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on  
**The Relevance of a**  
**Humanistic and Liberal**  
**Arts Education to Asia in**  
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call professional specializations. Maybe we can say that mathematics as well as natural sciences can be studied very humanistically. From that point of view maybe we can more profitably talk about how to "market the humanities".

FABELLA. This is just a clarification. I shouldn't have used the word *humanities*. Perhaps I should have used "general education" in the sense that you do have, as the Bible puts it, three main bodies of thought: natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and a little tail at the end called fine arts. What I was talking about was making the student aware of the entire range and not just the subroot called technically "the humanities." If you want me to use the term *general education*, so be it, but it was the broader concept that I was referring to and not just the narrow area of the humanities.

## THE THIRD PANEL

# THE HUMANITIES AND THE LIBERAL ARTS AS EDUCATIONAL CONCEPTS

*[There is much that is wise in Dr. Naval's paper, a shorter version of which was read to the group. A florilegium culled from it would be an injustice to both author and reader. The paper is almost exclusively on the humanities, and I have taken pleasure in reading Dr. Naval's lapidary affirmation, "[The humanities] have as their object the human being as such, the human being as a person." In the middle of the paper, however, the liberal arts are mentioned in relation to a quotation from a conference of Dr. Alejandro Llano, the rector of Dr. Naval's university and himself a much respected philosopher. Dr. Llano refers to the "artes ad humanitatem": the liberal arts, it seems, could be construed as means to ends defined by the humanities and consequently not needing a separate discussion from the humanities as an educational concept. Dean Mariano, alluding to the distinction Dr. Naval makes between skills or techniques and "ways of looking at the world," the latter being the domain of the humanities, suggests that perhaps the humanities teach skills, the skills of looking at the world. Dr. Naval's answer is thought-provoking: she points out that in practice intellectual education (under which education in skills and techniques falls) and moral education occur simultaneously, as the purpose of the former is also moral. Dr. French and Prof. Sheehan bring up a variation of Dr. Fabella's concern in the previous panel: how can we convince school administrators and government of the benefits of humanistic studies of which Dr. Naval speaks? Mr. Hall's reply to the two is a reference to the experience of the World Bank. Dean Mariano joins the discussion with three different ways in which the humanities prepare the future professional. Dean Corrigan protests that the benefits to be derived from the humanities are not quantifiable; in fact, the humanities "stand as a contradiction in the heart of education," a remark which deserves much thought. Ms. Huggan, ever the enemy of ivory-tower theorizing, points out how a creative writing course helps change students' attitudes to other cultures and other people.]*

NAVAL. After speaking in the first two panels about the influence of relativism and academicism on education in the humanities, we now turn to look at the humanities and liberal arts themselves in so far as they have a genuinely educational dimension.

To do this, we need to recover some kind of a pattern of a broad sweep of knowledge, a pattern which recognizes the value of academic expertise and science, but which also recognizes that other forms of knowledge have an equal value. Practical reasoning—in the classical sense of “moral reasoning”—has to recover its true importance in the life of education. We need to do more than nod in passing at art, history, and literature. It is not just that they contain value in their mode of expression: they can often give us profound moral vision. *Ethos* is the true subject-matter of the humanities and the social sciences; ethics cannot be relegated to being just one more subject among many, or a set of procedures which may occasionally be dusted off when need arises. We have, instead, to point towards a vision of academic learning as a social process which cannot be divorced from moral apprenticeship, or from imagination, without each of these fields of human endeavor becoming impoverished. In one sense, the past is not yet done with, and a critical assimilation of it is a central task of education.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of education is an ethical problem which reaches the level of being a political problem. Education is perhaps the one field where we can most clearly see the difference between indoctrination, on the one hand, and an empowerment of human dignity and freedom on the other. The activity of educating, and the resultant theoretical reasoning regarding it are carried out without the context of a particular image of the human being and of society. Thus, the development of a particular set of educational policies may facilitate or impede the achievement of a complete education; which, in its turn, will facilitate or impede human dignity. This dignity is not a static thing, something given once and for all, but rather something which is open to possibilities which in one way or another makes apparent the human capacity for self-determination and for undertaking long-term projects. This is because humanity, dignity, and freedom all imply one another, and the activity of educating is to be found in the midst of all three.

Progress in knowledge, then, as a decisive ethical dimension and the development of this dimension means, in its turn, cultivating what is human in a way that goes beyond the isolated cultural experiences of an individual or a group. In a nutshell: there is no advance in knowledge without a sufficiently developed moral sensibility, and this can only flourish in the environment of a community which is enriched by the cultivation of the humanities.

People sometimes have the idea that the humanities are not much good because they are not much used. Hidden behind this suspicion is a conviction that the supreme values are those of utility. But, if we are to live in a manner worthy of our nature, we need not only those objects which satisfy our immediate needs, but also things which confer dignity on our existence.

The humanities are just those disciplines whose nature is to give an account of the human condition and of its modifications through time. They are the kinds of knowledge which are concerned with what is most deeply human within the human being, with that which distinguishes us from inanimate things and from other animals: thought, language, artistic creativity, freedom, memories and plans, virtues, concern for others, ambitions and fears. They have as their object the human being as such, the human being as a person.

In a more definite way, “humanism” is usually conceived as a cultural movement which seeks to return to the ancient world of Greece and Rome, from which it draws an ideal of a complete and harmonious personal formation. This movement, which is historical, linguistic, literary, ethical, and profoundly pedagogical, relies on the educational value of a knowledge of

the ancient world. It proposes, as a manner of carrying out its project, the study of “humane letters,” as they used to be called: ancient literature. It is called to seek in the origins and foundations of Western civilization the instruments and stimuli necessary to shape a new world.

In this sense, a great part of the contemporary study of the humanities is a continuation of a long cultural tradition which flows down the ages and continues to make possible again and again that “Greco-Christian synthesis in which every true and fruitful humanism consists.”<sup>2</sup>

The humanities preserve the knowledge that the human race has of itself, and they attempt to cultivate and deepen in this knowledge. They imply a care or cultivation of the spirit: in a word, culture. They confer dignity on human life, which, if it is to develop fully, needs values that have worth in themselves, values that match the human search for meaning, the human desire to know what is the purpose of human life, and the need to transmit this meaning and this knowledge to others. The humanities enrich human life because they are storehouses of ends, rather than means, storehouses of the ends of human life. This is because the human person has in his or her own right a certain absolute value. This is why people are more important than things, wisdom is more important than skill, spirit is more important than matter. Promoting the humanities means affirming this primacy of spirit over matter.

Iris Murdoch, arguing against the idea of “the two cultures,” says: There is only one culture, from which science so interesting and so dangerous, is now an important part. But the most essential and fundamental aspect of culture is the study of literature, inasmuch as this is an education about the way of imagining and understanding human situations. We are man and we are moral agents before being scientists, and the place of science in human being ought to be discussed by *words*. This is the reason why it is and always will be more important to know about Shakespeare than to know about any scientist: and if there is a “Shakespeare of science” his name is Aristotle.<sup>3</sup>

If we turn to look back at the classical world—not out of nostalgia, but through a desire to find a solid foundation—we find a different point of view from which to look at the different questions which currently concern us.<sup>4</sup> Reading classical literature, clearly, is not a direct source of solutions to modern political or educational problems; but it may be the starting point for an enterprise of discussing these problems with new lights, an opportunity to avoid certain dead ends, like, for example, the confrontation between liberal individualism and republican communitarianism, between a politics of rights and a politics of virtues. What we gain from the classics, in general, can be seen as ways of looking at things that are more flexible and more complete than more modern alternatives. Reading the classics well can help us to better formulate the questions we need to ask about what we are doing as agents in the field of education.<sup>5</sup> The classics offer us the chance to rise to a theoretical level on which we can consider education without coming to see it as a problem easily resolved or as a tragic dilemma or paradox.

For example, the advantage of Aristotle’s conception is that it enables us to transcend our concern about the distinction between public spheres and private spheres. Instead of worrying about the superiority of one of these over the other, or about questions of where to draw the line between them, we find our attention concentrated on how different policies will affect the development of the virtues and vices of a democracy (in Aristotle’s sense); on how these policies and institutions will affect the way in which individuals behave in the modern democratic activity of being the master craftsmen of their own lives.

It is not a question, then, of defending a return to the classics in opposition to modernity. What we are about is stressing the central role that belongs to the classics as a source of education, within the structures of modern liberal life. They are a valuable point of departure from which we can come to understand ourselves better, not a recipe for a revisionist utopia or for a defence of conservatism. We should find in the classics the possibility of overcoming our tendency to draw up sharp dividing lines between science and ordinary life, between metaphysics and morals, or between theory and practice.<sup>6</sup>

Why are there apparently so few these days who understand these very obvious truths? It is because we live in a society which is daily more and more dominated by technology, in the widest sense, and this drives us to pay more attention to means than to ends. What we seem to be facing is a triumph of instrumental reasoning, which is one of the most characteristic marks of late modernity. It has already been two or three hundred years, at least, since this kind of reasoning came to dominate the cultural scene; but we have had to wait until the last decades to see the social construction of the educational projects which logically derive from it.<sup>7</sup>

When a system of education is rebuked, at a superficial level, for failing to prepare its pupils for practical life in today's society at that very moment the system begins to run the risk of failing to prepare its pupils for any kind of life in any society whatsoever. We are on the brink of setting out on a course of disoriented education, which is of no use in educating people who are to grow up to work effectively in a society of knowledge which is subject to continued innovation.

A society which has no appreciation of the humanities is a society which has lost its way. The level of humanity in human life declines, even though the quantity of consumer goods owned may increase. It is the humanities which truly enrich the human race. When no importance is given to knowledge of the humanities, culture splits up and fragments for want of a unifying principle. People who are enclosed within their own specialized fields of knowledge can no longer communicate. No one has a unified vision of the world and of the human race. In a situation like this, we have to try to connect once more the scattered fragments and work out a new synthesis, at the base of which we have to put the wisdom of the humanities.

In a society oriented towards innovation and communication, the liberal arts take the centre stage. The bonds of this society have a high level of symbolism and require rapid changes of perspective, which involve the use of the creative imagination. All these are themes which implicitly or explicitly concern the *artes ad humanitatem* which for centuries have been exploring the mysteries of thought and language, and have been seen the lightning-flashes in which these mysteries have expressed through art over history.<sup>8</sup>

The knowledge-based society requires, more than anything else, people who are fully educated in the full sense. This is why the most far-sighted people of our age, worried by economic compartmentalization, social conflict, and ethical deterioration, seek to recover the unity which has been lost and are turning their eyes once more to the humanities. It is not merely a question of starting to read Cicero, Shakespeare, or Chesterton again—though that would be a great deal. The challenge we are faced with is more difficult and more interesting. What we have to do is to overcome the dispersion of activities and forms of knowledge that have to do with the human person and recognize ourselves as beings open to something beyond. We have to try to re-order

the dispersed forms of knowledge in the unity of a new cultural synthesis. We have to weld together what has been split apart, from the most universal and profound point of view that is provided by the wisdom of the humanities. Scholars of the humanities have to be the catalysts of interdisciplinary dialogue

What will be decisive

for producing an education of real quality is whether it succeeds in producing an educated and civilized style of life among others. This will be in the context of a fruitful environment in which there can become real and present the horizons of meaning which can rescue people from the atomization they are suffering, which can give depth to their idealistic desires for authenticity. The real agent of education is the *ethos* of the teaching institution, the richness of human value which its own style and atmosphere present, and the firm commitment to a shared search for truth which is the air it breathes.<sup>9</sup>

Stressing *tradition* is not to deny the possibility of creation or change. On the contrary, it is tradition that makes them possible. Without tradition there would be nothing to change, and nothing for creativity to aim at. In a tradition we can distinguish two elements: skills or techniques, and ways of looking at the world. We can give importance to the latter without denying the former, since to be obsessed with the former and ignore the latter means sterility and compartmentalization. To see means to see in a certain way, but these ways of seeing are acquired from others and thus are always shared with others.

We are faced with a multi-cultural world today; but the requirement of a homogeneous community and of certain communitarian thinkers, though they disagree about what chance there is of creating one. "They think that without a shared ontological foundation—who I am, where I am, where do I come from—there is no chance of creating any validity for the decisions and choices of the subject."<sup>10</sup> They balance the liberal conception of extreme personal autonomy by opposing the conception of each one's care for the others. This, for them, is the principle of education.<sup>11</sup>

Part of learning to be a person, which is what education consists in, is therefore learning to be a moral agent in a moral community, whose members are also moral agents. This conclusion is consistent with the idea which goes back to Plato, that moral education is an essential and central part of education. In a similar way, a later part of learning to be a person is learning to take part in the various theoretical and practical activities of the community and to occupy social roles.

Two processes, then should go hand-in-hand in this endeavor. The educators should draw attention to the central importance for individual lives of being anchored in a culture and a tradition (and this includes binding the individual to a socio-cultural context); and at the same time pointing out the human possibilities of re-considering and overcoming negative features which may exist in a community or tradition.<sup>12</sup> This all demands a careful conversation which is not ideological or doctrinal, which reflects the tensions which arise between reason and experience, individual and community, tradition and social change, human perfectibility and human weakness. Education, then, should at every level be related to a critical appreciation of those elements in the tradition and the community which are to define us as individuals.<sup>13</sup> It is this type of education which enables us to escape from the relativism of a purely personal

perfectionalism—if that were really possible; let us say, rather, a relativism which gives birth to isolated individuals. Bloom, in *The Closing of the American Mind* remarks in this context that the phrase which most exactly describes the state of his students' souls is "the psychology of separation." (New York, 1988: 117-18):

"The possibility of separation is already the fact of separation, inasmuch as people today must plan to be whole and self-sufficient and cannot risk interdependence. Imagination compels everyone to look forward to the day of separation in order to see how he will do. (...) separation is (...) an intentional rebuff to the demand for reciprocity of attachment which is the heart of these relations (...) This continual shifting of the sands in our desert—separation from places, beliefs—produces the psychic state of nature where reserve and timidity are the prevailing dispositions. We are social solitaires."

This communitarian point of view seems to cast more light on various aspects of education than does the individualist attitude, but it still fails to be sufficient to guarantee a complete education.<sup>14</sup>

As things are, educators have to ask themselves how to reinvent the kind of community that is needed. But where can they find the answer?

"I am inclined to think that Fletcher was in the right of it, as against his opponents, when he maintained that to return to read the philosophical and political texts of Greece would necessarily be central to any kind of education which would be capable of enabling a society to resist such a situation or recover from it."<sup>15</sup>

In the end, now is the moment for the humanities.

1. "Every education teaches a philosophy; if not by dogma then by suggestion, by implication, by atmosphere. Every part of that education has a connection with every other part. If it does not all combine to convey some general view of life it is not education at all," Chesterton, G.K., *The Common Man* (London, 1950), 167.
2. A. Fontan, *Estudio preliminar a Humanismo y Teología de W. Jaeger* (Madrid, 1964), 44.
3. Murdoch, I., *The Sovereignty of Good* (London, 1970), 34.
4. W. Jaeger's remark in the prologue to his *Paideta* (*Paideta. The Ideals of Greek Culture*, [New York, 1965]) makes the point I am trying to make here.
5. Cfr. Salkever, S.G., *Finding the Mean. Theory and Practice in Aristotelian Political Philosophy* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1990).
6. Cfr. Naval, C., *Educación ciudadana. La polémica liberal-comunitarista en educación* (Pamplona, 1995).
7. See Llano, A., "Sentido de las humanidades en el actual momento histórico," a conference delivered in Pamplona, 26. VIII. 1994.
8. Cfr. *Ibid.* 13.
9. *Ibid.* 14.
10. V. Camps, review of C. Thiebaut's *Los límites de la comunidad* in *Sistema*, 116, IX. 1993: 154.
11. Cfr. Cuyppers, S., "Is personal Autonomy the First Principle of Education?" *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 26/1, 1992: 5-17.
12. Cfr. Bowers, *Elements of a Post-Liberal Theory of Education* (New York, 1987), 77.
13. One can find a brilliant critique of a "modern" school in Dickens's novel *Hard Times* (1854), where teaching is accurately represented as a dry and arid system of pedantry, wholly indifferent to the affective needs of the children and the development of their imagination. In this context, it would be interesting to distinguish among consequences in education, not only liberalism or communitarianism, but also a third element: utilitarianism, which seems to be neither liberal nor communitarian, but some third thing.
14. Cfr. E. Springsted, *Who Will Make us Wise?* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 154.
15. A. MacIntyre, "The Idea of an Educated Public" in *Education and Values: The Richard Peters Lectures*, ed. G. Haydon (London, 1987), 35-36.

[HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSION. Mariano suggests that the humanities teach "skills and techniques proper to the human being as human being." He asks whether Naval's call for education in "ways of looking at the world" as distinguished from education in skills and techniques would not itself call for training in the skill of looking at the world in a specific way. French and Sheehan bring up the question of how to convince others about the benefits of the humanities Naval describes. Hall mentions the experience of the World Bank in reply. Mariano proposes three ways of convincing people of the benefits of the humanities. Sheehan accepts one of them: that the liberal arts best prepare students for a future world marked by rapid change. Corrigan and Hall point out that employers everywhere are looking more and more for skills developed by the liberal arts. Huggan notes the educational value of creative writing in making people more sensitive to the lives of others and ultimately other cultures.]

### Teaching Skills and Techniques and Teaching Worldviews

MARIANO. I find myself agreeing with all the points that Dr. Naval has brought out. I just want to ask if I have understood her well if I would say that, in the same way I was saying before that I think that the opposition that we should see is not that between humanities and sciences but rather humanistic perspective versus a specialist perspective, I would like to ask if at the same time we should also see that there's no opposition between skills/techniques and worldview knowledge. Rather the opposition would be skills and techniques which are proper to a human being as a human being and skills and techniques which are proper to a human being as a physicist, economist, linguist, etc. What I'm saying here is maybe there are certain skills techniques which belong to a humanistic education, and these are skills and techniques which help man perform as a man ready to take on any specialist skill, and then perhaps we can look at the humanities from the point of view of skill as a master art. So that again there's no opposition between arts and sciences on the one hand. So here maybe the opposition is humanistic knowledge versus specialized knowledge, and then also the opposition is intellectual virtue versus professional technique, and that humanistic knowledge and intellectual virtue belong to humanistic education. We're talking here about "to see" means "to see in a certain way." Could we perhaps add that we also need to learn how to see in that particular way and that this is a skill which a humanistic education ought to be giving us?

NAVAL. I think you have to have both skills and technique together with the ways of seeing the world, and you have to educate in these two ways, but I think the important thing is to impart intellectual education and moral education (or character education if you prefer to call it that) together. I think this is the point: when you impart some knowledge, do so such that, at the same time you are giving knowledge, you are moving the student, you are persuading people in a good sense, because with this knowledge, your end is not only to transmit some knowledge; it is to educate in a way of seeing the world, and this is more difficult than to transmit some knowledge. This is the idea.

### Viewing the World through Poetry

HUGGAN. This is something quite brief, but it's in response to what I thought was a splendid paper and also the question that you brought up about the question of seeing. It's a line that came

to me earlier this morning. As a writer and a non-academic person, I perhaps come at these questions a little bit differently, and more poetically, and I think, since this is a conference on the humanities, if I give you a line of poetry, it's perhaps relevant. There's a wonderful Canadian poet who's now in her 70s. Her name is Margaret Avison. She has a poem called "Snow," and the first line of the poem is one that I always write on the board before I start teaching a creative writing class I think it answers your question about how we should be seeing. The line is this: "The optic heart must venture a jail break and recreation." There you are. Savor that for the rest of the day.

### Justifying the Humanities

FRENCH. I fear what I am going to say may sound crass, gauche, and subversive, but I have to go back to the University of New South Wales after this conference. My university is dominated by technology, by science and engineering in particular, and excels in those areas. But in the early days of the university, it was seen that there was a need to balance that with humanistic education, and so a series of compulsory courses was introduced called "General Studies." The students have another name for it, but which is not very flattering. They hate it basically, and it's been a fight for complex reasons. At the moment it's being restructured. They're trying to keep the philosophy over at the university, but I fear that, reading people's lips, it will disappear fairly soon because it has been a failure. But if I go back to the University of New South Wales and say to the senior administrators that, "Look, I've just been to this conference, and they're asserting vociferously the value of humanistic studies in education if we wish to be world leaders in education and so forth," I'll have to be able to justify it and they'll want to know: "Well, prove it." We're a very pragmatic university. That's what I'd like to ask. I don't want to degrade the discussion. It seems to me that there are ways to demonstrate that humanistic education does benefit people in various perspectives of their lives, whether it be just total happiness or whether it be their professional success. Has anyone given thought to that or ways to quantify it, if I dare to use the word *quantify*?

A. SISON. There've been several attempts at this, in making a list of fundamental or basic human values. They usually post that as an open-ended list. Next step would be arranging them in hierarchy.

SHEEHAN. Could I push that point a little further? I thought the paper gave an excellent rationale for the humanities, but we are after all a captive audience. I want to just pick up the comment in the paper that, if humanities is not understood and appreciated, then society has lost its way, and I really think there is a basic challenge (certainly in Australia, I believe in England, but I'm not very sure about Canada and the States) of proving the effectiveness of what the humanities can contribute. It comes through government, in what government says it values. It comes through financial support, in government cutting off support from the humanities. It comes in institutional management, and I guess in a sense the challenge is, "Prove it's not intuitive on your part, and there is some evidence for the assertion." I think the demand for proof will become far more important and challenging as we move into the future where priorities for reform are increasingly being set by technology. So I guess in a sense I'm worrying about the consequences, the value, the support (financial and otherwise) given the humanities, and we need to take preventive action. But in a sense, I really want to know the answer to someone who says: "You believe in it. Convince us." I think the argument that's being given about the list of values would simply be rationalized in terms of government, certainly in Australia, as perhaps advancing to knowledge, but not a lot that's useful and hardly any benefits. We won't support it.

### The University versus the Multiversity

HONG. I have been worried about Korea's prospects in education, especially because all the universities in Korea tend to become "multiversities" of sorts rather than universities. I mean by *multiversities* teaching all kinds of things, not only the core curriculum, but the professional and vocational and also social, educational courses and night courses and everything. In a university the main purpose is to seek objective truth in terms of classical reason and knowledge as final goals of education or liberal arts education. Korean universities are now trying to teach English, because English has become the international language and also computer and the Korean language. Practical education, rather than enriching human nature, focusing on the person, man himself. I think we should put a high priority on teaching the humanities before teaching the professional fields.

### The Humanities Confer Dignity on Human Life

HALL. I'm struck by the discussion, in particular our colleagues from Australia, who've identified an issue that's certainly true in Canada. We are trying to analyze the cost and benefit of all these things. It's not much different, it seems to me, from what was going on in places like the World Bank 25 years ago when they felt investments in education in developing countries had a far too long a return on investment, only to find out 25 years later that there were no people capable of taking decisions, not having been given the opportunity for that application of education to the development of society. It seems to me that Dr. Naval has identified the importance of humanities by saying that they confer dignity on human life. After all, what is the purpose of technology or what is the purpose of all of the things we're encouraging, unless it leads to something more. If it only leads to corporations leading the world rather than governments through the use of their technology, then I don't know if we are better off. We must then have a larger purpose, it seems to me.

### Do You Have Any Solution to the Problem of Diversity?

D'ANDREA. This is perhaps changing the topic a little bit. But I wanted to ask Dr. Naval to return to a comment she made earlier and it is connected to her paper, but suppose that someone concedes the argument that the humanities are essential to higher education; then we're faced with this problem which you have identified earlier, this idea of official neutrality in the classroom; instructors have to occupy some neutral point of view. There is no such thing, as any honest teacher in the humanities, any good teacher, would have to admit. Suppose one agrees with your justification for humanistic education, how are we to deal with the problem of diversity of the backgrounds and traditions our students come from in our own teaching, if we're not to adopt this what seems to me dishonest posture of official neutrality? How should we go about doing things?

NAVAL. I'm not sure I have the solution to that. You know MacIntyre very well and what he says about official neutrality in the university. I think the solution could be to build small communities of knowledge where you can have a tradition. We can share this tradition, and you can educate in this tradition, because in other cases it's impossible. If you don't have shared knowledge or shared tradition that you can give to the students, then I don't think it is possible to educate in a complete sense, in an intellectual and moral sense.

### There Is No Such Thing as Neutral Teaching

D'ANDREA. Just a follow-up point. The term *tolerance* or *toleration* has been tossed around a bit. It's not a very good term actually because it doesn't imply necessarily respect. There are a lot of things I might tolerate without respecting them. It seems to me something needed in these forums where there are diverse standpoints is respect, but ideas are necessarily intolerant. So my view that democracy is the best form of government is intolerant of the view that, say, oligarchy is. So we shouldn't think in humanistic education that our teaching has to be tolerant. It seems to me that we should take a stand, but we should do justice to opposed points of view, and that's compatible with respecting them. In fact it is a requirement to do justice to another point of view that you respect it, but not that you agree with it and not that you think that what you are teaching isn't contradicting or undermining it. That's at least one way one could go.

### How UA&P Markets the Humanities

MARIANO. I'd like to go back to the challenge of Mr. Sheehan regarding the difficulty which many if not all administrators of liberal arts colleges and institutions have when they're trying to defend the usefulness of the humanities, when they're faced with the usefulness of the other sciences, technology, etc. I'd like to point out three areas which we've had some sort of success in the college in using as a marketing pitch for the humanities. And I am going to talk about these three, not because we are using them as a political move, but because we sincerely believe in these three areas which we can use as a marketing pitch. The first one: society nowadays is turning into a knowledge society. And this means that more and more people are beginning to realize that the economic worth of a professional lies, not in what he can get to do, but more in what he can get to know, lies more in how he can process information and be able to advise and be able to act in accordance with the knowledge that he does obtain. I can even link this up to information technology, and we could say that the humanities can produce people who can program the computer. Computers are very useful, but computers can't program themselves, and to a certain extent, the usefulness of a computer is determined by people who have (what I was calling before) the intellectual virtues, the virtues of man as man, the intellectual skills of man as man rather than any specialized skill. Second, the notion of entrepreneurship. People pay a lot to attend seminars in entrepreneurship, and more and more the message that comes across is that we need people who have a vision and who can communicate this vision so it can be shared by many, and we need people who can act together on that vision. And I submit that these correspond to skills which are humanistic skills rather than specialized skills. Third is the area of change. Society is changing very fast. And many very specialized skills that people learn in schools become obsolete when they leave schools. And so the marketing pitch is, "Let us give our students skills which are the master art, skills which can make them capable of learning on their own." Now I think these skills are liberal arts skills. I think we can make a marketing pitch both in business and in politics for the humanities. Of course the humanist, the authentic humanist, knows the real value of these skills. It is not primarily to be used for business and politics, but for something higher—contemplation, as Dr. Naval says. I think there's the point again that, if we strive for the higher things, many of the lower goods can also be taken care of.

SHEEHAN. If I could play devil's advocate. I think the real challenge is simply we have to move beyond our own rationalizations of what is achieved by humanities education to produce something that can convince others. With respect to knowledge, I think on a global scale people

are now willing to place much more emphasis on the importance of knowledge in relation to the humanities, but certainly not in some countries and certainly I don't think in mine. I think the awareness that you highlighted with respect to doing and knowing is not culturally appreciated in my country, and I suspect in some others as well. To illustrate that: the humanities are considered the handmaidens of technology as opposed to "technology can benefit from humanities." I think the whole thrust of the discussion is the assumption that technology can benefit from the humanities, whereas government and educational processes are looking at it in the "handmaiden" sense. With respect to vision, vision is one of those terms linked very much with strategic planning which has got the grip on my country. Australia has not yet succumbed to the fall of strategic planning and is caught in the rise of it. And I think vision is not a rationalization one should hang the defense of the humanities around. Picking one of the three, I have a preference: it's change. I think there are enormous changes that are going on, and we should marshal the arguments for the humanities around that. I think, with respect to change, we should capitalize, we should interpret, talk about them and take the lead in what they mean for us. So of the three of them, I'm resonant to change and not resonant to vision or knowledge.

CORRIGAN. I sometimes overhear students after lectures saying, "During that class I took 17 pages of notes": I often wonder whether any thought at all went on in that particular process. In the Western tradition at least, the university is founded upon precisely that claim: to teach nothing, that is, that the teacher does not get up and then disseminate information to the pupils, though this happens in most of our lecture halls, but rather the teacher is a midwife. Many of us who've come from small villages will know how very important the midwife is. She is the cultural, intellectual, and spiritual center of the village. She's the real center of all commerce there, the midwife who helps to bring forth moral agency, intellectual agency in the students. I may be mistaken, but this is only in partial answer to Peter's very difficult question to answer, and that is, according to the indicators in North America of what prospective employers want, ten, fifteen years ago they wanted in the top ten a particular professional qualification. At the present time a particular professional qualification does not even feature in the top ten. Much more important are the skills which Dr. Mariano would consider to be specifically human, that is, the skill of being able to think, of being able to analyze, of being responsible (that is, in the sense of community service actually). Now it's very difficult to quantify these things. I agree too that we shouldn't be driven. I think universities particularly should not be driven entirely by business interests, which is why ethics as a forum has to grow on campuses right throughout the world. Those questions are almost impossible to ask in Canada, and that's without any sectarian bias. Simply, nobody is talking at all about the rationality of what is happening, for instance, in biotechnology, on campuses right throughout Canada—which is rather a frightening contradictory state for our universities to be in. What I want to say here is, the humanities in many ways stand as a contradiction in the heart of education. They are very different from other purely quantifiable entities. They seek a kind of certainty which is very different from that in either physics or biology. But again we can probably take heart in this matter that apparently physics seeks, has sought, a certainty which nowadays of course cannot be verified in any positive way at all.

HALL. Kevin has already commented on what I was going to say. Essentially that in Canada, and we did particular studies at the institution in Toronto that I came from, the employers who were looking for graduates indicated very clearly that they wanted specific skills. But if you asked them what they would see as the most appropriate skills for the success of the person in their corporation, they would mention exclusively the things that related to the humanities—ability

to communicate, ability to interact with other persons. All those things were far more important if the individual was to progress in the company, to become more successful in the company. Only at the entry level were they interested in the particular technologies. For the long-term benefit of the student, even in the economic environment exclusively rather than concerning the human benefit, they were concerned about things that grow out of the humanities.

### **Do We Need to Reinvent the Humanities?**

LAZARO. Listening to all these statements, I'm wondering whether we really have to reinvent the humanities. I would like to pose that question to everybody because I'm beginning to notice a general trend, as in the paper of Dr. Naval: return to the basics, return to the classics. Do we really have to reinvent the humanities?

### **The Intolerance of Intellectuals**

CHIANG. I think education is one of the key topics in our conference. So far we emphasize the education of the next generation. But in my limited experience, sometimes among the most intolerant persons, intellectuals are on the top list. Some of my colleagues, they emphasize the values of Chinese culture: they think it the best civilization in the world. In other words, they refuse to accept any values of any other civilization. And they teach their children how important is Chinese tradition. They imply that our values are higher than others. So how can we make the world better if we use that way to educate our next generation? If the teachers can communicate as in this conference with others from other parts of the world, they might gain some understanding. So that's very important. We do need to educate ourselves first sometimes. Technology: why do we want to develop a new technology? Because it's useful to improve human beings' life—totally, not in one way. You can increase income and acquire a computer and a more comfortable house, that's part of it. But in whole, not just in small part.

### **When Should Interdisciplinary Dialogue Take Place?**

SHANNON. If I could begin my remarks with something that's actually tangential but which I found mildly amusing, as far as Peter's and Kevin's comments. This year in Australia, the government gave a quality audit of research and community service in Australian universities. One of the first questions we were asked was "Where is your strategic plan for community service?" But getting back to the issue of the humanities, I think in answer to Dr. Lazaro, the humanities, at least in Australia, to some extent do have to reinvent themselves. One of the skills employers consistently seek is what they call communication skills. I am not always sure that they know what they mean by that, whether communication is in the technical area or more general, and following on from that is how you teach such skills in order to be able to communicate something. We received some money recently to start next year something we shouldn't have to put on, and that's a course on written communication skills. In Concepcion's paper, she says scholars of the humanities have to be catalysts of interdisciplinary dialogue. And her paper is quite convincing, as a paper, but again (I suppose we Australians are coming out as excessively pragmatic) getting back to the university and trying to convince people of this is a difficult issue. An interdisciplinary dialogue in itself is also very difficult. Kevin earlier referred to disciplines talking to each other, and that's part of it, but I'm not clear in my own mind at what level this occurs (with policy-makers) or when you put it into practice (whether it's at high school level, undergraduate or graduate level) and there are other issues. My research is in

mathematical modelling in medicine. The value of any of my contributions is in my skills as a mathematician and the fact that, with exceptions such as Chris French, most doctors aren't prepared or able to read mathematical papers, whereas I'm prepared to get through the latinized jargon that doctors use in their papers. There are a lot of issues here that I suppose are excessively practical, but nevertheless in the day-to-day life of administrators loom very large.

### **Creative Writing Opens the Student to Others**

HUGGAN. It's very difficult to look outside, to know other cultures when you have a closed standpoint. This goes back to the classics and Socrates: really the place to start is by knowing yourself, to know oneself first. The way to do that within the educational system at any level, secondary or tertiary, I think, is to assist people to know their own lives by writing about it. In a creative writing program you have a stronger sense of literature, reading world literature, when you've tried yourself to write from within yourself. When that's incorporated into a program so that it doesn't necessarily have to have an enormous academic benefit, it's been my experience that when you enable students or assist students to write fiction about their own lives, they have a greater appreciation of the difficulties in their own lives, the things they might want to change themselves in their traditions, in their societies. It opens them then to reading about other people's lives.

### **Students Do Not Appreciate the Humanities**

ATTAVAVUTICHAJ. Thammasat University (that's where I come from) was founded emphasizing the social sciences, but later on humanities was added, then after that technology and science. Science about thirty years ago, any student who enters this university has to take two years of general education, which comprises three areas: humanities, social sciences, and science—not pure science, but things like environmental science, which is badly needed for the country. But after fifteen years there was an outcry from some areas of studies: that they needed more time for their specific field, because if you take two years for general education, then there will be only two years for law or for engineering. They wanted four full years. So at the moment, general education has been reduced to just one year. And even reduced to one year, there are still lots of students who can't see the real point of why they have to take courses in humanities when they are going to do things like medical science or engineering, although there are those who finish university and come back and say that it's needed, it is, very necessary once you go out into the world. It helps a great deal, you know. At the moment humanities and humanistic education are in trouble in our country. The most difficult problem we face now is that of students who specialize in the humanities. Once they go out it's very difficult for them to find jobs. They are accepted as teachers, and that's all. Another thing I would like to say is that it's not a problem of liberation in our country but of integration, integration of humanities, social sciences and sciences. And of course, we try to tell the students we need interdisciplinary courses, we need interdisciplinary understanding, but then I think the teachers themselves are not clear in their own minds about the concept of the humanities. So what should we do about it?