

Thomas Jefferson, Ideologue

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Information in the last letter of M. de La Fayette that your eye sight has improved excites in me a hope that you might be able to finish your last work, and fill up the Ideological circle in which you made so great and happy a progress. I hope it for the benefit of a child of my old age, the University of Virginia. . . . It's misfortune will be that identity of language will confine the choice of it's professors to the countries speaking our own. But it will still be your science which shall get thro' that medium.

Thomas Jefferson to Destutt de Tracy, Nov 5th 1823.

In his 1957 introduction to *Living Thoughts of Thomas Jefferson*, John Dewey claimed that French political philosophy had little influence on Jefferson. (Dewey, 1957). With the possible exception of laws governing the inheritance of property, Dewey maintained that “every one of Jefferson’s characteristic political ideas . . . was definitely formulated by him before” he assumed the position of American Ambassador in Paris during the summer of 1784 (Dewey, 1957, 23). Jefferson’s *Notes on Virginia*, composed in 1781 and 1782, seems to support Dewey’s contention (Jefferson, 1984). Responding to a number of queries from the French Legation in Philadelphia, he contributed to a statistical survey of America with a wide ranging account of the geographical, economic, social, and political conditions of life in the State that clearly demonstrates the continuity of his early and later thought.

The scope of Jefferson’s scientific learning, his classical erudition, and his articulate defense of liberal ideals—including the doctrine of natural rights and the separation of church and state—was immediately appreciated by the *philosophes* (Ellis, 1998). But while discussing history and government with Filippo Mazzei, the nature of species with Buffon, and race with Condorcet, Jefferson always kept an intellectual and social distance between himself and the French savants. Shocked by Parisian morals, and, it seems, his own errant passions, he could not emulate the flamboyant Franklin. Of all the societies he visited, he was perhaps most at home in the salon of Mme Helvétius. The meeting place of Condillac, Diderot, D’Alembert, and D’Holbach, during the 1780s Antiuil became a retreat for materialist philosophers and liberal political theorists. It was here that the shy and retiring Virginian formed his closest bonds with Pierre Cabanis, Pierre de La Rosche (editor of Helvétius’ collected works), and the economic theorist Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours. Schooled in the writings of Locke, Shaftsbury, Bolingbroke, Hutchinson, and Kames, Jefferson was clearly sympathetic to the political and epistemological discourse of the salon. But he did not adopt a new master. Rejecting the radical implications of sensationalism, he returned home still firmly grounded in the Scottish moral sense philosophy and Whig political thought he had imbibed as a youth. It was only in the final two

decades of his life, after his retirement from the Presidency, that Jefferson became enamored with the work of Destutt de Tracy, and an advocate for Ideology in America. Accordingly, Dewey and other commentators are somewhat wide of the mark in concluding that if there were a stream of influence between the two nations, it was surely from America to France, for, as this chapter will show, Tracy’s materialistic writings, especially his texts on economics, politics, religion, and public schooling provided a powerful philosophical justification for Jefferson’s mature vision of a virtuous republic (Adams, 1997). As he announced in 1820, after establishing a professorship in Ideology at the University of Virginia, Tracy’s works were sure “to become the Statesman’s Manual with us (Chinard, 1925, 203).”

The Improvement of the Race

Jefferson’s educational proposals are contained in Query 14 of the *Notes*, right after his discussion of race, an appropriate location given his views on the perfectibility of human nature and the fact that 40% of the states’ population lived under the yoke of slavery. This authoritative account of the physical, moral, and intellectual capacities of the red, white, and black peoples of the New World shaped debates over the emancipation and schooling of African-Americans for the next seventy-five years (Winthrop, 1968). A nest of legal and scientific arguments over the identity of the human species, the status of the mulatto, the relationship between climate and race, and the consequences of social integration that Samuel Gridley Howe was forced to reconcile with Whig political ideology in the founding document of the American Freedmen’s Bureau (Tomlinson, 2005).

Jefferson opened his discussion of human improvement with an explanation of how the State of Virginia had revised colonial laws to fit the spirit of the new republic. Chief among these changes, contrary to Dewey’s claim, was an amendment to the rules of descent ensuring “that the lands of any person dying intestate shall be divisible equally among all his children,” and legislation “to establish religious freedom on the broadest bottom (Jefferson, 1984, 263).” Although not yet brought before the government, Jefferson also explained that a resolution had been drafted to emancipate the state’s slaves, colonizing blacks to some distant land and recruiting white workers to take their place. “It will probably be asked” he continued, “why not retain and incorporate the blacks into the state, and thus save the expense of supplying, by importation of white settlers, the vacancies they will leave (Jefferson, 1984, 264)?” He responded with two separate arguments: the deep seated social prejudices of whites and the basic “distinctions which nature has made” between the races. After enumerating a number of physiological differences—skin color, hair, sweat glands, the size of the lungs, and sleeping habits (all of which had important moral implications)—he turned to the

intellectual capacities of blacks. Unlike Indians, who developed art and “astonish you with strokes of the most sublime oratory; such as prove their reason and sentiment strong, their imagination glowing and elevated,” the African knew nothing of drawing and produced only the crudest music (Jefferson, 1984, 266). Even the literary works of educated blacks were immature. Their “imagination,” he concluded, was “dull, tasteless, and anomalous (Jefferson, 1984, 266).” If “in memory” they were “equal to the whites; in reason [they were] much inferior (Jefferson, 1984, 266).” Could such differences be explained by the cruel and harsh terms of their confinement? Apparently not. Despite even harsher conditions, the classical world bore testimony to the achievements of white slaves. “Misery,” Jefferson reflected, was “often the parent of the most affecting touches in poetry (Jefferson, 1984, 269).” “Among the blacks is misery enough, God knows, but no poetry (Jefferson, 1984, 269).” In any case, he insisted, the commonly recognized “improvement of the blacks in body and mind, in the first instance of their mixture with the whites, has been observed by every one, and proves that their inferiority is not the effect merely of their condition of life (Jefferson, 1984, 269).” He conjectured therefore, “as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind (Jefferson, 1984, 267).” “Will not a lover of natural history,” he asked, “one who views the gradations in all the races of animals with the eye of philosophy, excuse an effort to keep those in the department of man as distinct as nature has formed them (Jefferson, 1984, 267)?” The purity of the white race was at stake. “Among the Romans,” he noted, “emancipation required but one effort. The slave, when made free, might mix without staining the blood of his master. But with us a second is necessary, unknown to history. When freed, he is to be removed beyond the reach of mixture (Jefferson, 1984, 270).” Torn between morality and practicality, he would spare no effort to prepare emancipated slaves for independent living—“sending them to a distant land with arms, implements of household and of the handicraft arts, feeds, pairs of useful animals etc.”—but offered absolutely no hope of schooling for the blacks of Virginia (Jefferson, 1984, 264).

For white citizens, however, education was integral to Jefferson’s political principles. He even claimed that his 1779 Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge “was the most important bill in our whole code,” completing, had it passed, the laws against entails and primogeniture, and the separation of church and state (Padover, 1952, 70). As Montesquieu taught, he understood that corruption nestled in all societies, and that a political mechanism had to be devised to prevent the degeneration of government. But rather than the widely vaulted checks and balances of the British system, Jefferson put his faith in representative government and the good sense of the common man to elect wise and virtuous leaders—or, more accurately, representatives who would elect wise and virtuous leaders. “Having put down the aristocracy of the clergy,” and nurtured an equality of condition” among the population, he later told John Adams that “education would have raised the mass of the people to

the high ground of moral respectability necessary to their own safety, and to orderly government; and would have completed the great object of qualifying them to select the veritable *aristori*, for the trusts of government (Jefferson, 1959, II: 390). Schooling in Jefferson’s Virginia would thus have two components: the development of a literate population capable of making informed choices, and the education of the moral and intellectual elite.

Where Adams saw the great aim of government as management of the passions, Jefferson put his faith in a basic moral sense common to all men and women. Conscience, he told his nephew Peter Carr, was as much a part of human nature “as the sense of hearing, seeing, feeling (Jefferson, 1984, 901).” While given to individuals

in a stronger or weaker degree . . . [it] may be strengthened by exercise, as may any particular limb of the body. This sense is submitted, indeed, in some degree, to the guidance of reason; but it is a small stock which is required for this: even a less one than what we call common sense. State a moral case to a ploughman and a professor. The former will decide it as well, and often better than the latter, because he has not been led astray by artificial rules.

(Jefferson, 1984, 901-902)

Armed with this insight, and a basic knowledge of the natural and social worlds, the citizenry themselves could provide the moral basis of a virtuous community. To this end, Jefferson proposed a system of free education for all (white) children. Situated within each ward (a five square mile miniature republic), schools would be erected and a teacher employed to provide three years of instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, together with lessons in the principles of civic virtue and Republican government. Study of the Bible—which was far too demanding for the immature mind—was to be replaced with “useful facts from Grecian, Roman, European and American history” that would teach the essential character of human nature and the basic hierarchical structure of a good society (Jefferson, 1984, 273).

As reason strengthened, such knowledge would then enable each citizen “to work out their own greatest happiness, by shewing them that it does not depend on the condition of life in which chance has placed them, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation, and freedom in all just pursuits (Jefferson, 1984, 273).” Jefferson’s grand vision of a political community sustained through public schooling was thus quite different to the kind of embryonic democracy central to Dewey’s educational philosophy: progress and stability would be achieved through deference to wise and noble leaders, not a faith in common intelligence and conjoint problem solving.

Jefferson’s second concern was the selection and education of the elite. Conscious of the ethical problems of eugenic engineering, “for experience proves that moral and physical qualities of man, whether good or evil, are transmissible in a certain degree from father to son,” he contented himself with the existence of an “accidental *aristori* produced by the fortuitous concourse of breeders

(Jefferson, 1959, 388).” This, he told Adams, was “the most precious gift of nature for the instruction, the trusts, and government of society (Jefferson, 1959, 388).” He thus proposed a revolutionary scheme for the selection and training of his natural aristocracy. Each year the school’s visitors would select the top boy and send him, at public expense to one of twenty grammar schools established around the state. After one or two years of study in “Greek, Latin, geography, and the higher branches of numerical arithmetic,” the most able would be selected for four more years of instruction. By this means,” Jefferson asserted, “twenty of the best geniusses will be raked from the rubbish annually (Jefferson, 1984, 272).” Finally, at the end of their education, “one half are to be discontinued (from among whom the grammar schools will probably be supplied with future masters); and the other half, who are to be chosen for the superiority of their parts and disposition, are to be sent and continued three years in the study of such sciences as they shall chuse, at William and Mary college (Jefferson, 1984, 272).”

The final part of this scheme demanded a radical revision Jefferson’s *alma mater*. As argued in Bill 80 for Amending the Constitution of the College of William and Mary, the original mission of preparing Anglican ministers had to give way to the civic needs of the people. This entailed replacing Latin, Greek, and Divinity with a more secular, scientific curriculum. Ancient languages, he complained in the *Notes*, “filled the college with children (Jefferson, 1984, 277).” By restricting such preparatory skills to the previous educational level, professional schools in Law, Medicine, and Government could be established to transform traditional on-the-job training with knowledge of the principles governing human nature.

Although the legislature failed to approve Bill 80, Jefferson was able to institute elements of his plan in 1779, when, as governor, he became a trustee of the college. Under his guidance, the curriculum was reorganized around professorships in Law and Police; Anatomy and Medicine; Natural Philosophy and Mathematics; Moral Philosophy, the Law of Nature and Nations, and the Fine Arts; and Modern Languages. In the *Notes* he expressed hope that other professorships would soon be funded to offer specialized work in the sciences. But the College’s charter, its lack of funds, and its increasing isolation from the political center of the state frustrated Jefferson’s goals. By 1800 he had given up on transforming William and Mary. Virginia, he now understood, needed a new State university to educate its future leaders and offer the South an alternative to what he saw as the baleful influence of New England learning. Jefferson was also frustrated by legislature’s reluctance to fund public schools. A much diluted form of Bill 79 did pass in 1796, but, Jefferson explained in his *Autobiography*, on realizing that the taxes levied for instruction “would throw on wealth the education of the poor . . . the more wealthy class were unwilling to incur that burden,” and, as a result, schooling failed “to commence in a single county (Jefferson, 1984, 43)

As Jefferson’s duties drew his attention to the national stage, he also considered a number of schemes to

establish a system of education for the entire country. In 1794, for example, he explored the possibility of founding a national university with émigré faculty from the University of Geneva. Later, as President, he commissioned Du Pont de Nemours to design a system of schooling and supported Joel Barlow’s scheme for a national university and Institute of learning based upon the French model. Neither proposal was embraced by Congress; indeed, it seems that Jefferson had his own reservations about the federal control of knowledge. Accordingly, it was only after his return to Monticello, in the 1810s and 1820s, that he threw his full energies into the cause of educational reform, proposing, once again, the three-tiered system of public schooling outlined in Bills 79 and 80. Only now, influenced by the philosophy and social science of the Idéologues, his original plan was strengthened by the political philosophy of Tracy, who, in the years prior to Napoleon, had been instrumental in establishing a similar structure of schooling in France.

Destutt De Tracy

When, in the aftermath of the Terror, Sieyès, Garat, Volney, and many of the other liberal reformers who met at the salon of Mme Helvétius came to power in the Directory (1795-1799), they turned to the moral philosophy and disciplinary pedagogy sketched by Cabanis as the means to bring order and stability to the new republic. Public policy was to be informed by “the science of man,” or what would later become known as “social science.” This incipient movement gained political and philosophical focus in 1796, when Cabanis’ friend Destutt de Tracy was elected to the section devoted to the analysis of sensations and ideas at the newly established National Institute. It was Tracy who laid out the political agenda flowing from this physiologically-based sensationalist epistemology and coined the ill-fated neologism, *Idéologie*.

A youthful supporter of the American Republic and Turgot’s liberal reforms, Antoine Louis Claude, Comte Destutt de Tracy embraced revolutionary calls for greater representation of the Third Estate. As a delegate of the Bourbonnais nobility in the National Assembly (1789-1791) he supported the Declaration of the Rights of Man, advocated the abolition of slavery in the French colonies, and strongly endorsed anticlerical legislation. Together with Cabanis, Du Pont de Nemours, Talleyrand, Garat, Sieyès, Condorcet, and the other prominent intellectuals who met at the *Société* 1789, he envisioned a scientifically enlightened representative government that avoided the radical egalitarianism of the Democrats. Most troubling for Tracy, was the spreading discontent in the Army. A colonel under Lafayette (the future father-in-law of his daughter), he struggled to maintain discipline amid radical attacks on the privilege of rank. With the arrest of the king, and Lafayette’s subsequent escape to Belgium, Tracy resigned his commission and retired to Antieul, where, out of the public eye, he kept company with Condorcet and Cabanis. But Tracy’s aristocratic background proved too much for the Jacobins. Imprisoned for eleven months, he was only saved from the guillotine by the fall of Robespierre. It was during

this internment that he immersed himself in Condillac and the other philosophical works that would become the basis for *Idéologie*—literally, the science of ideas.

Like the epistemological and behavioral doctrines of the logical positivists, Tracy believed that a sound foundation for knowledge could be established by carefully assembling ideas out of the basic features of sense experience: thought had to proceed from simple to complex in steps immediately comprehensible to the attentive mind. In contrast to Condillac, however, Tracy did not view the faculties as an amalgamation of sensations, but rather, as Cabanis explained, basic responses of the human organization. Perception, memory, judgment, and desire were functions of the brain, the nervous system, and the bodily temperaments. Ultimately, Ideology was part of zoology. But it also suggested rational laws of mind and behavior. Fusing Condillac's analysis of signs with a moderate utilitarianism, he explained how social and moral codes could be constructed to foster happiness. The key to human well-being was the creation of a political order that properly regulated desires by rewarding virtue and punishing vice. For while direct instruction in moral principles might influence the behavior of more philosophic minds, the average person learned little from the classroom or the Catechism: the legislator and the laws were the true teachers of mankind. Rejecting the concept of a moral intuition, Tracy was adamant that even the most basic notions of right and wrong were acquired through socialization in the family and other cultural institutions. It was thus incumbent upon political leaders to engineer public and private practices that would develop correct habits and teach the population the fundamental link between reason, virtue, and happiness. This included maintaining an economy which fostered small industry while eliminating debt, speculation, and the evils of extreme wealth; the abolition of primogeniture; and, the removal of clerical influence over civil institutions.

Political economy was at the heart of Tracy's system. Grounded in his conception of human well-being, productive activity was to be measured by "goods" that promoted the full and harmonious development of the faculties. Following Jean Baptise Say, he rejected the physiocrats' premise that wealth was measured by agricultural production. According to Du Pont de Nemours, for example, manufacturing and commerce contributed little to the production of useful goods: the key to prosperity was simply to increase the efficiency of farming. Characterizing the efforts of the bourgeoisie as sterile, he promoted economic development through improved farming techniques and a centralized monarchy capable of coordinating the production and distribution of food. Say thought that this focus on agriculture was too narrow. The manufacturing and commercial classes were also involved in producing tools, food, and other materials that contributed to the country's wealth. Value, which reflected human needs, was best measured by the market. Tracy concurred. It was not the middle classes that were sterile but the landowners who lived in luxury off the labors of the peasants. There were three actors in Tracy's economic system; the *savant*, educated to understand the scientific principles governing nature and

society; the worker, who provided the physical power necessary for production; and the entrepreneur, who invested capital to make possible socially useful enterprises. While recognizing the inequalities inherent in this organization of money, mind, and labor, he insisted that the interests of each class were best served by developing their talents in the position that fate had placed them—much as Jefferson had argued in the *Notes*. Modest industrialization would not hurt the worker: money saved in one area permitted further investment that created new jobs. The essential point was to combat unrestrained capitalism and the gross inequalities it produced. But Tracy was hopeful that in a more liberal state property owners would realize that a well-paid and trained laborer was good for all, and, with the kind of representative government established in America, educated workers would appreciate the importance of electing virtuous leaders who would work for the common weal rather than narrow class interests.

Indeed, Jefferson's Republicanism seems to have served as something of a blueprint for Tracy's political theory. As expressed in his *Critique of Montesquieu's Spirit of the Laws* (composed in 1805-1806 as Napoleon consolidated power and disenfranchised the *Idéologues*), Tracy defended representative government as a modern solution to the problem of a just society (Tracy, 1969). Montesquieu identified three basic forms of government (Republic, Monarchy, and Despotism) and explored the sentiments each created in order to retain authority over the population. In Tracy's mind this division failed to carve the political world at its joints. Governments, he believed, were more productively categorized according to whether they promoted the general will or special interests. And, rather than asking how each conserved power, it was far more important to examine how they promoted public or private good through the dissemination of knowledge. As Montesquieu noted, only "those governments which are founded on reason, can alone desire that education should be exempt from prejudice (Tracy, 1969, iv)." "In a hereditary monarchy," for instance, a prince "ought to inculcate and propagate the maxims of passive obedience, and a profound veneration for the established forms (Tracy, 1969, iv)." There should be a "dislike for the spirit of innovation and enquiry, or the discussion of political principles (Tracy, 1969, iv)" And, "above all," Tracy continued, he should employ "religious ideas, which taking possession of the mind from the cradle, make durable and deep impressions, form habits, and fix opinions, long before the age of reflexion (Tracy, 1969, iv)." Conversely, in a Republic, a government fearing "error and prejudice" would "constantly to attend to the propagation of accurate and solid knowledge of all kinds" and

prevent the poor class from becoming vicious, ignorant, or miserable; the opulent class from becoming insolent and fond of false knowledge; and should cause both to approach that middle point, at which the love of order, of industry, of justice, and reason, naturally establish themselves.

(Tracy, 1969, iv: 0).

Tracy gained a powerful weapon in his battle against the hegemony of the Church with the publication of Charles Dupuis' twelve-volume *Origin of all Religious Worship* (Dupuis, 1795/1984). As Tracy summarized Dupuis in his anonymous *Analysis*, all the world's religions, including Christianity, could be reduced to myths of nature, allegorical tales and metaphysical constructs that sought to explain the unknown forces governing events. Most invidious was the priesthood, which built elaborate theological arguments to defend the spiritualization of nature and silence rational inquiry. Rather than elevating the population by teaching that happiness and virtue went hand in hand, it sought to maintain social privilege through the spread of superstition and fear. In 1799 Tracy had an opportunity to correct this abuse and construct his own vision of a rational and moral society. Elected to the Council for Public Instruction, he poured his energies into fashioning elite schools for future leaders, convinced that a class of scientifically trained savants could craft the institutional practices, legal statutes, and popular customs necessary to perfect the intellectual and moral powers of the masses.

The Government of Mind

One of the central pillars of the Constitution drawn up by the National Assembly was a commitment to the education of all citizens. Having eliminated the tithes and taxes that supported religious schools, nationalized Church property, and suppressed traditional universities, the Assembly turned to the construction of a system of public education free from ecclesiastical control. This meant a radical revision of the religiously oriented Latin curriculum maintained by the Church, in line with the theories of mind and secular ethics advanced by enlightenment thinkers. But while clear in their political aims and philosophy of education, the revolutionary planners struggled with the particulars. The *philosophes* had left no blueprints and there was no other national system of schooling for them to draw upon. Should all children attend school beyond the elementary level? Should fees to be assessed? Was education to be controlled by state or by local officials? Buildings, desks, books, and teachers, everything was open to debate. It is hardly surprising then, that more than twenty proposals were submitted in the first two years of the Republic. Most influential were the schemes of Mirabeau (authored and published by Cabanis) and Talleyrand (1791), both of which proposed a four-tier system comprising elementary and secondary schools, technical colleges or lycées (to replace universities), and a National Institute.

To review these proposals the short-lived Legislative Assembly (1791-1792) appointed a Committee on Public Instruction under the leadership of Condorcet, who had roused popular opinion the previous year with a series of five memoirs on the necessity of education to the future of the Republic. Condorcet's report, *The General Organization of Public Instruction*, preserved this same basic structure while advancing a more egalitarian philosophy (Palmer, 1985, 124-129). Not that he endorsed the leveling scheme of Robespierre, who, in 1793, advocated a nationwide system of boarding schools, Maisons d'Egalités, in which children from

age 5 to 12 could be raised without distinction. Condorcet's goal was simply to avoid the great disparities in education that underwrote the political oppression of the *Ancien Régime*. Similar in its details to Jefferson's proposal, but with two extra levels, he suggested primary schools to educate the masses free of charge, secondary education, with scholarships for the able poor, district grammar schools, and lycées. Finally, above and controlling all, would be a National Society divided into classes for mathematics and physical science, the moral and political sciences, the applied sciences, and literature and the fine arts.

Condorcet's timing could not have been worse. Before any action could be taken the Assembly turned to face the threat of the Austrian and Prussian alliance, and all enthusiasm for educational reform was lost in the tide of nationalistic spirit. It was not until the end of 1794, with the rise to power of the *Idéologues*, that the National Convention (1792-1795) finally started to take action. Marked by the execution of Louis XVI (December 1792) and the rise of the Jacobin Terror (September 1792-June 1794), the intervening years had decimated cultural life. Schools, universities, and learned societies had been closed, and many prominent intellectual leaders and public figures, including Condorcet (who denied the guillotine by dinking a poison provided by Cabanis), had been put to death or ostracized. The need for order now superseded the need for equality. As the *Idéologues* saw it, schooling had to establish a secular morality necessary for a stable republican government, and France's place as the leading center for science and the arts restored. Again, the Commission on Public Instruction was asked for its recommendations. This time, under the guidance of Garat, Joseph Lanakal authored a number of reports suggesting amendments to Condorcet's scheme in line with growing anti-democratic sympathies. Eventually passed into legislation, most importantly in Pierre Daunou's Law of the Third Brumaire (October 25, 1795), a comprehensive, if hierarchical, system of education was founded—and remained in place until Napoleon reorganized French schooling in 1802, and the National Institute in 1803.

The Daunou law required that one or more fee-paying primary school be located in each canton and an *école centrale*, a center for learning and educational activities, established in every department. Unlike the secondary schools envisioned by Condorcet, these were not meant to be an extension of primary education, but rather separate elite academies for students beyond age twelve who wished to prepare for higher education or careers in the civil service. Indeed, in contrast to the more radical plans of the Assembly, primary schooling was not even compulsory. True, funds were provided for the meritorious poor, but this provision did little to satisfy democratic critics who bemoaned the loss of earlier, more egalitarian schemes. Thus, where the primary schools were charged to teach the fundamentals of reading, writing, and arithmetic, natural history, and the basis of republican government to the working poor, the more academic curriculum of the central school—comprised drawing, ancient languages, mathematics, physics, chemistry, general grammar, *belles-lettres*, history, and legislation—was designed for children of the middle classes. The next level of

education also departed from Condorcet's plan. Instead of the Lycées, ten higher specialized academies were to be founded. And, while a National Institute was established, it also differed in structure and mission to what Condorcet envisioned. Less a controlling body for the whole system than a center in which to celebrate French learning—a living encyclopedia of knowledge, as Daunou put it—the Institute, omitting the applied sciences, divided 144 of France's leading scholars into the remaining three of Condorcet's four classes (Stein, 1961). Cabanis, Tracy, and several other prominent *Idéologues* were appointed to a section of the Second Class on Moral and Political Sciences devoted to the analysis of sensations and ideas.

At the height of the Jacobin Dictatorship plans had been drawn up to develop a corps of teachers armed with the knowledge and pedagogic skills necessary to educate a nation of republican citizens. Ten thousand men would attend a central seminary in Paris, and from there disseminate correct practices by opening normal schools in their own departments. Supportive of this initiative to spread the art of teaching, Garat and Lanakal combined early in 1794 to advocate the establishment of what would become the *Ecole Normale*. But with the change in political climate their political interests gradually changed from preparing primary teachers to establishing a higher seat of learning to guide the education of an elite class. Accordingly, when the *Ecole Normale* opened in January 1795, a single auditorium in the Natural History Museum, the fourteen eminent professors engaged for the four month semester did not have young children on their mind. Rather, their courses laid out the curriculum of the *écoles centrales*, established the following month by the Law of 3 Ventose. Among the many notable intellectuals, Lagrange and Laplace lectured on Mathematics, Garat on "Analysis of the Understanding," and Sicard on General Grammar. All of this must have appeared quite esoteric to the majority of students, who had been sent by local authorities in order to train as primary school teachers. By May, more than half had departed, leaving the faculty to justify their role as the guardians of higher education rather than masters of pedagogy.

As its first few years of existence soon revealed, the public school system created by Daunou's Law faced serious problems. Hindered by the lack of central authority, the *Idéologues'* plans were invariably subverted by local conditions. The chief concern was the existence of a large number of Catholic independent schools guaranteed by the right of conscience secured in Title X of the Constitution. Often supported by charitable funds, this alternative system enrolled more than half of all pupils. Not only did this subvert Condorcet's goal of a unified system, but, for democratic critics within the Directory, it became a palpable threat to the Republic. Orthodox clergy, it was claimed in the debates of 1798, were using elementary schools in a counter-hegemonic struggle against the political ideology of the revolution. To combat this threat, laws were enacted to bring private education in line with public policy. Government officials had to enroll their children in public schools; local authorities were charged with monitoring private education to ensure schools used approved textbooks;

and, in order to exclude any priest not committed to civic codes, headmasters had to be married or widowers. As for the central schools, the confusing mission of educating both university and primary level students led to a hodge-podge of classes for all ages and abilities. Attendance was sporadic, lectures disorganized, and teachers lacked training. With no bureaucratic mechanism to enforce its directives, most of the ministry's edicts fell on deaf ears.

Equally important to democratic critics was the divide between elementary and secondary schooling. The curriculum of the *écoles centrales* did not dovetail with the primary school's, and, by the Law 3 Brumaire, students were not permitted to enroll until age 12, three years after their elementary education was completed. Fearful of creating a new aristocracy, Democrats called for sweeping changes. The *Idéologues* resisted. The staggering costs aside they saw no purpose in expanding the education of the masses. What was the use of schooling millions of peasants in the higher branches of knowledge? Too much learning would only sour the worker for the life of toil to which they were destined. Primary education, Tracy explained, had to be short and sweet. It should pass on the most basic knowledge and values of the social elite, but ought not to be considered an introduction to the work of the central schools. Unlike Jefferson, he did not even think it appropriate for the children of the *classe savante* to attend primary schools. Far better that these future leaders of society stay home and cultivate their tastes in a more refined environment until they had the maturity to pursue the more demanding studies of the *écoles centrales*—as outlined in Tracy's *Observations sur le Système Actuel d'Instruction Publique*, an eight year syllabus in Language and Literature, the Physical Sciences and Mathematics, and the Ideological, Moral, and Political Sciences (Tracy, 1801). But debate was mute. With foreign armies surrounding France, and the threat of a Jacobin revival, Liberals threw their support behind Bonaparte's *coup d'état* of November 1799. Led by Sieyès, the *Idéologues* helped engineer Napoleon's rise by designing the three-chamber scheme of the Legislative Body, the Tribunate, and the Conservative Senate—only to compromise their own authority in the final agreement, by ceding executive power to the First Council. Napoleon did not have to answer to the Senate. Thus, on December 28th, when Tracy, Cabanis, Garat, and a host of other *Idéologues* accepted the honored and highly paid role of senators, they lost a direct voice in the formation of government policy. From then on, as they ceased to be of value to the First Council, they gradually became his scapegoats, metaphysicians, responsible for all the ills of the revolution. The faults of the school system would now be addressed by administrative *fiat* rather than parliamentary debate.

At first the *Idéologues* were confident that Napoleon would help carry their scheme forward; a visitor at Auteuil and a member of the National Institute, Bonaparte had courted the approval of intellectuals and promised to maintain important political appointments. Crucial for their educational ambitions was the Council on Public Instruction, an advisory group formed in October 1798 to guide the Minister of the Interior. Originally comprising eight

members of the National Institute, including four from from the section on analysis of sensations and ideas, the ideological agenda of the group was strengthened the following February when Tracy joined their number.

In 1797 professors were instructed to submit their teaching plans and course notes, but few responded. Determined to see how Ideological principles were being enacted, Tracy issued a rather stern reminder together with a detailed questionnaire designed to assess the effectiveness of the nation's one hundred central schools. He was not happy with the results, but mindful of the debates raging in the legislature, took care to press his principles without opening the central schools to political attack. Tracy was most concerned with the presentation of history, geography, legislation, and political economy, the social sciences necessary for the future *savants* of his secular state. In a number of circulars distributed just prior to Napoleon's *coup*, he reminded professors of the relationship between mind and language, and the system of laws, institutions, and social customs that arose from a knowledge of human nature. As teachers of future legislators and administrators, it was their duty to prepare students with the ability to shape behavior in positive ways. Yet the materials they presented revealed either a total misunderstanding of Ideology or a stubborn commitment to Spiritualism. The fundamental problem, Tracy reported, was the failure to make the philosophy of language the basis for all learning. How could students understand the purpose of their studies if they did not appreciate the basic relationship between signs and thought? Recommending they read Condillac, he outlined the Ideological project and explained how an ordered system of signs yielded knowledge free from conceptual confusion and charted a pedagogic path to reason and virtue. Ideology itself had to become a subject of inquiry to properly prepare students for classes in legislation, literature, and history.

Armed with an understanding of mind and character, pupils would explore the civic codes, criminal law, commercial regulations, and critically evaluate their capacity to promote freedom, prosperity, and happiness. They would then be in a position to appreciate the development of societies through history. Like Condorcet, in his monumental *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (1795), Tracy viewed the past through the lens of ignorance and oppression. The traditional script of sacred tales, heroic stories, and political myths had to be replaced by a scientific study of peoples that revealed the causal structures necessary to engineer social progress.

Unfortunately for the *Idéologues*, secular social science was not popular with either students or faculty—grammar, legislation, and history were among the classes with the lowest enrollments. Many teachers reported that attention to writing skills left little time for philosophical study. Even those who did address the nature of mind tended to integrate Ideology and Spiritualism. Moreover, although teachers embraced the goal of political criticism, they stubbornly presented revealed religion or the dictates of the Church as the basis of morality. As for history, Tracy noted a broad sympathy for studying the past as a ladder to

civilization, but much to his chagrin, found almost no interest in Dupuis' masterwork.

Presenting the group's report to Lucien Bonaparte, Tracy maintained the *écoles centrales* had proven themselves indispensable to the future of the Republic. Certainly, some changes were necessary. The minimum age of enrollment had to be lowered, prerequisites needed to be established, studies ought to be more carefully coordinated, and national examinations instituted—but the system was sound. By concentrating on the social sciences, the rigorous schooling of middle-class children between ages 8 and 16 would prepare elite students for careers in the civil service, or professional training in one of the special schools. It would even help develop a core of dedicated teachers capable of revolutionizing the primary education of the masses.

Tracy's report died on the minister's desk. Eight months passed without a word, then, in October 1800, Bonaparte dissolved the Council and took charge of its papers. Determined to preserve the existing system, Tracy joined the growing public debate on education by publishing the Council's findings and presenting his own textbook for the central schools—the first of his multi-volume *Elements of Ideology* (Tracy, 1803; Tracy, 1804; Tracy 1805). Dissatisfaction with the lack of organization and the confused mission of the central schools was growing. Determined to address this potentially volatile situation, and meet Napoleon's political goals, officials from the Council of State crafted the bill eventually passed by the Legislative Body on May 1st, 1802 as the Law of Eleven Floréal. It appears that Bonaparte was instrumental in shaping the most important provisions of the act. He did not share the secular goals of the *Idéologues*, and certainly did not need an army of social scientists. Resurrecting elements of Condorcet's plan, the lycée was established to provide students between 9 and 16 with a general education prior to technical training in the special schools and *écoles secondaires* (while not a step toward the lycées) to foster social advancement for talented children of the lower orders. However, it was political patronage, not leveling, that underwrote the extensive system of scholarships that would make this new system possible. A lycée education was to be both a reward for the children of loyal government employees and a training ground for a future corps of dedicated and tough-minded public professionals. The same logic was then applied to the teaching body itself, when, in the laws of 1806 and 1808, Napoleon created the Imperial University, a hierarchically administered state run bureaucracy that turned lycée and secondary school faculty into civil servants and standardized both public and private education.

By this time the *Idéologues* had lost almost all influence over government policy. Starting shortly after the *coup* of 18 Brumaire, the rift with Napoleon came to a head with their opposition to the Concordant of 1802. Fundamentally opposed to the re-introduction of the Church into public life, they hoped to frustrate Napoleon's initiative in debate, but instead found themselves ostracized from power as Bonaparte pressured the Senate to purge the Tribunal and the Legislative Body of his opponents. Four months later the Senate was forced to name Bonaparte

Consulate for life and accept a new constitution that effectively neutered its control of the Executive. The final nail in the *Idéologue's* coffin came early the following year when Bonaparte reorganized the National Institute, dissolving the class on the analysis of sensations and ideas. Out of political favor, and with no voice in the shaping of educational policy, Cabanis, Tracy, and the other *Idéologues* gradually receded from public life. Ideology had become both passé and dangerous: There was simply no place for the “science of man” in a state that denied politics. Accordingly, while the school system of post-revolutionary France retained vestiges of the structural reforms suggested by the *Idéologues*—a two-track system that provided basic knowledge for the masses while preparing elite students for advanced training—it was shorn of the secular mission and social science curriculum fundamental to the positivist state envisioned by Tracy. The lycée, as Napoleon recognized, had become the great instrument for the maintenance of his bureaucratic empire.

Thomas Jefferson, *Idéologue*

It is not surprising that struggling to consolidate authority within the Napoleonic regime, the *Idéologues* would seek the endorsement of a powerful and sympathetic friend, the American President, and president of the American Philosophical Society (a group of scientifically minded men, including Benjamin Rush, Joseph Priestly, and David Rittenhouse openly sympathetic to the physiological doctrines of Sensationism). In 1802 Jefferson was elected as an associate member of the class on Moral Science and started receiving texts from the movements leading theorists. Say sent his two-volume *Treatise on Political Economy*, Cabanis his *Reports on the Physical and the Moral*, and Tracy the first two volumes of his *Elements of Ideology*. Encumbered by the demands of his office, Jefferson had little time to examine these works, especially, he later admitted to Adams, Tracy's rather dense and dry epistemological tract, but he did write back expressing his gratitude for the honor they had bestowed upon him and his interest in their future practical and theoretical labors. His retirement, he promised, would be sweetened by the careful perusal of his new library. In 1806, Jefferson received a second package from Tracy, the French manuscript of his *Commentary on Montesquieu*. Unable to publish under the eye of Napoleon, Tracy hoped the work would gain proper attention in America. Here was a topic much more to Jefferson's liking. As a student he had carefully dissected Montesquieu's masterpiece in his commonplace book. But, while accepting the relationship between human nature, government, and institutions—even the physiological arguments about climate, temperament, and manners—found the defense of Monarchy totally unacceptable. Tracy corrected and updated Montesquieu arguments: aligning the character of the state with the anthropological physiology of Cabanis, he presented a scientific justification of republican government. Apart from a small disagreement over the virtue of single verses a plural executive, Jefferson was enthralled. Here was the principle political text of the generation. As Napoleon villainized the *Idéologues* for all the excesses of the Revolution, Jefferson

had the work translated and published in America. He persuaded James Madison, rector of William and Mary, to make it required reading for all graduating students, and, in 1812, wrote to Thomas Cooper—the first professor appointed to the University of Virginia—expressing his hope that the Review of Montesquieu . . . will become the elementary book of the youth at all our colleges” (Jefferson, 1907, 13: 178-179). He even suggested that students prepare for the text with a “a mature study of the most profound of all human compositions, Cabanis's ‘Rapports du Physique et du moral de l'homme.’” (Tracy, 1803) In 1814 Jefferson received the fourth volume of Tracy's *Elements*, which, after much trouble with printers, he personally translated and published as *Treatise on Political Economy* (1817). Convinced that Tracy had corrected and systemized economic thought from Quesnay to Smith and Say, Jefferson wrote to Albert Gallatin, the Secretary of the Treasury, in 1818 offering the book as an antidote to the nation's profound ignorance of the science. By “simplifying principles” it brought “the whole subject within a narrow compass (Chinard, 1925, 105-106).” Taken together, the *Commentary on Montesquieu* and *Political Economy*, were to “become the Statesmen's Manual . . . elementary books of the political department” at the university of Virginia (Chinard, 1925, 203).”

In 1813 Adams wrote to Jefferson excited by his recent acquisition of Dupuis' *opus*. Joseph Priestly had rejected the work and labeled its author an atheist. But Adams was more circumspect and challenged Jefferson to tackle the twelve volumes with him so that they could resolve for themselves the debate between materialism and spiritualism. Jefferson praised Adams' heroism, but reported his appetite for Dupuis had been satisfied by Tracy's analytic review, and sent on the “pithy morsel” for his friend's edification. (Adams and Jefferson, II: 491). This debate, woven out of metaphysical and theological conceptions of nature, mind, and spirit, was at the core of Jefferson's thought. Following Priestly's deistic teachings, he formulated a vision of the universe that fused materialism and Christianity. Like Much as Cabanis, Priestly believed that organic matter possessed sensitive properties capable of generating consciousness and free will. Jefferson found this conjecture far more plausible than the supposed existence of an immaterial self. Citing Locke's attack on spiritualists—that it was blasphemy to assert God could not have endowed matter with the power of thought—Jefferson confessed to Adams that it was easier to swallow “one incomprehensibility rather than two . . . an existence called spirit, of which we have neither evidence nor idea,” and which, lacking extension and solidity, “can put material organs into motion (Adams and Jefferson, II: 491).” “To talk of immaterial existence,” he later elaborated, “is to talk of *nothings*. To say that the human soul, angels, god, are immaterial, is to say they are *nothings*. . . I cannot reason otherwise: but I believe I am supported in my creed of materialism by Locke, Tracy, and Stewart (Adams and Jefferson, II: 491).” (Stewart, whom Jefferson had befriended in Paris during the first year of the revolution, supported a Baconian science of mind and society similar to Tracy's scheme, but tempered by a commitment to the

doctrine of innate truths. Elie Halévy has written that Thomas Brown, Stewart's student and handpicked successor at the University of Edinburgh, "borrowed so much from Destutt de Tracy and Laromiguière that, he has been accused of plagiarism (Halévy, 1966, 453)." Both of these writers strongly influenced Jams Mill, and other philosophic radicals, sponsoring liberal beliefs in the nature and structure of education remarkably similar to those of Tracy and Jefferson. Stewart, however, was no materialist.) "Why should the materialist be expected to explain the process by which matter exercises the faculty of thinking" when scientists are unable to account for the properties of gravity or magnetism? Only "on the basis of sensation" he told Adams, "erect all the certainties we can have or need. When this is quit all is in the wind (Cappon, 1984, 568)." Dupuis' *Origin* showed the truth of this dictum in the history of religion. A firm foundation for faith had to be established from the unquestionable design of the universe and the immutable principles of morality. Jesus, he insisted, was not a living divinity, but a profound teacher of moral truths. Eschewing spiritualism, he confessed to being a Christian "in the only sense in which I believe Jesus wished anyone to be, sincerely attached to his doctrines in preference to all others; ascribing to himself every human excellence, and believing that he never claimed any other (Jefferson, 1907, 1122)." Later in life Jefferson even argued that the early Christians were themselves materialists, and blamed St Paul for infecting faith with mysticism and spirituality. Taken up by the Church, these obscurities were then turned, "by artificial constructions into a mere contrivance to turn filch wealth and power to themselves (Jefferson, 1907, 1214)." Charging rational men with infidelity, religions became "the greatest obstacles to the advancement of the real doctrines of Jesus, and do in fact, constitute the real anti-Christ (Jefferson, 1907, 1214)." Adams concurred. Praising Dupuis' history as the greatest fairy tale ever written, he too remained committed to the moral lessons of Christ. "The Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount," he told the Virginian, "contained my religion (Cappon, 1984, 494)."

But who was this Tracy? "The ablest writer living on intellectual subjects, or the operations of the understanding," Jefferson replied (Cappon, 1984, 494)." Describing his three volumes on Ideology and his critique of Montesquieu, he explained that the *Idéologue* was now completing "the circle of metaphysical sciences" with a work on ethics. Tracy, he warned Adams, was a follower of Hobbes and adopted the principle "that justice is founded in contract solely, and does not result from the constitution of man (Cappon, 1984, 494)." He, like Adams, believed in an innate sense of right and wrong, but was nonetheless convinced that while they differed on foundations "so correct a thinker as Tracy will give us a sound system of morals (Adams-Jefferson, 242)." Although Adams found Tracy's *Analysis* "a feigned (sic) Miniature of the Original," his interest was piqued (Adams-Jefferson, 499). What, he asked playfully in his next letter, was this Ideology?

When Bonaparte used it, I was delighted with it, upon the common principle of delight in everything we

cannot understand. Does it mean idiotism? The science of *non compass mentuism*? The Science of Lunacy? The Theory of Delirium? Or does it mean the Science of Self-Love of *amour proper*? Or the elements of vanity?

(Adams-Jefferson, 501)

Most of all he wanted "to see his Ideology upon Montesquieu (Adams-Jefferson, 501)." Jefferson promised to have a copy of the *Critique* delivered, explaining that by "Ideology," Tracy understood all the subjects which the French term *Morale*. Adams was delighted. The following year when he read the manuscript of *Political Economy* he found himself skipping from proposition to proposition, unable to leave the book unfinished. "It is a condensation into a little globule . . . of all the sound sense and solid knowledge of the grand master Quanax (sic) and all his redoubtable knights (Adams-Jefferson, 525)." Delighted with this "high approbation of Tracy's book," he asked for permission to use his letter to help ensure the circulation of the work, and Adams happily consented (Adams-Jefferson, 538-539). Tracy's moderate *laissez-faire* policies provided a theoretical justification for many of the issues Jefferson had struggled with in his political career. His vehement opposition to government intrusion in economic affairs—to national banks, paper money, direct taxation, the setting of interest rates, and public debt—resonated perfectly with Jefferson's crusade against federalism. Most importantly, perhaps, Tracy helped temper the romantic image of pastoral life that Jefferson had presented in the *Notes*. True, he remained committed to the political importance of the land as the seedbed for the development of republican character, but events such as the embargo of 1807 taught the importance of small scale manufacturing to America's economic independence. Fearing the excesses of the British industrial system, the debasement of labor and the attendant evils of urban life, he defended Tracy's model of development through modest entrepreneurship. Science and technology would be harnessed improve the public infrastructure and the conditions of home and labor, but society was still to be agrocentric. One nagging inconsistency in this vision that cannot be overlooked was Jefferson's support of extending slavery to Missouri. Given his oft repeated characterization of the institution as perverting the nature both of the master and slave, its Westward expansion—even if removing blacks from plantations to farms—was hardly established the moral basis on which to build an empire of reason.

"A Child of my Old Age"

In addition to Tracy's political and economic writings, Jefferson was also extremely interested in his educational work. He even wrote to Tracy in 1817 confessing that he had "availed [himself] of some of the leading ideas of . . . [his] luminous tract on public instruction" in the planning of Central College, at Albemarle. Like the *école centrale*, this was to be a secondary school—it was only later, when the site and buildings were developed into the University of Virginia, that Jefferson returned to his earlier three tier system, albeit with much of Tracy's curricula still intact.

Jefferson's 1814 letter to Peter Carr, the College's future principle, reveals the extent of this debt. Every citizen, he explained, "should receive an education proportioned to the condition and pursuits of his life (Jefferson, 1907, 1348)." Dividing the population into "the laboring and the learned," he proposed elementary instruction in "Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, and Geography," and a secondary curriculum for his *aristo* comprising the major divisions of Language (Languages and History, ancient and modern, Grammar, *Belles Lettres*, and Rhetoric); Mathematics (Pure and applied Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Natural History, Botany, Zoology, and Anatomy); and Philosophy (Ideology, Ethics, the Law of Nature and Nations, Government, and Political Economy). With the exception of lessons in the Theory of Medicine, this was almost exactly the same grouping of subjects Tracy had proposed in his *Observations* for the *école centrale* (Jefferson, 1907, 1346-1342). He even followed Tracy in advocating education for the deaf and the blind. Finally, as in France, he proposed professional schools to extend technical expertise in various theoretical, scientific, and practical fields.

Early in 1817 Charles Mercer's proposal for a system of public schools—which Jefferson opposed as fiscally unsound and overly bureaucratic—was narrowly defeated in the state senate. Determined to push his own scheme, he wrote to his political ally Joseph Cabell with two proposals, designed to establish elementary schools and a state university in Virginia. Consolidated in *A Bill for Establishing a System of Public Education*, Jefferson's plan was contained similar recommendations to his 1779 scheme, with the notable reduction in the number of natural aristocrats to be educated at public expense. But even with this concession the Bill gained little support. Instead a subsequent proposal to use \$45,000 of the literary fund to support the schooling of poor children was accepted. It was as a rider to this legislation that the construction of the University of Virginia was approved, thus setting off a four year struggle for financing that pitted primary and higher education against one another. Scholars have debated which end of the educational ladder Jefferson thought most important. Given his continuing petition for public schooling, even until his death, this seems an unfair question. But forced to choose, he told Cabell that it was better to pause primary schooling for three years and ensure the university properly established. As the epitaph he chose for his grave stone reveals ("Here was buried Thomas Jefferson Author of the Declaration of American Independence of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom and Father of the University of Virginia"), he was convinced that this child of his old age would be one of the most significant projects of his life (Jefferson, 1907, 706).

By 1818, with the construction of Central College well underway, the legislature appointed Jefferson and twenty-three other commissioners to plan the location, structure, administration, and curriculum of the University of Virginia. Meeting at a tavern in Rockfish Gap, the group weighted two other sites before settling on the facility at Albemarle as the most convenient for the white population of

the state. Written by Jefferson, the *Report* briefly outlined a plan for situating dormitories, classrooms, and faculty lodgings in a village-like academic campus that would facilitate the kind of mentoring relationships that had been so important in Jefferson's own youth. But this hardly captured the grandeur of Jefferson's architectural scheme. Convened that beauty was a mark of eminence, he planned stately auditoriums around an impressive quadrangle. Virginia's grace would attract a faculty composed of the finest minds in Europe, and stand as a citadel of learning for students across the South and West. The legislature worried about costs and balked at foreign speaking teachers. But Jefferson was not to be denied. As America's most elegant campus started to take shape, a promising young lawyer, Francis Glimmer, was dispatched to recruit faculty from Britain—the second generation of scholars would be home grown. As for the curriculum, Jefferson laid out a table of subjects that would develop wise and virtuous leaders with knowledge of government, political economy, and the scientific skills necessary to engineer a happy and prosperous commonwealth. Structured around ten professorships, including a professor of Ideology, his curriculum remained essentially what he had advocated to Carr four years earlier. (In 1824, as funds became scarce, the scheme was consolidated to eight professorships, with ideology, general grammar, and ethics included in moral philosophy, government and political economy in the school of law.) Military training, gymnastics, manual arts, dance, and drawing were also mentioned, as was the need to preserve a secular foundation for studies. The ethics professor would offer proof of the existence of God, "the author of all the relations of morality, and of all the laws and obligations these infer," and from this common ground, each sect would be able to provide, in facilities surrounding the campus, "as they think fittest, the means of further instruction in their own peculiar tenets (Jefferson, 1907, 467)." Not only did this respond to the severe criticism that Virginia lacked religious instruction to match the useful sciences, "by bringing the sects together, and mixing them with the mass of other students," he told Cooper, now at the University of South Carolina, "we shall soften their asperities, liberalize and neutralize their prejudices, and make the general religion a religion of peace, reason, and morality (Jefferson, 1907, 1465)." To his dying day Jefferson was resolute in protecting the wall of separation between church and state—Virginia, the nation's first real university, would be a secular institution centered on the library, not the Church. It would also, he told Tracy in 1820 "be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind, to explore and to expose every subject susceptible of its contemplation (Chinard, 1925, 203)." Tenure, equality of rank, and the elective system, would preserve the precious independence of thought. But as the selection of faculty continued, especially after Gilmar's untimely death, Jefferson's famed toleration hardened. Fearing the spread of federalism, preached in the northern colleges attended by so many of Virginia's youth, he sought to constrain teaching, especially in the all important subjects of law and government. Insisting that the legislature had the right to ensure future leaders were weaned on correct

republican principles, he convinced the Board of Visitors to mandate a curriculum structured around the works of Locke, Sidney, the Federalist Papers, the Declaration of Independence, and Washington's Valedictory Address. He also insisted that the Board only hire a professor of law who would adopt the Whig *Coke on Littleton* rather than the Tory *Blackstone*. As for moral philosophy, he jumped on Madison's former student, George Tucker: a retiring senator from Lynchburg who had held the Jeffersonian line on Missouri. His lack of experience in metaphysics was not a problem, Jefferson explained, for "any person with a general education" could quickly master "Locke, Stewart, Brown, [and] Tracy (McLean, 1961, 158)." In his first year, Tucker even taught economics from Cooper's text on Say until the professorship in law was finally filled by another member of Madison's coterie, John Lomax.

Without Jefferson's stewardship Tracy's science of the mind gradually disappeared from the curriculum at Virginia—Tucker, for example, gravitated to the more standard college digest of Scottish Common Sense Realism. But a more enduring Ideology remained. For while it is true, as Pangle and Pangle suggest that the renewed religiosity of the era favored the spread of denominational colleges rather than the secular and scientific studies pioneered by Jefferson, Virginia nonetheless proved a pivotal institution in the political culture of the Antebellum South (Pangle and Pangle, 1993). Party, rather than social science became "Old Schem's" legacy. Four months before his death, Jefferson wrote to Madison determined to preserve his republicanism.

It is in our seminary that that vestal flame is to be kept alive; it is then to spread anew over our own and sister States. If we are true and vigilant in our trust, within a dozen or twenty years a majority of our own Legislature will be from one school, and many disciples will have carried its doctrines home with them to their several States, and will have leavened thus the whole mass (Adams, 1888, 139).

If, as Jefferson claimed, the school of law, was the "nursery of our Congress," then Virginia had many influential sons (Adams, 1888, 139). For, as William P. Trent chronicles, in the first fifty years, Jefferson's institution trained hundreds of students who would take leading political and professional roles across the South, thus helping to legitimize the distinct sectional culture that would pervade the political contests of the next generation.

More troubling for Jefferson's legacy, was the Old Dominion's failure to establish a system of public schooling until the 1870s, when the reforms pushed by Horace Mann in Massachusetts gradually spread across the country. Writing just a decade after Jefferson's death, Mann completely ignored the campaign for public schooling in Virginia. His view of human nature and the social good was sustained by a second Transatlantic "science of man," Ideology's successor, Phrenology. Here was a moral philosophy America could not resist. In addition to political arguments for a wise and virtuous citizenry, phrenological principles provided a justification for every aspect of the educational system.

From the physical design of the school house to the choice of text books and the training of teachers, Mann presented what Jefferson could only hint at, specific and compelling scientific explanations for the aims, methods, and content of schooling in the newly urban, rapidly industrializing world.

In an 1825 letter to Adams, Jefferson reports that he had "never been more gratified by the reading of a book than by that of Flourens."

Cabanis has gone far toward proving from anatomical structure and action of the human machine that certain parts of it were probably the organs of thought and that consequently matter might exercise [sic] that faculty. Flourens proves that it does exercise it, and that deprived of the cerebrum particularly the animal loses all senses, all intellect, and memory, yet lives in health ad for indefinite terms. It will be curious to see what immaterialists will oppose to this.

(Adams and Jefferson, 605)

A youthful disciple of Cabanis and Tracy, Flourens had praised Gall's efforts to identify and locate the brain's various mental organs. By 1822 his attitude had changed. Now under the orbit of Gall's nemesis, George Curvier, he presented a series of ablation and stimulation experiments that supported the Cartesian conception of mind. Dividing the brain into six distinct regions, he showed that each area performed a unique role in the overall mental economy: The cerebrum, for example, housed sense experience, memory, intelligence, and free-will. But as he demonstrated so sensationally, even the removal of large sections of this material did not lead to the total breakdown of powers. Opposing Gall's localization thesis, Flourens was able to argue that thought was distributed throughout the entire region, thus proving the existence of an all controlling a *moi*. Ironically, what Jefferson read as an empirical demonstration of the physical causes of thought and feeling, Flourens intended as a refutation of materialism and brain localization. It is to that theory, and the aims, methods, and content of education it sustained, that we now turn.

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