masters were temporarily absent. Learning consisted of long hours of classes and study, although this routine was interrupted regularly by periods of supervised play and occasionally by dramatic performances on classical themes acted before invited relatives and guests. Excellence and hard-work were promoted through competition, with prizes being awarded to those students who excelled in their work. This rigorous program, implemented in all of their large colleges, gave the Society a reputation for excellence which few private tutors and municipal schools could match; and this too contributed to their lasting popularity and success.

Unfortunately, the almost complete lack of matriculation registers for these colleges does not allow us to know the kinds of students the Jesuits educated. It has been asserted that in Madrid they catered for the sons of the nobility, while the municipal school taught those of the “middle class,” but this is probably inexact. Presumably, the origins of the Jesuits’ students in Spain matched those of their college in Bordeaux, France, where it has been demonstrated that the sons of government officials and merchants dominated the college, but not to the exclusion of children of lesser ranks. In Spain, it can be assumed that only the high aristocracy, wary of all forms of organized education, and the illiterate poor stayed away.

Two measures of the Jesuits’ success in secondary education are the number of colleges they established and the number of students they taught. The first of their colleges in Spain opened in 1547 at Gandía, a Levant town near Valencia, and later grew into the Jesuits’ first university. Other colleges followed quickly, and by 1600 the Society, with the help of local patrons, had established colleges in most of the kingdom’s major cities and towns. Thereafter, Spain’s troubles dampened the pace of their expansion and by the opening of the eighteenth century the establishment of new colleges had come to a halt. By then, however, the Jesuits maintained no less than 118 colleges in Spain, 92 of which were located with the Crown of Castile, in addition to 20 seminaries for the training of priests (Map 1). The largest cities, as might be expected, had the largest complement of these colleges; Madrid and Seville, for example, boasted 4 apiece. Regionally, the Society was best represented in the north of the peninsula, particularly the Basque provinces and Old Castile, where they possessed a total of twenty-one colleges, along with Andalucia, where they had colleges in no less than twenty-eight towns. Other areas had

66See Domínguez Ortiz, Sociedad Española, 2: 192.
68There are differences regarding the exact number of Jesuit colleges in Spain. Included here are only their teaching institutions—colleges and seminaries—as found in Lud. Carrez, Atlas Geographicus Societatis Jesu (Paris, 1900), Assistentia Hispaniae, and in A. Guglieri Navarro, Documentos de la Compañía de Jesús en el Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid, 1967).
Map 1. Schools and colleges of the Society of Jesus in Spain. (Sources: Carrez, Atlas Societatis Jesu; Guglielmi Navarro, Documentos de la Compañía de Jesús.)
proportionately fewer colleges, but, as Map 1 clearly shows, by the middle of the eighteenth century the Jesuits had at least one establishment in every province of Spain.

Matriculations are perhaps a more accurate test of the popularity and influence of the Jesuits, since they represent the willingness of families to send their offspring to the Society's schools. Most of these records have been lost, but it remains clear that wherever the Jesuits opened a college, students were never in short supply. In Seville, for example, the Jesuits were teaching 500 students in 1563, about 800 a decade later, and over 1,000 by 1590. Moreover, with the help of the city, a new college, that of San Hermenegildo, had been built to accommodate this crowd. Matriculations at Córdoba grew at a similar pace, reaching the 1,000 mark by 1588. Even in smaller towns, the Jesuits' record was outstanding. Their college in Monterrey in Galicia, for instance, enrolled 400 students annually during the 1560s, nearly 1,000 by 1582, and approximately 1,200 by 1588. Other colleges enjoyed similar prosperity, and though it is only a rough estimate, the total number of students taught by the Jesuits in the kingdom of Castile toward the end of the sixteenth century was something on the order of 10,000 to 15,000 a year, the vast majority of whom were studying Latin grammar.

The progress of matriculations at Jesuit colleges in the seventeenth century is more obscure. Most colleges recovered quickly following the severe plague which opened the century, and by the 1620s the University of Salamanca complained that the Jesuits in Madrid enrolled “2,000 students in their schools, many of whom have been brought from the University of Alcalá de Henares, as a result of which that university has become so deserted that scarcely anyone attends class.” In subsequent decades, war, mounting taxation, and inflation accompanied by demographic decline may have caused matriculations to fall, but, owing to the lack of accurate figures, this is only an assumption which remains to be proved. In Pamplona students in the Jesuit college at the end of the seventeenth century numbered 300 to 400 a year. This figure, equal to the number of students enrolled in this college one hundred years earlier, suggests that matriculations were on the rise following the difficult, middle decades of the

79 Only those for the college of Pamplona between 1670 and 1720 survive; cf. AHN: Jesuitas, lib. 192.
80 Astrain, Compañía de Jesús, 1: 589; 4: 172.
81 Ibid.
82 Ibid.
83 This figure is no more than an educated guess. The eleven colleges which existed in the Jesuit province of Castile in 1593 taught Latin to approximately 3,500 students. If one includes those who were studying the 3 Rs, the liberal arts, and theology, the total is well over 5,000 (cf. ARSI: Provincia Castilla, lib. 14 II, folios 228v–297). Other colleges in Andalucía, Galicia, Asturias, and Navarre would have raised the grand total to 10,000 or more.
84 AGS: GJ, leg. 972, “Memorial de la Universidad de Salamanca,” 1627.
85 AHN: Jesuitas, lib. 192.
century. However, the history of Pamplona’s college may not correspond to what was happening elsewhere, and it is possible that the Society’s other colleges resembled that in León which was said to have lost students because of declining economic circumstances.  

Whatever the precise experience of individual colleges, it appears certain that the total number of students taught by the Jesuits at the opening of the eighteenth century was no greater than and possibly below that of a century before. The War of the Spanish Succession took an additional toll, and, in spite of a brief recovery during the 1720s and 1730s, the Jesuits lost ground once again in the years immediately preceding their expulsion in 1767. In 1764, for example, commentators in Palencia, Soria, and Zamora remarked that the Jesuit colleges located in those cities had had more students “in the past.”

If the Jesuits’ position was weakening at a time when secondary school education in Castile was on the rise, the causes may be found in the revival of municipal schools, increases in the number of independent preceptors, and the belated entry of the other religious orders into public education. By mid-century the Augustinians, Dominicans, and Franciscans had begun to challenge if not supplant the hegemony of Jesuit schools, managing to siphon off part of what would have previously been the Society’s exclusive clientele. More serious for the Jesuits was the threat posed by the independent preceptors who, despite monthly fees of five to ten reales, were increasing both in number and popularity. In 1728, for instance, the rector of Córdoba’s Jesuit college complained of a serious shortage of students at his institution and placed the blame on “an inundation of preceptors . . . so copious that one stumbles upon a preceptor at nearly every street corner.” And in Antequera, where free instruction was offered by the Jesuits as well as the Franciscans, two private preceptors enrolled twenty students between them, each of whom paid fees of six reales a month. It was the same elsewhere; if a preceptor—known commonly as a pedante, domine, or dio-sero—was present, a number of students preferred to pay for their instruction and perhaps benefit from classes that were smaller and less disciplined than those in the religious colleges.

Thanks to the educational census of 1764–67, it is possible to see the extent to which the Jesuits controlled the teaching of Latin in Castile. While municipal schools accounted for nearly half of the pupils (45 percent)
and the independent preceptors another fifth (about 20 percent), approximately one-third of the students attended religious schools. Of these, the Jesuits claimed the lion’s share; their 3,500 pupils represented nearly 80 percent of those who were taught in religious schools and about 30 percent of the total number of schoolboys listed in the census (Table 2).\(^{91}\) In the 1760s, therefore, the Jesuits, in spite of losses which they had incurred in the previous half century, still represented a major force in Castilian education. Their strongholds were Galicia and the province of Seville; in the former they taught close to 60 percent of all students, in the latter, 40 percent. The Basque provinces and Madrid were also Jesuit fiefs,\(^ {92}\) but census materials for these areas do not exist.

Against this background it is easy to understand why the expulsion of the Society of Jesus in 1767 precipitated an educational crisis. Although the crown intervened, allowing towns to hire instructors with revenues confiscated from the Society and to open schools in the buildings the Jesuits had deserted, many problems remained. Trained masters were expensive and in short-supply, and many communities were obliged to hire incompetents.\(^ {93}\) Difficulties continued and a new series of educational censuses, beginning in 1772, underscored the gravity of the situation.

The first of these inquiries covered the province of Seville, a region especially hard-hit by the expulsion.\(^ {94}\) Of the thirty organized schools that had existed in 1767, only nineteen remained. A subsequent inquiry in

\(^{91}\) In the fourteen provinces of the census, the Franciscans maintained only five schools; the Augustinians and the Dominicans each had only four.

\(^{92}\) For a history of the Jesuits in the Basque provinces, see Malaxechevarria, *Compañía de Jesús por la Instrucción del Pueblo Vasco en los Siglos XVII y XVIII...* (San Sebastian, 1926).

\(^{93}\) AHN: Cons., leg. 13183, report of Cuenca includes complaints of this nature from officials in the town of Huete.

\(^{94}\) AHN: Cons., leg. 13183, report of Seville, 1772.
1775 showed little improvement, yet the regent of the royal audiencia in Seville, who had been in charge of this census, recommended that no new grammar schools be established, particularly in smaller communities, since they would only encourage the masses to abandon their work in industry and the fields. Another survey, conducted in 1778 by the chancillería in Valladolid for Castile north of the Tagus River, indicated that there were fewer organized schools but more independent preceptors than in previous years. Though many towns requested the crown’s help to revive their schools, the president of the chancillería called for the suppression of most of the smaller schools still in existence and an end to all but a few of the independent preceptors. He also advocated the amalgamation of small schools into larger institutions, the standardization of teaching methods and texts, and the creation of a special board of examiners to select new teachers and to keep in touch with the “sabios” (or scholars) of Europe in order to learn of new ideas and techniques relevant to the teaching of grammar and the liberal arts. But few, if any of his suggestions were put into practice; meanwhile, Latin education in Castile continued to decay. Complaints from Galicia in 1785 about shortages of schools, skilled teachers, and pupils point to the lasting effects of the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767.

One of the major reasons for the failure of Latin schooling to recover quickly after 1767 was the crown’s failure to come effectively to their aid. Suspicious of the results that widespread, popular instruction in Latin might bring, the monarchy under Charles III left the bulk of the organization and financial support of Latin schools to private individuals, municipalities, and the church. The most that it did for secondary education was to revive the old Seminario de Nobles in Madrid and to establish similar schools in Valencia and Vergara. And even though the crown was willing to provide some temporary financial assistance to the towns most affected by the expulsion of the Jesuits, in the main it acted only as a loose regulatory agency and an arbiter of educational disputes. Active intervention had to await the coming of the nineteenth century, beginning with Charles IV’s involvement in the establishment of a number of specialized technical schools.

Before this belated attempt at centralization and control, the only agency in Spain which had attempted to establish order amidst the chaos and confusion of the teaching of Latin was the Society of Jesus. To assess

95 AHN: Cons., leg. 13183, report of the Chancillería de Valladolid, 1778.
96 AHN: Cons., leg. 5495. The town of Mondoñedo complained about the “lack of endowed masters in most of the villages” (folio 38), while the Bishop of Mondoñedo said about the same thing in a letter dated 28.IV.1785. La Coruña claimed that its children learned the three Rs too late, that is, when they were “already adult and then passed into the study of grammar at an age better suited for instruction in crafts.”
97 There was a plan offered in 1792 for a college designed for nobles from the New World that was to be established in Granada, but the institution never got off the ground. See AA Granada: leg. 894, 1792.
the results of its contribution is difficult. At the outset, it is important to recognize that only a minority of the students who went through the Jesuits' schools entered the church; the greatest number by far entered secular careers, many in government. And one can probably assume that with the exception of leading court families, many of whom educated their children at home, a large proportion of crown officials in the years between 1600 and 1770 had been brought up under the Jesuits' care. One can only guess, of course, as to the outcome of such shared experiences among this elite. The fact that their education, at least in content, had changed marginally over the years, locking them into a program which emphasized the study of Latin, antiquity, and the image of order and stability presented in the world of Imperial Rome, perhaps helps to explain the dull, methodical nature of Spanish imperial politics, where the hackneyed ideas of "one monarch, one religion, one sword" prevailed. Like the schools' curriculum, the politics of the age consistently looked backward, toward a mythical Golden Age, that of Rome incarnate in the person of the Emperor Charles V, rather than seeking inspiration from the realities of the present or looking to the future.

Indeed, the internat, by bringing together sons of wealthy families destined to be Castile's future leaders and encouraging them from an early age to pursue their own interests and ambitions, but always within a fixed, immutable framework, may have itself contributed to class-exclusive policies, the protection of privilege, and the status quo in Castilian society to the detriment of social reforms aimed at improving the lot of the laboring poor. Here one is tempted to point out that the major reformers of the late eighteenth century—the Count of Aranda, Campomanes, and Jovellanos—had all been raised outside of Jesuit auspices, although the unsuccessful reformer, Pablo de Olavide, had been taught by the Society in Peru. But too much should not be read into this, because the program of other Latin schools closely resembled that of the Jesuits in content if not in form and in method. Thus Castile's long-standing resistance to innovation and to reform may be linked to a system of Latin education which at its heart taught the elite unquestioning obedience to authority and tradition. In Castile these ideas apparently helped the monarchy to maintain a relatively peaceful society, controlled and disciplined from within, and resigned to imperial defeat, financial disorders, and the arbitrary nature of absolute government. Internal tensions, rather than assuming a violent nature, as in seventeenth-century England or eighteenth-century France, found their outlets in religious fanaticism, persecution of racial and religious minorities, exploitation of empire, migration to the New World, and hostility to foreigners and their ideas.

But this is undoubtedly exaggerating the importance of Latin education in Castile. More certain is that Latin served as an important agency for upward social mobility, particularly in the years between the reign of the Catholic kings and the opening of the seventeenth century. It did this
in two ways. A knowledge of Latin, however rudimentary, conferred a measure of status and prestige; those who knew something of the language acquired a reputation for learning and wisdom, and this in turn helped them to obtain key positions in the public and the private domain. Furthermore, Latin schooling provided access to the universities, whose degrees helped to boost talented commoners and members of the lower nobility into positions of wealth and importance. By the middle of the seventeenth century, however, Castile’s depressed economy and the efforts of new noble families to protect their political prerogatives and social position made sure that Latin was stripped of this particular role. After the 1620s, Latin in fact served increasingly as a wedge against upward social mobility. Though the church demanded it, the elite feared the consequences of its spread, and, consequently, the crown moved to restrict its instruction to society’s upper ranks. Under these circumstances, one can begin to understand why Latin education remained a local, private, and largely uncoordinated and spontaneous effort, except in the hands of the trusted Jesuits, where it helped to buttress the existing social and political order.

In any event, it might be argued that Latin was beneficial to Spanish society, since it provided the church with a link to its earliest years, gave the upper classes a distinct education they could call their own, and allowed the nation’s rulers access to the Golden Age of Imperial Rome, which they could aspire to restore under the banner of Catholic Spain. In addition, as noted above, the ancient language conferred social status and in some cases offices and jobs, helping in this regard families at the middle rather than those at the bottom of the social scale. On the other hand, a pedagogical preoccupation with the Latin language and ancient culture in general helped to block curricular change at universities and schools, or, as Jovellanos put it: “The Latin language, for reasons which are hidden to my poor reason, has raised itself up to the dignity of the one and only legal idiom of our universities, and what is more, it is conserved in them, despite past experience and disappointment.”98 Meanwhile, Latin schools, by the expense and difficulty of their program, helped to thwart the advance of the intelligent, more ambitious and talented poor or at least direct them into nonproductive and nonreproductive ecclesiastical careers, thus canceling long-range prospects for families of lowly origin to rise on the social scale.

But this too is exaggerating the influence of the Roman tongue and that of early education in general. Perhaps the most that should be said is that Latin went hand-in-hand with “robe” culture in Castile. In the sixteenth century Latin abetted the rise of a new social and political elite—

the nobility of the robe—which owed its position to advanced education and the offices of the crown. But in the seventeenth century Latin education became increasingly restrictive as this elite, gradually assimilating itself into the established aristocracy, while seeking to protect its position from below, sought to make Latin the exclusive privilege of the noble and rich. In short, Latin, the instrument by which many of Castile’s ruling families had originally come to power, was then used by this same elite to protect the stability and the fixed social order of the *ancien régime*. 