

PART III:

CIVILIZATION, CHRISTIAN MORALITY AND CHRISTIAN CULTURE

CHRISTIAN IDENTITY AND SCHOLARLY VOCATION IN A SECULARIZED SOCIETY

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The Western World is an inheritor of Greek philosophy and Hebrew prophecy through the action of the Christian Church. The barbarian tribes who invaded the Western Empire were transformed into Latin Christendom. In this civilization universities were born, with a degree of freedom from political powers to develop science, art, philosophy and theology. The Church was a representative of the spiritual sphere of humanity and its relationship to God; while the Emperor or kings were representatives of “secular” power. Thus, through a unique process briefly and skillfully described by Eric Voegelin in *The New Science of Politics*, the West also became a place of unique freedom of the spirit. A similar view is expressed by Orestes Brownson, in *The American Republic*.¹

Tensions between the Emperor, the Pope and the kings escalated as the secular powers of the West became increasingly civilized. This resulted in jealousies, creating tensions between the Emperor and the Church. Different political communities included in Latin Christendom longed to become the sole *Corpus Mysticum*, to the exclusion of both the Roman Church and other political communities. So, the earthly *Leviathan* began a claim for a cult beyond Christ’s motto “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” Later, the *Leviathan*’s claims for such a cult took two different forms: the “divine right of Kings” and the “sovereignty of the People.”

The closer to the start of the simmering jealousies, the more the inertia of Christian customs and morality kept the consequences of the idolatry of nationhood in check. Thus, the different “states” that resulted from the dissolution of Latin Christendom during the wars of the 16th and 17th centuries respected the freedom of the spiritual

¹ Eric Voeglin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952), especially pp. 102-17. Orestes Brownson, *The American Republic* (New Haven: College and University Press Publishers, 1972), pp. 72 ff. and 86 ff.

sphere, allowing universities and the newly founded “Academies” to search for truth with a large degree of freedom. As Tocqueville observed, even among modern absolutist monarchies, the power of Christianity more often than not kept kings and princes from gross violations of human dignity.² Concerning Latin Christendom *before* the age of absolute monarchy, the efficacy of religious deterrents from gross violations of human dignity is even clearer, as noted by Manuel García Pelayo, who studied the phenomenon in his work *El Reino de Dios, arquetipo político*.³ Moreover, thanks to the strength of existing institutions and customs, the Classical and Hebrew-Christian traditions also manifested themselves in the rise of rationalistic theories of natural law. Although often opposed to the Catholic Church, these secured a place for freedom of spirit through declarations of natural rights.

Later on, however, as the destruction of Christianity progressed, various revolutionary governments succeeded in obtaining a divine cult. The Nazis destroyed every liberty, including the freedom of universities, as the Communists have done and still do in the Western world, including Spain and Spanish America, and in the East. The extent of the enmity between sectarian secularism and Christianity is large because the first regards the second as a rival religion.⁴ Ironically,

² Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1953), Vol. 1, pp. 326-27.

³ Manuel García Pelayo, *El Reino de Dios, arquetipo político* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1959). G. K. Chesterton has interesting remarks about this point in his *The Return of Don Quixote*, in *Collected Works* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), Vol. 8, pp. 197-98.

⁴ The last two paragraphs provide a mere outline. The history of this process can be seen to some extent in Eric Voegelin’s works, especially in *From Enlightenment to Revolution*, *The New Science of Politics*, and his several studies on what he called for a long time “Gnosticism.” The author develops these topics at greater length in *Racionalidad y justicia. Encrucijadas políticas y culturales* (Caracas: UCAB-ULA, 2004), especially chapters 2 and 3. Sometimes, the apparently ecumenical intentions of the most extreme secularists can be misleading. Under the pretense of ecumenical discourse, it is not difficult to find the will to power and the attempt to form a new “People” or its “vanguard” out of one’s own Nation so as to impose one’s own creed on the world. For instance, Condorcet wanted that power for the French intellectual

in many Western or Western-influenced countries, the secularist ideology of our time uses the language of “individual rights” as its weapon.

1. The current situation in the United States

The tendency of the modern State to demand a political cult and to make void traditional freedoms of the Western World is becoming apparent even in the USA. Some self-branded “liberals,” who are actually secular extremists, attempt to convert every institution, public and private, into a model of the public ethos that they wish to impose on society. Freedom of association will not be respected; and no spiritual institution will be able to escape the clutches of these extremists. Presently, their methods consist mainly in well-orchestrated propaganda and social pressures. Those who stand for a principle opposed to the secularists’ creed become the target of charges of “irrationality,” “authoritarianism,” and even of “Nazism.” This kind of prejudice manifested itself in some criticisms of Mel Gibson’s movie *The Passion of the Christ*. But its lack of success, despite the influence secularism enjoys in the mainstream media, shows to what extent cultural elites in United States are often distanced from the people.⁵

(see *From Enlightenment to Revolution* [Durham: Duke University Press, 1975], pp. 130-32) and the Soviet Union followed Bakunin’s plan (given to Czar Nicolai I) for the conquest of a great empire (see *The New Science of Politics*, p. 177).

⁵ The author felt this kind of pressure recently at the University of Notre Dame. “The Observer,” an independent newspaper edited there, published a story about some students wearing armbands at a football game to contest “Notre Dame’s No. 1 Princeton Review ranking for intolerance of ‘alternative lifestyles,’” that is to say, of the lifestyle of gays and lesbians. Wanting to respond to a student demand for wider discussion of the issue, the author wrote an article arguing that homosexual marriage is not possible in accordance with natural law, and that to say this does not imply discrimination against anybody. “The Observer” published the article, but included a drawing of a man beating and raping a student wearing an armband, all against the background of the Irish clover. This was a true instance of symbolic language! These are all elements of this kind of tactics. Such elements lie very far from the use of rationality and very close to

A multitude of examples of such prejudice could be given. But let us turn our attention to a paradigm case—the reception of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by critics in the United States. Abraham Lincoln reportedly said that the book “made this great war.”⁶ In the edition by The Modern Library (New York: 2001), we find a survey of opinions of different critics since 1852. In the beginning, many people saw the novel as a revolutionary work. In the South, some greeted it as an evil and unscientific one, while in other circumstances it was seen as a noble and encouraging work. But a recent critic, Hortense J. Spillers (1989), sees in the book nothing less than a *summa* of evil and a piece of reactionary rubbish. Why? Because it did not find “a path to radical social revision” (Marxist feminism), and because it has “at its heart” a “theological terror” (the fear of eternal damnation.) The novel is, according to Spillers, “an opportunistic deployment of the ideologies of a kerigmatic gospel.” In the eyes of some secularists, the Christian character of this book transforms its revolutionary significance into reactionary rubbish.

Something is truly amiss among cultural elites of the United States. History and all reality are approached with cynicism and strong prejudices. Eric Voegelin, quoting Hooker, says of it, “the attitude is psychologically iron-clad and beyond shaking by argument.”⁷ Voegelin found a strong trend of irrationality in the United States when he stayed here for two years on his first visit. This trend can be seen clearly in current secular thought. John Rawls is arguably an instance, and the fact that the praise for his work has been completely unaffected by the many contradictions that it contains is a clear indication of an even greater problem.⁸ The roots of this irrationality appear to lie in the fear of drawing the last consequences of intellectual theses. Secularist thinkers want to arrive neither at the nihilism of a Nietzsche or of Hume's sophisticated arguments, on the one hand, nor at

manipulation and abuse of power. Of course, this personal anecdote is only a marginal and unimportant instance, although a very graphic one.

⁶ See a group of early critics of the novel in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, pp. 641-48.

⁷ Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*, p. 137.

⁸ See the author's *Una lectura platónico-aristotélica de John Rawls* (Pamplona: Cuadernos del Anuario Filosófico, 2003), pp. 15-16; see also the last section of this paper.

the Absolute of a true religion, different from the cult of their beloved 'People' or 'Nation,' on the other.⁹ In such a context, it is not difficult to discover ancient tactics used again in our times.

From the Puritan revolution in England, some very effective ways to destroy a human institution, or institutional order, are well known. As noted by Eric Voegelin:

...in order to advance the "cause" the man who has it will, "in the hearing of the multitude," indulge in severe criticisms of social evils and in particular of the conduct of the upper classes. Frequent repetition of the performance will induce the opinion among the hearers that the speakers must be men of singular integrity, zeal, and holiness, for only men who are singularly good can be so deeply offended by evil. The next step will be the concentration of popular ill will on the established government. This task can be psychologically performed by attributing all fault and corruption, as it exists in the world because of human frailty, to the action or inaction of the government. By such imputation of evil to a specific institution the speakers prove their wisdom to the multitude of men who by themselves would never have thought of such connection; and at the same time they show the point that must be attacked if evil shall be removed from this world. After such preparation, the time will be ripe for recommending a new form of government as the "sovereign remedy to all evils."¹⁰

In light of Voegelin's account, one cannot fail to see the similarity in the use that secularist critics of the Catholic Church have made of the sexual scandal in New England, the echoes of the scandal in fictional movies made in Spain and Mexico, and the present efforts for the "democratization" of the Catholic Church.

Opinion in some academic settings is now ripe to accept the dogma that every institution, both public and private, has to be "liberal" and

⁹ See Eric Voegelin, *On the Form of the American Mind* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), pp. 41, 43-44, 245, 281-82.

¹⁰ *The New Science of Politics*, pp. 135-36. For other features of the Puritan's tactics, see also 136-37.

“democratic.” No moral opposition to homosexuality and no tenet against the use of contraceptives or against abortion as ways to the liberation of women can be tolerated. No authority will be recognized besides the assembly of the people, in Church or State, except, that is to say, the *natural rights* discovered and imposed by the “liberals.”

In academic Catholic or Christian communities, some of these steps have already been taken. In more secular settings, there is an even more advanced state of corruption: no reference to the Christian past of this country or of Europe will be allowed, except in order to ridicule it; no “what” questions; no talk of God or the soul. Karl Popper was afraid to state this kind of question in the academic medium of the 1970s, a time already thoroughly affected by a scientistic and anti-metaphysical ideology.¹¹ He appears to reject “*what*” questions, questions about the essence, but he reintroduces them in a hidden way in a footnote, in order to avoid the censure of his readers. John Searle provides us with two other significant examples. Benjamin Libet once told him “that in the neurosciences, ‘It is okay to be interested in consciousness, but get tenure first.’”¹² Materialist thinkers claim that the problems of freedom of the will and of consciousness will be solved when talk about them disappears.¹³

In philosophical circles, but perhaps not yet in neuroscientific circles, it can be enough to show that an author has a religious affiliation to avoid considering his arguments. For example, John Searle himself holds a materialistic view of the “mind” based only on the argument that a “dualism” would violate the scientific picture of the world that “we” have built with so much effort during the last four hundred years.¹⁴ As regards John Eccles, the great “dualistic”

¹¹Karl Popper, *The Self and Its Brain* (New York: Springer International, 1977), pp. 9, 100, 172, 175, 193 and 553.

¹² John Searle, *The Mystery of Consciousness* (New York: A New York Review Book, 1997), p. 193.

¹³ See John Searle, *The Rediscovery of the Mind* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1992), pp. 29 and 250. The latter passage contains an explicit reference to Richard Rorty as one author of these claims.

¹⁴ See, for example, *The Mystery of Consciousness*, p. 194; *Minds, Brains and Science* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 98; and *Mind. A Brief Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), chapters 1-5.

neuroscientist, Searle dispatches him with a brief phrase: he "... has a religious commitment with the existence of a soul ..." ¹⁵ Thus, Searle provides an example of the anti-religious pressure. We should keep in mind that he also shares in the orthodoxy of secularism, where one can speak about "consciousness," but not about "soul."

The issue of secular orthodoxy is becoming grave. There is social and legal pressure to hinder both private and public persons from expressing religion, Christianity in particular, in the public square. These attacks against the expression of religion often take the mask of an alleged constitutional principle of the separation of Church and State. According to secularist thinkers, this principle means that God has to be progressively and completely evicted from public life, in order for the State to be open to human beings of every creed. Of course, this interpretation and its grounding are preposterous. The interpretation is absurd because, on the one hand, this country mentioned God and Christ in the very text which is invoked in favor of the separation of Church and State. ¹⁶ On the other hand, the way in which things evolved during the nineteenth century made it clear that every creed could be practiced in the United States, if it did not endanger the public order of this society. This view is also absurd, because its real effect is for the secularists to impose on public life their own pseudo-religious belief, even when the majority of the people may disagree with it.

This latter point deserves careful analysis, because it reveals that the secularist religions are apt to be non-democratic, and contrary even to the already false maxim that the "assembly of the people," ought to be sovereign. ¹⁷

¹⁵ *The Mystery of Consciousness*, p. 136. See also p. XIII.

¹⁶ So the text of the Constitution ends: "Done in Convention by the unanimous consent of the States present the seventeenth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty seven." Indeed, this country invoked God even in dollar bills!

¹⁷ Leo XIII, in *Immortale Dei* (nn. 2, 10, 13, 17 and 23), showed that the maxim of the sovereignty of the people is anti-Christian and ought to be distinguished from the problem of political regimes, which is entirely different.

2. The Secularization of the Church as a Movement Akin to the Divinization of Society

Let us turn our attention to the effects that this process of secularization has had within the Church. The pseudo-religious forms of secularism are enemies of true religion. They want either to destroy any trace of religion or to transform the remaining traces into mere instances of the general secular spirit that they intend to impose on society. At the same time, the eternal temptation before the soul of a Christian can lure her into the vanity of pleasing the world or of enjoying the pleasures that the world in its turn offers. Should a Christian yield to this temptation, he would lose his identity and would become what the secularists want him to be. A share in the honors or powers or pleasures of “this world” is received in exchange for the soul.

The loss of identity is happening within Catholic colleges and universities through the influence of some scholars, including theologians. Ralph McInerny argues that, in large measure, the yielding to secularism was initiated in consequence of the occasion for dissent provided by the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. This, in effect, caused the exertion of a will to power over the faithful. The sexual issues with which the Papal document deals, and the confusion that followed after the Second Vatican Council, allowed room for certain theologians to substitute their own authority for the authority of the Church.¹⁸ We might add that not only Christian colleges and universities are being secularized, but also religious orders and, considering the number of canonical “annulments” of marriage granted every year, the Church courts.

Within the Church in the United States, one of the main temptations to error has to do with the very powerful cultural and political myth of “democracy.” Many people strive to substitute the concept of absolute “democracy” for the hierarchy of Christ’s Church. In the face of this distortion, the most obvious experiences are denied. For example, even in political society it is very clear that there is government and it does

¹⁸ See Ralph McInerny, *What Went Wrong After the Second Vatican Council* (Manchester, New Hampshire: Sophia Institute Press, 1998), pp. 108-09 and 136-37.

not merely execute the will of the governed subjects.¹⁹ But, in the distorted view, God is replaced by a new idol, *the People*. Of course, in reality people are always actually subject to authority. What the Catholic advocates of “democracy within the Church” want, as seen by McInerny with lucidity, is simply to replace the *Magisterium*.²⁰ It is not difficult to discern in this the familiar ‘will to power’ that probably moved Satan since the beginning of time.²¹ This can be immediately noticed in the key documents that McInerny considers in his analysis of the Church in the United States.

Charles Meyer, for example, tells us; “If there is an underlying fallacy in the statement of the [dissenting] theologians [of the Curran statement], it is perhaps that truth can be attained more readily through a democratic process than by an authoritarian decision.”²² In “the most outspoken statement” against *Humanae Vitae*, written by Monsignor George Schlichte, we discover this real core of the problem with ease:

The Holy Spirit is present first of all in the community of God’s people, and those who fail to reflect the consensus of this community damage the effectiveness of the Church’s mission.²³

One wonders if that “Holy Spirit” is not, by any chance, the *Volksgeist* of Hegel and the post-Hegelians instead of the Eternal God, sovereign of every nation.

An old Papal document can be of use one century after its publication for understanding the mechanisms with which this secularization of the

¹⁹ See *The New Science of Politics*, p. 38: “ruling power is ruling power also in a democracy, but one is shy of facing the fact.” James Madison stated already in *The Federalist Papers* (XIV, originally published on November 30th, 1787), that the Republic of the United States is not a democracy, but a republic.

²⁰ See McInerny, *What Went Wrong After the Second Vatican Council*, pp. 91-92.

²¹ See Saint Augustine, *De Trinitate*, book 13, chapter 13.

²² McInerny, *What Went Wrong with Vatican II*, p. 98. The Curran statement was published by *The New York Times* on July 30, 1968 and in pages 60-64 of McInerny’s book. Charles Meyer is quite right in pointing to “democratism” as the main fallacy.

²³ McInerny, *What Went Wrong with Vatican II*, p. 77.

Church works! An important point to be emphasized here is that this analysis reflects an attack upon the very sources of Christian wisdom. The Scripture and the Fathers are submitted to textual criticism. Not every kind of textual criticism is problematic, of course. But it becomes so when it can be “rightly called *agnostic, immanentist, and evolutionist*” as *On the Doctrines of the Modernists* observes.²⁴

Once an entire discipline is formed with underlying principles that are not judicious, the situation of young scholars becomes difficult. If they want to be regarded as “serious intellectuals,” they cannot disregard the hermeneutical web developed in the tradition of such a discipline. But it is then difficult to distinguish between what is true and useful for a sincere study of the sources and what is a consequence of a philosophy incompatible with Faith. This situation is made even more difficult because historians and critics of the Christian tradition have formed “a close alliance” so that:

If one of them makes any utterance, the others applaud him in chorus, proclaiming that science has made another step forward, while if an outsider should desire to inspect the new discovery for himself, they form a coalition against him. He who denies it is decried as one who is ignorant, while he who embraces and defends it has all their praise... The domineering overbearing of those who teach the errors, and the thoughtless compliance of the more shallow minds who assent to them, create a corrupted atmosphere which penetrates everywhere...²⁵

Other key points of the secularist attack include those alternative philosophies with which one could answer critics' claims about religion and “rationality.” One such tradition is scholastic philosophy. Against her, “they use the weapons of ridicule and contempt.”²⁶ Inextricably united to the attack against the philosophical tradition of the Church, the encyclical argues that “To bring contempt and odium to the mystic Spouse of Christ, who is the true light, the children of darkness have been wont to cast in her face before the world a stupid calumny, and

²⁴ See “On the Doctrines of the Modernists” (*Pascendi Domini Gregis*, 1907) (Boston: Saint Paul Editions, 1954), #34.

²⁵ *Ibid.*; see #34.

²⁶ *Ibid.*; see #42, p. 53.

pervverting the meaning and force of things and words, to depict her as the friend of darkness and ignorance, and the enemy of light, science and progress.”²⁷

All of this is reinforced by more general tactics.

There is no species of insult which they do not heap upon [Catholics who fight the battles of the Church], but their usual course is to charge them of ignorance and obstinacy. When an adversary rises up against them with an erudition and force that renders them redoubtable, they seek to make a conspiracy of silence around him to nullify the effects of his attack... For them the scholarship of a writer is in direct proportion to the recklessness of his attacks on antiquity and of his efforts to undermine tradition and the ecclesiastical magisterium.²⁸

Moreover the document observes that such persons “seize upon professorships in the seminaries and universities...”²⁹

The causes of the fall of many churchmen as a consequence of these attacks are also pointed out by the Successor of Peter: “They are possessed by the empty desire of having their names upon the lips of the public...”³⁰ “When a Catholic layman or a priest forgets the precept of the Christian life which obliges us to renounce ourselves if we would follow Christ and neglects to tear pride from his heart, then it is he who most of all is a fully ripe subject for the errors of Modernism.”³¹ “The

²⁷ Ibid., #42, pp. 54-55

²⁸ Ibid., #42, p. 55. It should be noted that not everyone who makes use of Modern philosophical doctrines or scholarly tools in theological research can be charged with the characterization made by Pius X over one hundred years ago. Some scholars, for example, do not have other intellectual tools, and they use them honestly and in the best way they can. Moreover, some modern doctrines (phenomenology, for example) are better suited for a proper use by theologians. What I am trying to uncover is the fact that the manipulation of Catholic consciences described by Pius X is still very active, even though, of course, it is not the only active phenomenon among Catholic scholars who use “Modern” philosophy.

²⁹ Ibid., #43, p. 55.

³⁰ Ibid., #43, p. 56.

³¹ Ibid., #40, p. 52.

young, excited and confused by all this clamor of praise and abuse, some of them afraid of being branded as ignorant, others ambitious to rank among the learned, and both classes goaded internally by curiosity and pride, not infrequently surrender ..."³²

I think that the Pope was completely right in the analysis of the crisis and its causes. As already indicated, I must add that today in the United States many churchmen—lay and clerics alike—have derailed the cult of God and built the cult of *their* people. This is the cause of their conceiving that absolute *democracy* has to be established in the Church: it is not God but the people—led by them, of course—that is the source and object of faith and cult.³³ This is also often the cause of their ignorance and isolation from the life of the Church outside the United States.³⁴ Thus, both from outside and inside the Church, the old methods of carrying about a revolution have been used. Such methods include showing the miseries of the members of an institution and attributing such evils to the institution itself.

Even though Pius X saw well the nature of the disease and most of the contemporary ways of its spreading, he could not stop it, because the only measures at his disposal were of a kind that is unable to vivify an institution. As Maurice Hauriou argued, norms and regulations, sanctions and punishments are dead without a preexisting spirit animating the institution.³⁵ In the Church, that spirit is the living Faith that heals and elevates human reason. The Pope did what he could and

³² *Ibid.*, #42, p. 55.

³³ An example of this spiritual disorder, *ethnolatría*, can be found in William L. Shannon's "Eucharist, Understanding Christ's Body," published by *Catholic Update* (Cincinnati: Saint Anthony Messenger Press, 1998).

³⁴ Some bishops are reducing the course of studies of seminarians and taking out the study of Latin. This move is misguided for two reasons. First, one of the greatest dangers for the Church in the United States lies in its isolationism and the country's general ethnocentrism. Second, another great danger is activism that causes neglect of study, prayer and contemplation. To throw young men to work in parishes without a strong inner life, under the presupposition that workers are needed urgently, is a grave mistake. Give us men with a rich inner life and we will have an abundance of fruits.

³⁵ Maurice Hauriou, "Teoría de la institución y de la fundación," *Obra escogida* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Administrativos, 1976), pp. 257-96.

should have done, but that was not enough. The Church needs the sound attentiveness of Catholic intellectuals both to the Word of God and to reality. Thinking Catholics have to understand, first, and show, later, that reason does not belong to the so-called “rationalists.” Reason is not in opposition to God. Reason, without God, is condemned to absurdity.³⁶ As J. M. Bochenski stated, “Sartre is the most intelligent and the sharpest of all atheists. He perceived that, real being in the world could only be explained by God. But Sartre is not willing to recognize God; he thinks that He is a contradiction, and therefore he quite logically deduces that all being, particularly man, is absurd, senseless.”³⁷ We can say even more: reason is not opposed to faith. “God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.”³⁸ Reason is very poor in theoretical resources concerning the most important aspects of the position of human beings in the universe, and weak in its control of the irrational aspects of life, without faith and grace.

For Catholic colleges and universities in the United States, this is a matter not only of fidelity to Revelation. It is also a matter of justice. The faithful entrust their children and their money to these institutions in the belief that students will be formed intellectually in The Faith and the money will be dedicated to furthering that very Faith. When colleges and universities act as secularized institutions, they are committing a fraud.³⁹ Do they want to be secular? No problem! But they should be honest. They should stop receiving money on behalf of their lost Catholic identity.

For young scholars, this might be a matter of eternal salvation. Do they want to have a “brilliant career” within the current state of such

³⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche understood this very well. For this reason he stated that we have no choice but to believe in God, as long as we still believe in grammar.

³⁷ I.M. Bochenski, *Philosophy: An Introduction* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1962), p. 107.

³⁸ 1 Cor. 1: 25, New Revised Standard Version.

³⁹ This is what lies behind the powerful article of Susan Biddle Shearer, “Notre Dame Has a Duty to Uphold Church Teachings,” *South Bend Tribune*, 18 March 2005, B5.

institutions? They should be ready, then, to exchange their soul for that career. Do they want to do something really important, to preserve and to transmit the treasure of The Faith and authentic religion to future generations? Do they want to help in the fight against the powers of darkness and against the menaces of the cult of the earthly *Leviathan*? In that case, they should be ready to use their inventiveness in the design of new institutions or, when necessary and possible, in providing a new spirit to the existing ones. In doing so, they have to commit themselves to an enterprise that will take decades and maybe centuries to blossom.⁴⁰ This is what our forefathers did to preserve The Faith from any degradation of human doctrines and to build Christian civilizations. This is the call that God is shouting to young Catholic scholars.

⁴⁰ And they should be ready, also, to dedicate hours to true meditation on the Word of God, because without prayer and contemplation there is no hope of doing anything for God. In order to spend hours in meditation, the young Catholics of the United States need to overcome a very powerful tendency of their culture to overestimate practical activity and underestimate the value of contemplation. Eric Voegelin found this tendency often in his study *On the Form of the American Mind* (see pp. 35-36, 62-63, and 219, for examples). Pius X refers to it as the principle of the "Americanists:" "the active virtues are more important than the passive, and are to be more encouraged in practice" (#38, p. 48). This principle has many incidences in academic life. Among them, for example, the quantity of books read is often more valued than the meditation needed to discern truth from error.