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JUAN LUIS VIVES

(1492?-1540)

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Vives merits study on account of his literary excellence, his eminent role as a Renaissance thinker and his outstanding intellectual, ethical and aesthetic values. We may also note his historical relevance, his congruence with the ‘spirit of our time’ (the *Zeitgeist*) and with recently emerging values such as peace, moral conduct and the transcending of national conflicts and ethnocentrism, the permanent ideals to which UNESCO is dedicated.

Education and teaching

Juan Luis Vives was born in Valencia, Spain, in 1492 or 1493, the records of the date being inconsistent.² His native city, a seaport, was open to the influence of the Italian Renaissance through its political connection with the Italian islands and the kingdom of Naples, which were at that time part of Spain. His native tongues were Valencian and Spanish; he was to familiarize himself with Greek, French, Flemish, English and Italian; but Latin was the language of learned communication and he demonstrated outstanding proficiency in it in his works. This multilingual European dimension remained constant throughout his life.

Vives came from a family of converted Jewish cloth merchants,³ of solid financial standing, who were repeatedly placed on trial by the Inquisition between 1491, when his mother renounced Judaism, and 1524, when his parents and paternal grandmother were convicted.⁴ His rigorous sense of moral rectitude has Judaeo-Christian origins.

Following primary studies, completed at the age of 12, Vives attended a two-year grammar course and a three-year arts course in the recently inaugurated University of Valencia, established in 1501 by a papal bull of Alexander VI. He experienced the conflict between traditional scholastic education and the nascent humanism that was to inform his own literary development.⁵

In 1517 he moved to Paris, where he studied at the Faculty of Arts, taking Logic as his main subject. In protest at the poor education he received, he later wrote his famous pamphlet *Adversus pseudodialecticos* [Against False Dialecticians] (Louvain, 1519).

We are told that Vives enrolled in Montaigu College.⁶ His teachers included, in particular, Nicolas Bérault, a product of Italian humanism. But there was another influence on his thinking at the time; in the college he came into contact with *devotio moderna*, a movement launched in the Netherlands in the late fourteenth century by Gerhard Groote and later developed by the ‘Brethren of the Common Life’, who sought to revive the spirit of the early church. Eschewing rarefied theological and philosophical discussion, they devoted themselves to a profoundly moral and religious way of life. Thomas à Kempis’ *The Imitation of Christ* typifies this movement, which deeply influenced Vives. According to recent research, he also had contacts with the Lisieux College, but Vives did not confine himself to a particular college and selected the most highly reputed teachers from among the fifty or so colleges of the Sorbonne.

In 1519 we find Vives working as a professor at the University of Louvain, which was composed of the four classical faculties of Arts, Medicine, Law and Theology. Vives, a great

humanist and teacher of classical studies, lectured on Pliny's *Natural History* in the morning and on Virgil's *Georgics* at his evening classes. But his name does not appear on the list of teachers. He probably offered his services as a guest lecturer who would talk on specific subjects by virtue of his personal prestige.

In Bruges he met and became a close friend of Adrian of Utrecht, Vice-Chancellor of the University, who later became Pope Adrian VI, to whom he addressed one of his letters, offering a lucid diagnosis and cure for the ills of his age.

He was in great demand as a private tutor, in which capacity he was employed primarily by the Valdaura family, merchants from Valencia, whose daughter he married in 1524. Among his most prominent pupils was Guillermo de Croy, appointed Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, whose death deprived Vives of many opportunities.

Of decisive importance during this period was his contact with Erasmus, whose literary authority, mastery of classical thought and profound theological learning were undisputed. Through Erasmus and the Netherlands circle, Vives became steeped in what has been called 'northern humanism'. Italian humanism, in its many different guises and with its various representative figures, is more literary and aesthetic, while northern humanism is considered more moral, more theological, philosophical, political and social in character. In this northern humanist school, Erasmus was the most eminent theologian; Budé excelled as jurist and More concerned himself essentially with social and political matters.⁷ Vives stood out by virtue of his moral and philosophical principles and shared with the others a strong attachment to religion.

In 1523, he traveled to England at the behest of Henry VIII and his wife Catherine of Aragon. On a number of occasions, the king and queen, accompanied by several members of the court, attended his lectures at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, which were devoted to the classical Latin authors: Cicero, Quintilian, Virgil, Ovid and Horace.

The stern, moral and indeed ascetic character of education at Oxford both influenced Vives in his habits and corresponded to his temperament.⁸ Strict discipline was observed in Corpus Christi College. The day began at 5 a.m. with mass, biblical texts with commentaries were read out at mealtimes, walks were taken in double file, and the rules called for the maintenance of unity and harmony, avoiding anything that might cast a shadow over communal life.

His commentary on Saint Augustine's City of God (*Comentaria ad libros De Civitate Dei D. Aurelii Agustini*) (Louvain-Bruges, 1521-22), a work commissioned by Erasmus and dedicated to King Henry VIII, is a brilliant critical, historical and philological interpretation surpassing anything he had previously published. He had close contacts with the Court. Cardinal Wolsey honoured him with his friendship; it was he who dubbed Vives as 'doctor melifluo' because his prose flowed like honey. Although he had established a worldwide reputation and was in receipt of a royal pension, Vives lived in strained circumstances.

An outstanding member of the brilliant humanist cultural group at the English Court with which Vives communicated was Thomas More, the most famous of the English humanists and the most admired and respected by Henry VIII. More would eventually send Henry to the block for opposing his divorce from Queen Catherine. Vives also opposed this divorce and was obliged on that account to return to Louvain in 1528. His friendship with the powerful never caused him to waver in his convictions.

Thomas More, whom he met as early as 1520, had a profound influence on Vives. Until then, his works had been basically humanist in character, with a religious dimension that he never failed to cultivate. The bulk of his writings consisted of commentaries on a wide variety of classical authors through whom he sought to introduce his pupils to the Graeco-Latin world. But from that time onwards, he emerged as a thinker dedicated to the writing of voluminous works on philosophy, morals, social policy and education—from the time of his retirement to Bruges until his death in 1540. The impact of Thomas More is particularly significant because of his deep social commitment, clearly expressed in *Utopia*. Utopia is the name of an island discovered by a

Portuguese navigator, who begins a new wholesome life there, based on natural morals and religion in opposition to the corrupt, debased, bellicose environment around him.

De subventionem pauperum [Help for the Poor] (Bruges, 1526) by Vives and a large number of letters on the virtues of peace reveal the political, social and ethical influence of Thomas More. The title of Chapter IX, Book I, of this book reflects the thinking of both: ‘What God gives to each person is not given for each person alone.’⁹

The humanist philosopher

Luis Vives is not easy to classify as a philosopher. His education was that available at the time, especially in the Paris Faculty of Arts, that is to say the various strands of scholasticism based on Aristotle, although in his *Censura de Aristotelis operibus* [Critique of Aristotle’s Works] (1538) he specifies his position as follows: ‘Viewing the matter as carefully and thoroughly as possible, I conclude that pride of place must be given to Aristotle.’¹⁰ This does not mean that a statement may be defended solely on the authority of Aristotle or of any other philosopher. Truth is infinite because it is a work of God and therefore transcends all human capacity, having ever to be conquered anew. Some have gone so far as to speak of a ‘Vivist’ system, but this seems to be somewhat excessive. He took what he considered most valid from a variety of thinkers and combined it in a Christian world-view, based partly on Aristotle but also rooted in or at least sharing features with a great deal of classical thinking: Plato, Cicero, Seneca, Saint Thomas, Augustinism and occasionally Parisian nominalism.

In the first paragraph of his *De prima philosophia* [First Philosophy] (Bruges, 1531), he specifies his object and method. He sets out to investigate the causes of Nature, maintaining that our guide, notwithstanding the darkness that clouds our minds, is what we can attain through experience and reflection, since what cannot be demonstrated by reason draws us into the realm of fantasy and illusion.¹¹ This reliance on experience in a work of philosophy was unusual in his time and presaged the empiricist schools of thought of the Renaissance.

Death overtook him in the course of a work that represented his greatest endeavor, *De veritate fidei christianae* [On the Truth of the Christian Faith] (Bruges, 1540). He affirms in it that the truth of things surpasses human reason, which has to yield and discover reality on the basis of accurate observation, even though there are some who erroneously claim that man is the measure of all things. He rejects the dual theory developed in Parisian Averroistic circles according to which something may be true in philosophy and false in theology and vice versa. Such paradoxes and sleight of hand have no place in the thought of Vives.

The fruit of a lifetime’s teaching remains in the form of his ‘Introductions’ and ‘Commentaries’ devoted to classical authors. He wrote incessantly from the age of 22 onwards. His oratory and dialectical skills and powers of persuasion are in the best classical tradition, especially of the Latin authors, who were in those days considered to hold the keys to education, transcending the arid nominal scholasticism that held sway in Paris. However, his worldview is essentially scholastic in its most varied dimensions and, above all, deeply Christian.

Among his ‘Introductions’, ‘Commentaries’ and ‘Prelections’, we may refer in particular to the *Praelectio in leges Ciceronis* [Book of Cicero’s Laws] (Paris, 1514), *Praefatio in georgica Virgilii* [The Georgics] (Louvain, 1518) and *In bucolica Virgilii* [The Bucolics] (Breda, 1537), *Declamationes quinque Syllanae* [Sullanian Declamations] (Louvain, 1520) and *Isocrates oratio Aeropagitica* [The Areopagite Oration] (Oxford, 1523). In general, the command of rhetoric revealed by these works makes them a joy to read.

Vives, together with Budé, More and Erasmus, followed the path of Christian humanism. Those of his works usually classified as devotional include: *Meditationes in septem psalmos paenitentiales* [Meditations on the Seven Penitential Psalms] (Louvain, 1517-1518); and *Exercitationes animi in Deum* [Exercises of the Soul towards God] (Bruges, 1535).

The judgement of his contemporaries when he was still a young man may help us to understand the importance of Vives. Erasmus, normally very critical of his contemporaries, did not hesitate to praise Vives in a letter dated 13 February 1519 to the court physician Juan de la Parra, tutor to Prince Ferdinand of Hapsburg, brother of Charles V: 'We have with us Joan Lluís Vives, a Valencian, only 26 years of age but already well versed in all the philosophical subjects, who has made such strides in *belles-lettres*, eloquence, oratory and writing that I hardly know of anyone to compare with him.' Thomas More said in a letter to Erasmus in 1520: 'Nothing in Vives fails to give great pleasure to all. I myself draw special satisfaction from his work against the pseudo-dialecticians [...] because I find the same subjects discussed there as I dealt with myself some time ago, even before reading Vives, and I had adduced the same arguments.'¹²

The peacemaker

Luis Vives wrote letters to those who held the fate of Europe in their hands in the first half of the sixteenth century. The common denominator of these letters, some of which are in effect dissertations, is the search for a peace that everyone seemed bent on destroying. Europe, torn by endless strife, was for Vives a subject of deep and earnest concern. Words of advice to kings and to the Pope flowed constantly from his pen. Such was his intellectual and moral influence.

In 1522 he wrote from Louvain his letter to Pope Adrian VI *De Europae statu ac tumultibus* [On the Unrest and Disturbances in Europe]. 'Two things are requested and expected of You: silence of arms among princes and the cessation of all sedition among ordinary citizens.'¹³

He wrote to Henry VIII of England about the imprisonment of the King of France, Francis I, by Charles V in 1525 (*Ad Henricum VIII angliae regem, de rege Galliae capto*). He warned him in his letter that 'what happened to the King of France could happen to any one of you'¹⁴ and urged him to show restraint in victory and not to vent his fury on an innocent, defenseless nation. He again wrote to the king in 1525: 'Just as earnestly as I have always pleaded the cause of peace with Your Majesty and all the other Princes with whom I have enjoyed any favor, I shall rejoice, now that peace is again in the air, both for the public good and for the good of the Princes themselves.'¹⁵ This letter, written in Bruges, contains the following statement:

There is no war so advantageous as to be preferable to peace, however disastrous; one need only consider the worry, the expense or the danger it occasions . . . How many have repented of starting a war even under the most auspicious circumstances! And how nobody has regretted peace though secured at a cost!¹⁶

He dedicated his treatise *De concordia et discordia in humano genere* [Concord and Discord in Humankind] (Bruges, 1526) to Charles V, King of Spain, closing with these words: 'Nothing will arouse your horror more than hatred and discord and you will pursue nothing with more zeal than concord and love.'¹⁷

His work *De pacificatione* [On Peacemaking] (Bruges, 1529), addressed to Don Alfonso Manrique, Archbishop of Seville, opens with this statement: 'Nobody can claim to be a Christian . . . not a single individual, without striving for peace, concord, charity and mutual goodwill.'¹⁸

These writings on peace deserve to be reread. His resourcefulness in arguing his case, the manifold reasons he deduced, his description of the factors that make us stray from the path of peace and of the worldview on which politics should be based are still a source of strength and encouragement and an example of beauty.

Vives the educationist

Luis Vives was the first systematic educational theorist of the Renaissance. His magnum opus *De disciplinis* [On Disciplines] (Bruges, 1531), which he dedicated to King John III of Portugal and

which inspired a course of studies at Coimbra University, is the most prolific source of his educational thought. But almost all his works have to be consulted in order to understand Vives' approach to education.

For Vives, the source of wisdom was not to be sought in the textbooks of scholastic philosophy or in the interminable dialectical arguments fraught with the subtleties and great futility of the University of Paris, but rather in the outstanding authors of Greece and Rome. Wisdom has been accumulated slowly over the centuries and we have to turn to the past, consulting the sources with a critical eye, in order to cull unique and matchless treasures from its rich fountainhead. In the first book of *De disciplinis*, he expresses the view that this vast store of classical wisdom is being forgotten or that it has come down to us in an impaired state. He lists the causes of corruption in the arts as: unruly passions that hamper progress in the search for truth, the arrogance of the pseudo-dialectician, the desire to stand out, undue concern with subtle distinctions, intransigence, unwillingness to accept the truth from others, lack of a critical sense, the incompetence of teachers, hatred, the obscurity of authors such as Aristotle and of his commentators, and falsification or modification of original works.

His veneration for the classical world is combined with the critical outlook of the Renaissance. As a result, he takes issue with authors hallowed by the centuries, in particular with Aristotle, despite his unchallenged authority at the time, in his work *Censura de Aristotelis operibus*.

Each of the disciplines forming part of the university curriculum (grammar, dialectics, rhetoric, natural philosophy, medicine, mathematics, moral philosophy and civil law) is subjected to a critical analysis that reveals the causes of its decadence. His fiercest criticism is reserved for dialectics, a discipline awash with futility and trivialities.

His commentaries on teaching are among his most brilliant and interesting writings. Part II of the book *De disciplinis* is entitled *De tradendis disciplinis* [The Art of Teaching] but his contribution to the science of education is evident throughout his work. Book II provides a systematic view of teaching, no longer confined to the university, although the latter inspires the most extensive and finest part of his prolific writings. The key themes are presented at the outset: 'We must first examine, for each type of instruction, the question of *what, how, to what extent, by whom and where* it should be taught.'¹⁹

His teleological and theological ideas are clearly apparent in Chapter IV where he states that God is the supreme and ultimate end and that the arts must contribute to God's greater glory. But if there is one characteristic that sets him apart from other humanists, it is the moral dimension of his educational theory. The ethical imperative is a theme that runs through all his writings. The goal of the arts is erudition, development of the mental faculties and, above all, virtue.

In classical Latin culture, he is particularly interested in orators, for whom the use of words is not a mere literary game or a theoretical exercise but has a public function, that of convincing the masses and settling legal issues, so that words have an operative role, shaping individual and social circumstances. Without oratorical skills a public figure is doomed to failure; hence the interest that Vives took in Cicero, commenting on many passages in his writings and dedicating to him a number of his 'Introductions' based on university lectures. He also drew inspiration from Quintilian. In the Greek world, it was the speeches of Isocrates that prompted him to put pen to paper.

The subject to which he devoted most space and attention, not only in this book but throughout his work, was the subject of the teacher. 'Teachers should not only possess the skills required for sound instruction . . . they should also set an example of flawless conduct. They must above all avoid saying or doing anything that might set a bad example to or scandalize those they are instructing and refrain from any act not worthy of imitation.'²⁰ 'Those who qualify as teachers should do so not only by virtue of their learning but also by virtue of their conduct, inasmuch as learning that is not keyed to life is harmful.'²¹ The work ends with an essay, *The Life and Manners*

of the *Humanist*, which describes the ideal teacher, who is actually the living image of Vives himself.²²

Education and guidance must go hand in hand. Teachers do not merely instruct. To perform their principal function of educating, they must assume the role of a guide, helping individual students make judicious decisions about their studies, occupation and life. Counseling depends on analysis of students' abilities and interests so that they can be informed of the most appropriate course of studies and job opportunities for optimum vocational and social integration.

Children should stay at school for one or two months during which their intellectual abilities and qualities of character are assessed. The teachers should meet *in camera* four times a year to compare their impressions of the potential of their respective pupils and discuss the approach to be adopted in the light of individual aptitudes.²³

Luis Vives devotes many pages to the subject, especially the whole of Chapter IV of Book II of *De disciplinis*, where he shows how to determine the most appropriate course of studies for individual students. They must be assigned various activities to observe their reactions. One of the first tests of innate ability is arithmetic. He agrees with Quintilian that memory is crucial, both for ease of perception and for accurate retention. Games that reveal keen intelligence are a highly important yardstick, as children competing with others tend to act spontaneously without the slightest shadow of pretence. Emulation highlights and reveals resourcefulness, patterns of behavior, leadership and management qualities, initiative, and, in effect, their inner nature. Freedom is a basic prerequisite. Those engaged in an activity for which they are well fitted invariably do best. Teachers have to exercise great caution and avoid being over-hasty. It is therefore unwise to despair too soon of a doubtful or even weak intelligence, and likewise to invest too much hope in a strong intelligence. There are many examples of changes in cast of mind and patterns of behavior in society and in school. Some people whose intelligence has been underrated have performed well in the long run. Vives draws attention to the risks incurred when parents force studies on their children, either through excessive love because they want the best for them or in response to the prevailing custom. In those day custom demanded that children be channeled into careers in the military, the church, trade or literature, regardless of their abilities and aptitudes, as though nearly everybody were capable of anything.

A well-explored theme in modern psychology is the influence of the teacher's attitude on the pupil's performance. Vives notes that once students have been steered into a particular type of activity, both parents and teachers must cherish the highest hopes. After enrolment in school, pupils should on no account be discouraged without a serious attempt to improve their performance, both academically and in terms of behavior.

All human beings should acquire a thorough knowledge of themselves, also of their fragility and propensity to evil. We are often told of the optimism of 'Renaissance Man', his renewed respect for the natural condition, but this other factor, the negative side, the passions and evil inclinations, are always taken into account by Vives. Teachers must be aware of both good and bad tendencies so that they can stimulate desirable character traits and discourage undesirable ones.

Vives agreed with the humanist psychology of his time in stressing the need for the student to feel appreciated and respected. He therefore recommended that the teacher should show affection comparable to that of a parent: a love that fosters the noblest traits without overlooking those that must be corrected and remedied. The teacher should win the student's affection through benign affability and the pupils will in turn respect and venerate their teachers.

Vives also gave considerable attention to the location of schools, which should be established in healthy surroundings. This requirement was even more essential at that time in view of the risk of epidemics. They were to be located in areas where there was plenty of wholesome food, far removed from noisy crowds and from the public highway. 'There is no cause for surprise at such meticulousness in seeking a place for knowledge to be born and to grow; it is like looking

for a place to put a beehive so that the bees will leave us their honey.’²⁴ Environmental factors in education, which are currently the subject of so much research, already figured in Vives’ theory.

His empirical bent is evident in his working method, which was always based on the experience of his surroundings and on the application of what is now called ‘action-oriented research’: observing prevailing conditions, pinpointing problems, designing models for action and comparing them with real-life situations. He stressed that a great deal of experimentation and observation is required before general rules can be formulated.

His empirical approach is also evident in his *De anima et vitae* [On the Soul and on Life] (Bruges, 1538), which opens with the following methodological statement: ‘Anything that is not of an accidental nature capable of being perceived by our senses and that is not implicit in such accidental phenomena can be known by us only through its functioning.’²⁵ He studies the functions that we share with the animals, our various mental functions and especially the passions, to which he devotes Book III, in which his observation and personal analysis reach full maturity—one of his most remarkable achievements.

A key theme of startling topicality and a distinctive feature of Vives’ educational theory is the cultivation of language, which is inseparably linked to reason and which sets us apart from the animals. Language is an indispensable means of human intercourse. Students must be offered sound models of language and conduct, not only by their parents and teachers but by everyone with whom they have dealings. Language is the repository of learning. ‘It would be ideal if the human race had just one language or, barring that, at least one used without distinction by most peoples and nations.’²⁶ The ideal universal language, whose properties he enumerates, had to be Latin in view of its widespread use by many nations and peoples. There is scarcely any art or science without literary monuments. It would be a shame not to cultivate or conserve them. He regrets the fact that Muslims and Christians do not have a common language. But since the ideal is unattainable, he calls for the establishment of language schools in most towns, teaching not only the usual three—Latin, Greek and Hebrew—but also Arabic and even the whole range of dialects.

Children must be educated from the age of seven to the age of fifteen, although much will depend on the ability of the pupil. Mother tongues, national languages, Latin and Greek are of major importance.

The Latin language gained by borrowing from the Greek, just as Latin enriched the remaining languages of Europe, especially [...] Italian, Spanish and French, the speakers of which would greatly benefit from familiarity with Latin both to understand it properly, and hence all the arts through its medium, and to purify and enrich the native language derived from it.²⁷

From the first lesson in reading down to university education, clear and detailed practical standards are prescribed in respect of teaching and learning procedures, specifying recommended authors and passages and the attitude that pupils should adapt to studies.

His work *De ratione studii puerilis* [On the Right Method of Instruction for Children] (1523) deals with pre-university education. It consists of two brief treatises. The first is a work plan for use by the tutor of Princess Mary, daughter of the King and Queen of England and future wife of Philip II of Spain. The first stage is learning to read the letters of the alphabet. After the syllables and words come the parts of speech, with reading and writing proceeding hand in hand. Next comes declination, conjugation of verbs, syntax and translation from English into Latin. He recommends Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, Plato, Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine. Among the moderns, he cites Erasmus with *Inquiridion* and Thomas More’s *Utopia*. The pupil should always have a dictionary at hand to look up any unfamiliar word.

To avert the risk of an individualist education, other young girls of irreproachable conduct should study with the princess to promote a certain amount of emulation, closer acquaintanceship and the desire to excel, and to guard against the conceit induced by isolation.

Part II of *De ratione studii puerilis* starts with religion, recommending piety and attendance at religious ceremonies. Love of work is commended since God withholds his gifts from the idle. Pupils must be industrious both in their studies and in seeking to attain virtue. Memory is a recurrent theme in Vives since it is the store of all learning and can be improved with constant exercise. He describes how notes should be taken: pupils should collect terms, expressions, ideas and whatever deserves to be recorded. He urges them to cultivate a nimble and practiced hand in writing and never to approach a teacher without pen and paper lest the words fly over their head. He encourages them to ask questions: ‘Don’t be ashamed; the harm is not in asking but in not knowing’.²⁸

Vives’ style is oratorical, teeming with quotations and full of persuasive arguments. Hence his reverence for the great master Cicero and for Quintilian in his *Instituto oratoria* [The Training of an Orator]. Public life calls for the training of orators and such training was vital both for his individual pupils among the royalty and nobility and for university students. *De ratione discendi* [The Art of Speaking] (1532) was written in response to that need. He notes in the dedication that human society is bound together by justice and speech, yet he remarks that more influence is exercised by the latter. Supremacy lies with those most gifted in the art of speech. In studies of rhetoric, Aristotle is a key teacher. The aim is not to provide training in empty verbosity. Speakers were to draw their arguments from the problems of philosophy, familiarity with classical antiquity and experience of life. It was not by chance that the great orators of Athens and Rome emerged at great moments of freedom and vigor in society. He culls from the ancient tradition whatever seems important, always with a practical end in view, and states that his entire system is designed to produce an immediate enhancement of the powers of speech. Some authors prepared orators for court proceedings or politics, but Vives claimed to train them for all aspects of public life.

What is important in language is to communicate content. Ideas are the life and soul of words, which, in their absence, remain sterile and meaningless. According to a classical saying, the orator is a good person skilled in speaking (*vir bonus peritus dicendi*). This is a recurrent idea that runs through most of his work.

His *Exercitatio linguae latinae* [Exercises in the Latin Language] (1538) ran into more than 100 editions and was used to teach Latin to many generations in the old and new continents. Its last two dialogues deal with ‘Education’ (XXIII) and ‘Precepts of Education’ (XXIV). The penultimate argues that the good consists of knowledge, love of God, country, parents and friends, justice, temperance, generosity, magnanimity, etc. These values remain constant throughout his work.

Vives’ faith in education is well attested to in the second dialogue, when a child is taken to school for the first time:

FATHER: This, my son, is the workshop in which human beings are forged. The man you see here is the master of the forge. God be with you, master. Uncover your head, child, and bend your right knee as I taught you; now stand up . . . I am bringing you my son here so that you can change him from the little beast he is now into a complete human being.

FILIPONO (the teacher): I shall take the greatest care of him. It shall be as you say: he will change from a beast into a human being, from bad to good and into an upright man. Have no doubt about that.²⁹

‘Lifelong education’ is a key modern idea of which UNESCO has been the leading interpreter and promoter. It was also repeatedly upheld by Luis Vives. In his view, study is an activity that should never be concluded; its end comes only with that of life itself. The quest for knowledge is unceasing and has three aspects: cognition, communication and doing well.

[Humanists] will always thirst for knowledge and it will never occur to them that they have come to the end of learning. Seneca put it in strikingly accurate terms when he said that many could easily attain knowledge had they not convinced themselves of having already attained it. It was also Seneca who said in one of his letters to Lucilio: *You*

should go on learning for as long as your ignorance lasts; and, if the proverb is to be believed, for the whole of your life. The truth is that there is no knowledge in Nature so exhaustible and facile that it cannot occupy the whole lifetime of a mortal being.³⁰

Humanists must serve as a model for others. The existence of great learning is not sufficient for a period to qualify as a golden age. The quality that makes a century happy and golden is not so much learning as when learned persons make practical use of the knowledge that they profess in their lives, so that those who hear them and see them are moved to exclaim: here are people who speak as they live and live as they speak.

Humanists must be critical: they cannot confine themselves to one author or set limits on their personal thinking but must form an opinion without reference to that of others or even to their own conclusions when they see on reflection that they have been superseded.

In *De institutione feminae christianae* [The Education of the Christian Woman] (1523), he gives advice on the education and conduct of women from maidenhood through married life to widowhood. Girls must be educated from birth. In early childhood play is essential but the playthings should be such as will prepare them for their domestic chores. At the age of 7, girls were to be introduced to reading and writing and also to the manual tasks that fell to women in those days. A woman should never be idle. One of her tasks was to read good books and whatever contributed towards good conduct. He goes on to recommend the classics of the Greek and Roman world and lays special emphasis on the Fathers of the Church, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine and the New Testament. He dedicated this work to Queen Catherine, wife of Henry VIII, by whom he claimed to have been inspired. It seems odd that, although he concerned himself with the education of a princess, he was adamant that women should not use cosmetics, dye their hair or wear showy jewellery or lavish clothes, that is to say anything that implied arrogance or provocation to a person of austere temperament. The ascetic and moral side of his character extended even to these details.

Historical influence of Luis Vives

What impact did Luis Vives have on European and universal thought? The four-hundredth anniversary of his death and the five-hundredth anniversary of his birth prompted a considerable number of studies and congresses on Vives and showed that his work still stands as a contribution to universal culture. In 1974 Madrid was the venue for the sixth International Congress of Classical Studies, of which the theme was 'Tribute to Luis Vives'; in 1980 a symposium on 'Juan Luis Vives' was held in Wolfenbüttel (Germany) and in 1986 a symposium on 'Erasmus in Spain, Vives in Belgium' was held in Bruges (Belgium).

Bonilla y San Martín made a systematic study of Vives' thought and demonstrated the multifaceted nature of his achievements in the light of a classification of the sciences.

A. Lange, the great disseminator of Vivist thought in the Germanic world, evaluated Vives' significance as a philosopher and stressed his outstanding contribution to the Renaissance. He considers Vives to be the most outstanding figure in modern educational science prior to Pestalozzi.

Tomás Carreras Artau, the historian of Spanish thought, has made him the subject of much of his work.

Foster Watson, indefatigable researcher on Vives, attaches the utmost significance to Vives' ideas about education and maintains that Vives is the father of modern and experimental psychology. Pedro Sainz Rodríguez says in *Homenaje a Luis Vives* [Tribute to Luis Vives]:

Vives' fame is to be attributed to the following that he acquired and to the influence that he exerted on many of the major works of his time. We can gauge his standing in the eyes of his contemporaries from, for example, the

correspondence of Thomas More and Erasmus, in which both expatiated on the exceptional merits of their friend. His followers formed what can truly be called a pleiad. If we were to sketch their individual biographies, they would constitute a chapter in the history of culture. There is a tradition in Spanish culture of respect for the work of Vives, who has influenced many thinkers and writers.³¹

Wilhelm Dilthey maintains that Vives is the first systematic writer in the field of anthropology and that his work marks the transition from metaphysical to descriptive psychology.

The Scottish school of Reid, Dugald Stewart and William Hamilton was inspired by Vives and quoted him. Through them—and also directly—he influenced such Spanish thinkers of the nineteenth century as Eixalá, Lloréns y Barba, Giner de los Rios, Menéndez y Pelayo and Balmes.

In a study of Vives, Ortega y Gasset, the great twentieth-century Spanish philosopher, reviewed his exemplary life and work, noting that for four centuries, without interruption or dissent, he had enjoyed the high esteem of the most outstanding minds. With amazing foresight, a Brunswick scholar chose Vives as the subject of an academic thesis as early as 1531 (when Vives was only 39 years old), entitling his study *Philosopho praesertim Anthropologo*—“A Philosopher and above all an Anthropologist”.³²

Gregorio Mayans y Ciscar contributed most towards bringing Vives and his work to the attention of the world through his edition *J. L. Vivis Valentini. Opera omnia* (Valencia, 1782-90).

After Erasmus, the indisputable master and leader, Vives was one of the most widely read authors throughout the sixteenth century. Already in his own lifetime, his works ran into more than 100 editions. In the seventeenth century there were forty-six editions of *Introductio ad sapientiam*, forty-nine of *Exercitatio linguae latinae* and thirty-two of *De institutione feminae christianae*, translated into most European languages: Dutch, English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

The translation into Spanish by Lorenzo Riber of *Luis Vives: Obras completas* (1948), published by Aguilar, also helped to bring out his relevance. It has been reprinted by the Consell Valencia de Cultura.

Vives has been termed a European educationist, with reference not only to his geographical background but also to the stirring task of shaping a new Europe, whose emerging values can today be recognized in his works.

We now turn to a document of singular importance, which is consonant with the basic principles of Vives' thought. It was prepared by the Council of Europe for the fortieth anniversary of its foundation. Entitled *Trends in European Educational Systems: An Overall Picture*, it summarizes national projects and reports and the sources of its Documentation Center. Paragraph 2.1.3 on *Value education* states:

Europe is more than the Common Market; it has to be based on common values such as the values derived from Jewish, Greek, Roman and Christian heritage. Examples of these values are acceptance of human rights . . . respect for different opinions, solidarity and love of one's neighbor; rather than egoism and stress on consumption, a sense of responsibility, reliability, open-mindedness for other cultures and races, other continents. Without moral values human beings cannot live together peacefully in Europe.³³

These lines are like a compact version of the biography of Vives and represent the milestones in his intellectual development.

Scientific and technological progress, unless accompanied by all-round human development, may lead to serious imbalances and even end in disaster. Rediscovering the roots of European and universal culture in its outstanding figures and in the great thinkers who blazed new trails is an urgent task of modern civilization. Modern civilization obviously has a mission to fulfil in shaping the future, but lacks roots in the past that may render many paths less accessible in the time to come.

The Generalitat, the University and the City Council of Valencia, his native city, are preparing a major critical edition of his works, together with studies by qualified specialists, which

will add to his impact and serve to highlight his relevance for present and future generations. Such endeavors demonstrate the importance currently attached to his writings and to the rich cluster of educational values disseminated and defended through his massive output.

If the message of Vives—humanist, educator, and man of peace—to the modern world were to be summarized in a single sentence, it could be expressed without hesitation, in the same terms as the Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO: ‘Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed’.

Notes

1. *Ricardo Marin Ibanez (Spain)* Professor of Education at the Teacher-Training School in Valencia, at the University of Valencia, and at the National University of Distance Education (UNED). Visiting professor at several universities in North and South America. Has collaborated with various international organizations, such as UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and OECD. Author of numerous books and of articles published in specialized reviews. Former editor of the review *Innovacion creadora* [Creative Innovation].
2. P. Pérez García, ‘Joan Lluís Vives y su tiempo’ [Juan Luis Vives and His Era], in: Cruselles Gómez, J. M. et al. (eds.), *Joan Lluís Vives, un valenciano universal* [Juan Luis Vives: A Universal Valencian], p. 23-24, Valencia, Ajuntament de Valencia, 1993.
3. A. García, *Els Vives, una familia de jueus valencians* [The Vives: A Family of Valencian Jews]. Valencia, Eliseo Climent, 1983.
4. M. Pinta Llorente and J. M. Palacio, *Procesos inquisitoriales contra la familia judía de Juan Luis Vives* [Measures by the Inquisition against the Jewish Family of Juan Luis Vives], Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1964.
5. E. González González, *Joan Lluís Vives, de la escolástica al humanismo* [Juan Luis Vives: From Schooling to Humanism], Valencia, Generalitat Valenciana, 1987.
6. A. Bonilla y San Martín, *Luis Vives y la filosofía del Renacimiento* [Luis Vives and the Philosophy of the Renaissance], Vol. 1, p. 42, Madrid, Nueva Biblioteca Filosófica, 1929.
7. Profiles of Sir Thomas More and Erasmus appear in this series of ‘100 Thinkers on Education’ Ed.
8. Lorenzo Riber, ‘Juan Luis Vives, valenciano’, in: *Juan Luis Vives: Obras completas* [Juan Luis Vives: Complete Works], Vol. 1, p. 84 (Trans. by Lorenzo Riber), Madrid, Aguilar, 1947-48. Reissued by: Valencia, Consell Valencia de Cultura, 1992.
9. *Joannis Ludovici Vivis Valentini: Opera Omnia*, Vol. 4, Book 1, p. 450 (Ed. by A. Gregorio Majansio), 8 vols. Valentinae Edetanorum, in officina Benedicti Monfort, 1782-90.
10. *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 25.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
12. Pérez García, op. cit., p. 34-35.
13. *Opera omnia*, op. cit., Vol. 5, p. 166.
14. *Obras completas* op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 23.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
16. *Opera omnia*, op. cit., Vol. 5, p. 185.
17. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, Book 4, p. 403.
18. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, Book 1, p. 406.
19. *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 272.
20. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 273-74.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 276.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 416-37.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 273.
25. *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, Book 1, p. 300.
26. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, Book 3, p. 299.
27. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, Book 3, p. 301.
28. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, Letter 2, p. 273.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 287.
30. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, Book 5, p. 410.
31. Pedro Saínz Rodríguez, ‘Luis Vives y el Renacimiento en España’ [Luis Vives and the Renaissance in Spain], in: International Congress of Classical Studies, sixth, Madrid, 1974, *Tribute to Luis Vives*, p. 25, Madrid, 1977.

32. J. Ortega and Gasset, *Vives-Goethe*, p. 51-52, Madrid, Revista de Occidente, 1961.
33. Council of Europe, *Trends in European Educational Systems: An Overall Picture*, Strasbourg, 1989.

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