



RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Educating the Educators: The *Repetitio Humaniorum*

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ABSTRACT

This article assesses the *repetitio humaniorum*, the most comprehensive and arguably the most important form of teacher training in the pre-suppression Society. Based on a range of primary sources including autobiographical accounts, teaching materials, and archival resources, it closely examines all aspects of the *repetitio*, with a focus on how it was taught in the provinces of Bohemia and Austria in the eighteenth century.

Keywords:

Jesuit educational system; teacher training; *Repetitio humaniorum*; pre-suppression Society; Province of Austria; Province of Bohemia

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It has been postulated that a well-functioning educational system relies on three crucial components: a carefully considered instruction plan, reliable infrastructure, and competent, motivated teachers. In the early modern period, the Society of Jesus stood out as the leading provider of education precisely because of the exceptional quality of all three of these components. The renowned 1599 *Ratio studiorum*, a revised volume that was the result of decades of deliberation, offered a coherent and detailed plan of studies aiming to ensure the transfer of relevant learning in the hope that students would be “thereby aroused to appreciation and love of our Maker and Redeemer.”¹ The colleges of the order provided an infrastructural backbone for an international network of fully funded schools and universities built on sound economic foundations. In 1560 the second general of the order, Diego Laínez, decided that all Jesuits should “carry a part of the burden of the schools,” ensuring that their schools would have a constant supply of teachers.² Alongside career teachers who worked in schools for longer periods, every young Jesuit was expected to spend at least a couple of years teaching in the classroom during a phase of his formation known as the *magisterium*. Having tasked all those young men with teaching, the Society faced the challenge of turning them into competent teachers who would meet expected quality standards.

Teacher training is still one of the lesser-researched elements of the Jesuit educational system. Though some recent studies have explored the history and personnel of institutions for teacher training on a regional level,³ there remains a considerable gap in our understanding of its organization, employed methodologies, and the actual teaching activities conducted during this period. This article assesses the curriculum of the *repetitio humaniorum*, the most comprehensive and arguably the most important form of teacher training in the pre-suppression Society. Through a combination of autobiographical accounts, teaching materials, and archi-

1 “ut inde ad Conditoris ac Redemptoris nostri cognitionem atque amorem excitentur,” according to the first rule for the provincial in the *Ratio studiorum*; see Claude Pavur, S.J., ed. and trans., *The Ratio studiorum: The Official Plan for Jesuit Education* (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2005), 7.

2 Ladislaus Lukács, S.J., ed., *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Iesu: Nova editio ex integro refecta*, vol. 3 (Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1965–92), 304–6.

3 This has been accomplished in an exemplary fashion for the Polish and the Lithuanian provinces. Anna Królikowska, *Profesorowie jezuickich seminariów nauczycielskich od XVI do XVIII wieku* (Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Ignatianum w Krakowie, 2017) examines the personnel of the teacher training institutions, while Anna Królikowska, *Kształcenie nauczycieli dla jezuickich szkół średnich w Polsce od XVI do XVIII wieku* (Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Ignatianum w Krakowie, 2019) in its second half deals with the organizational structures.

val resources, it closely examines how the *repetitio* was taught, especially in the provinces of Bohemia and Austria in the eighteenth century.

Laínez's decision to include all Jesuits in educational work addressed the shortage of teachers that had, up to that time, plagued the Jesuit schools. What followed a few years later was the laying out of the first foundations of teacher training. In 1565 the Second General Congregation ruled in its ninth decree that at least one seminary should exist "in every province for the formation of professors and others who will be suitable workers in the vineyard of the Lord in the fields of humane letters, philosophy, and theology, so that afterwards they may supply the entire province."⁴ With this ruling, the congregation established an institution that would prepare teachers for the schools of the order. From the 1570s on we find colleges with the declared task, among other functions, of teaching young Jesuits the *humaniora*—that is, grammar, poetics, and rhetoric—and thus preparing them for their duties as teachers. The *Ratio studiorum* of 1586 prescribed the separation of *seminaria humaniorum*, where the teachers of *humaniora* were trained, from those of the higher faculties of philosophy and theology.⁵ Though this separation was not included in the final version of the *Ratio studiorum* in 1599, it was still mostly observed in practice; however, there were instances of the *humaniora* being taught in the same school as philosophy and theology.⁶

The main objective of teaching the *humaniora* was to improve command of the Latin and Greek languages and deepen an understanding of poetics and rhetoric. Its intended purpose was to build a strong foundation for higher studies, the study of philosophy and theology, and to prepare young Jesuits for the task of teaching grammar, poetics, and rhetoric in the schools of the Society.

The teaching of the *humaniora* to young Jesuits had different names in different provinces and periods. It was referred to as *iunioratus*, *rhetorum schola domestica*, *rhetorica nostrorum*, *seminarium rhetoricum*, *seminari-*

4 "saltem unum Seminarium Societatis perfectum in qualibet Provincia ad formandos Professores et alios, qui in Christi vinea idonei Operarii futuri essent in humanioribus litteris, Philosophia et Theologia, ut postea toti provinciae sufficerent." John W. Padberg, S.J., Martin D. O'Keefe, S.J., and John L. McCarthy, S.J., eds. and trans., *For Matters of Greater Moment: The First Thirty Jesuit General Congregations; A Brief History and a Translation of the Decrees* (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1994), 114. For the Latin text, see Georg Michael Pachtler, S.J., ed., *Ratio studiorum et Institutiones Scholasticae Societatis Jesu per Germaniam olim vigentes collectae, concinnatae dilucidatae*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1887–94), 75.

5 See Pachtler, *Ratio studiorum*, vol. 2, 147–48.

6 E.g. in Graz, where the *humaniora* were taught alongside the higher faculties from 1710 to 1715.

um nostrorum, seminarium provinciae, academia humaniorum litterarum, plantarium magistrorum, and probably by several other names. The most widespread term for it was *repetitio humaniorum*,⁷ implying that the young scholastics were once again tackling the same subjects they had studied as pupils in Jesuit schools before entering the order, but now at a higher level. The terminological diversity signals an important fact. In contrast to other elements of the Jesuit educational system, the *repetitio humaniorum* was neither precisely defined nor regulated in the order's fundamental documents, the Constitutions, or the decrees of the general congregations.

In the *Ratio studiorum* there was only one rule concerning the *repetitio humaniorum*, rule 18 for the provincial, stating that the duration of the study of the humanities and rhetoric cannot be specified, as it should be decided by the superior on an individual basis. Rule 18 also mandates that no one should be sent to study philosophy unless he has completed two years of rhetoric, and for especially talented candidates, this could be extended for up to three years total.⁸

The lack of clear directives led to widely diverging and changing practices in different provinces. This meant that the position of the *repetitio humaniorum* in the curriculum, its duration, and even its very existence were determined at the provincial level. In the Upper Rhine province in the eighteenth century, for instance, the *repetitio* was positioned in the curriculum only after the philosophy, not before it, contrary to the dictates of the *Ratio studiorum*. In the Upper Rhine it also began with the study of Greek, postponing the study of Latin grammar, poetics, and rhetoric until after the Greek course was completed,⁹ while in most other provinces the instruction in two languages was supposed to proceed in parallel. In the French provinces, the *repetitio humaniorum* was not the usual practice at all. It was only in the year 1692 that the provincial P. Louis Genevray introduced one year of *repetitio* in Paris after the novitiate, but it was only offered until 1701. Other French provinces later followed suit, but financial

7 In the following only the term *repetitio humaniorum* is used.

8 Pavur, *Ratio studiorum*, 14. It is not clear whether the two years of rhetoric mentioned in the rule included the one year of studying rhetoric in the final class of the gymnasium, or if the two years were the supposed duration of the additional study of rhetoric after the candidates have entered the Society. In 1603 the general P. Claudio Acquaviva wrote of “dos años en el seminario,” or the two years that the scholastic should dedicate to improvement of their command of Latin in the seminary of the order, Lukács, *Monumenta*, vol. 7, 494.

9 According to the autobiography of Dominik Roos, S.J., published in Joseph Gény, ed., *Die Jahrbücher der Jesuiten zu Schlettstadt und Rufach 1615–1765*, vol. 2, *Historia Collegii Selestadiensis et Residentiae Rubeacensis 1631–1765* (Strassburg, 1896), 720–836, here 791–93.

difficulties meant that the colleges soon had to halt these activities. In the province of Toulouse, the *repetitio* existed only from 1711 to 1726, and in the province of Lyon from 1717 to 1737, when the last *repetitio* in France was conducted.¹⁰ In the Polish and Lithuanian provinces, on the other hand, the *repetitio* was well established and existed until the suppression of the order; it took place after the novitiate, before the course of philosophy.¹¹ The most thorough *repetitio* was provided in the province of Bohemia from 1753 to 1766, when it was extended to two full years. In this province in the seventeenth century, its place in the curriculum was after philosophy;¹² later, it preceded philosophical studies.

Even in the provinces and periods in which the *repetitio humaniorum* was offered, not all young Jesuits took part in it. The criteria by which the participants in the *repetitio* were chosen are not entirely clear. It has been supposed that it was aimed at those scholastics whose command of classical languages was deemed insufficient.¹³ However, rule 18 for the provincial in the *Ratio studiorum* seems to suggest quite the opposite. Scholastics could be exempt from attending the *repetitio* not only if they were considered to be too old but also if they simply lacked the aptitude for humanities, whereas those “gifted with a special genius for substantial achievements, particularly in these studies” should be considered for an even longer stay in the *repetitio*.¹⁴ In this sense, it was not an instrument of leveling up but of bolstering already visible talents, thus investing in future career teachers. According to a testimony of a participant, in the province of Bohemia in the second half of the eighteenth century, it was generally the best, not the worst, students among the novices who were destined for the *repetitio*, although this witness also perceived a certain arbitrariness on the part of the pater provincial in the selection process.¹⁵ Only rarely was it frequented by those who had entered the Society not directly from the gymnasium but only after completing their philosophical or even theological studies. The

10 François de Dainville, S.J., “Le Ratio discendi et docendi de Jouvancy,” *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 20 (1951): 3–58, here 6–7 and 56.

11 Cf. Królikowska, *Profesorowie* and Królikowska, *Kształcenie*.

12 Pachtler, *Ratio studiorum*, vol. 4, 234–35.

13 See, e.g., Paul F. Grendler, *Jesuit Schools and Universities in Europe 1548–1773* (Brill, 2019), 10: “After the novitiate, if the young Jesuit was not well prepared in Latin and Greek, he spent a year or two improving his skills.” See also Jerzy Kochanowicz, *Kształcenie młodzieży w kolegiach jezuickich Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów* (Officyna Wydawnicza ATUT, 2021), 147.

14 Pavur, *Ratio studiorum*, 14.

15 Ignaz Cornova, *Die Jesuiten als Gymnasiallehrer in freundschaftlichen Briefen an den k. k. Kämmerer und Vizepräsidenten in Gallizien Grafen von Lažanzky* (Prague, 1804), 78–79.

percentage of novices who went on to the *repetitio* varied from year to year and from province to province. In the province of Austria in 1710, out of seventeen young Jesuits who had completed the novitiate,¹⁶ fourteen went to the *repetitio*, including two who had already finished the philosophy before the novitiate. Only two graduated philosophers, and one candidate who had already been a priest before he entered the Society, were excluded. Two years later, out of thirty-nine novices, including one priest and ten philosophers, only seventeen devoted themselves to the *humaniora*. All of them had either finished only the gymnasium or the first year of philosophy at the most.¹⁷ In the same province in 1750, out of fifty-seven candidates who had completed the novitiate, forty-two attended the *repetitio*. Of the remaining fifteen, nine were already older, graduated philosophers or theologians. Of the remaining six, four were apparently deemed so talented that they could not only skip the *repetitio*,¹⁸ but were immediately sent to teach in schools even before embarking on their philosophical studies.¹⁹ The proportions were similar in other years from the 1730s on. In the Upper German province, according to *Catalogi personarum* for the years 1749 to 1764, from the group of novices varying from eighteen to twenty-nine (fourteen to twenty-three of them from the younger category), a constant number of six or seven *repetentes* was selected each year.²⁰ In the Upper Rhine province only the wealthier novices were sent on to the

16 This figure does not include those novices destined to become *coadiutores*.

17 Ladislaus Lukács, S.J., *Catalogi personarum et officiorum provinciae Austriae*, vol. 6 (Institutum Historicum S.I., 1978–95), 505, 527, 600–601, 624.

18 See the lists of the *novitii scholastici secundi anni* in Trenčín and Vienna in 1749 and their distribution to colleges and offices in 1750 in Lukács, *Catalogi*, vol. 9, 98, 110–11, and 132–94.

19 Such practice clearly contradicted the *Ratio studiorum*. Rule 28 for the provincial urged that the teachers in the lower schools must have completed their philosophical studies before they started teaching; see Pavur, *Ratio studiorum*, 24. That the scholastics in Austrian province were employed in schools directly after the novitiate can probably be explained with the specific circumstances of this multilingual province. Despite the generally sufficient number of teachers, it often happened that candidates fluent in a specific vernacular were lacking. As knowledge of local vernaculars was essential for progress in the lower classes, where the teaching was largely conducted in vernacular, the provincial was forced to fall back on very young, unprepared teachers. Cf. the critique of this practice preserved in Rome, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (hereafter ARSI), Austria 22, 7.

20 *Catalogus personarum et officiorum provinciae Germaniae Superioris Societatis Iesu* (Munich, 1748–63).

repetitio,²¹ which was being financed jointly from their personal funds or pensions and from endowments of those colleges in which it was offered.

Luckily for those who did not attend the *repetitio humaniorum*, it was not the only form of teacher training in the Society. The *Ratio studiorum* made provisions for academies that also had this purpose but were much more limited in their scope. Rule 30 for the provincial and corresponding rule 9 for the rector required them to establish academies in those colleges from which the scholastics were sent to start their *magisterium*. The rector was to appoint an experienced teacher who would give one hour of instruction to scholastics three times a week. The duration of this training was not defined in the *Ratio*, only its position *sub fine studiorum*, toward the end of the philosophical studies. The rector's rule also listed what should be rehearsed in the academy: "giving lessons, dictating, writing, correcting, and performing the other duties of a good teacher."²² From remarks in the early seventeenth century, we can conclude that, in practice, this short training was reserved only for those prospective teachers who had not completed the *repetitio humaniorum* before.²³ The model for these academies was the practice established at the *Collegium Romanum* in the 1590s, where such teacher training was conducted during the last two months of philosophical studies. If other colleges followed suit and also provided this training only for three hours a week over two months, it left the scholastics with a total of twenty-four hours of a crash course, which hardly allowed them to go beyond the sheer basics. The young teachers would have been forced to resort to learning by doing, to informal tutoring by their seniors, and to studying pedagogy manuals, like those written by Francesco Sacchini or Joseph de Jouvancy.²⁴

21 See Bernhard Duhr, S.J., *Geschichte der Jesuiten in den Ländern deutscher Zunge im 18: Jahrhundert; Zweiter Teil* (G. J. Manz, 1928), 476n2.

22 Pavur, *Ratio studiorum*, 24 and 33. The introduction of the academies was not universally welcomed. See the objections of the Upper German province in Pachtler, *Ratio studiorum*, vol. 2, 486–88.

23 See, e.g., the remark in *Scripta P. Theophili Bernardini ad Scholas iuvandas*, Rome, ARSI, Inst. 115, 1^v: "Quod si qui ad studia philosophica missi fuerint nulla humaniorum repetitione, rectoris fuerit meminisse Regulae rectoris 9, ut non desit qui sub finem studiorum haec eadem eos doceat. [But if some candidates were sent to study philosophy without having attended the *repetitio humaniorum*, it will be the duty of the rector to think of the ninth rule of the rector, so that they would have someone who would teach them these things at the end of their studies.]"

24 Francesco Sacchini, S.J., *Exhortation and Advice for the Teachers of Young Students in Jesuit Schools*, ed. Cristiano Casalini and Claude Pavur, S.J. (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2021); Joseph de Jouvancy, S.J., *The Way to Learn and the Way to Teach*, ed. Cristiano Casalini and Claude Pavur, S.J. (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2020).

The relative abundance of various sources allows a deeper insight into the *repetitio* in the provinces of Bohemia and Austria in the eighteenth century. Besides the documentary sources like the provincial *catalogi personarum*, several instructions prescribing how the *repetitio* was to be conducted survive,²⁵ as well as some teaching materials,²⁶ a substantial body of writings by the participants,²⁷ and autobiographical accounts of ex-Jesuits,²⁸ such as the one by Stanislaus Wydra.²⁹ Probably the best source for the *repetitio* is an account given by Ignaz Cornova, who had experienced it both as a student and as a professor, in his insightful analysis of the Jesuit educational system.³⁰

On the provincial level, the *repetitio humaniorum* was organized according to the prescription of the second general congregation.³¹ In addition to their other functions, certain colleges also provided the *repetitio* for the candidates from the entire province. In Austria, these were Leoben in Styria, later joined by Győr in western Hungary, and Skalica in northern Slovakia. After the novices finished their two years of probation, they would be divided into groups of approximately the same size and distributed to the three

25 E.g. *Ordinatio pro repetentibus Hradistii*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 12029, 107^r–108^r; *Ordo Humaniorum Litterarum pro Nostris unduntaxat anno easdem repetituris*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 11951, 16^r–17^r; *Ordinatio pro Repetentibus Humaniora Scholasticis nostris 1762*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 11951, 88–89.

26 Antonius Hellmayer, S.J., “Institutio Humanistica dictata Anno primo Repetitionis in Hungaria Szakolczae inchoatae, nempe 1734,” Budapest, Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Egyetemi Könyvtár, f. 33.

27 The seven manuscripts in the Benedictine abbey Pannonhalma, Főapátsági Könyvtár, 118. D. 12; 118. E. 1; 118. E. 18; 118. E. 19; 120b. A. 2; 120b. A. 3; 120b. A. 9, and a complementary manuscript in Vienna, Archiv der Österreichischen Provinz der Gesellschaft Jesu, Ms. 2 09 14 19.

28 This category of sources provides many details for the reconstruction of the inner workings of the Society in the eighteenth century. In contrast to the earlier autobiographical writings of the Jesuits, which were generally destined for reception within the Society and omitted many details as self-evident and not worth mentioning, when the ex-Jesuits wrote their accounts after the suppression, they had the general audience not familiar with those details in mind.

29 Stanislaus Wydra, *Epigrammata* (Prague, 1804), 3–16. On Wydra (or Vydra in Czech spelling, 1741–1804) see Paul Shore, *The Eagle and the Cross: Jesuits in Late Baroque Prague* (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2002), 194–96.

30 Cornova, *Die Jesuiten*, 45–92. On Cornova (1740–1822) see Shore, *The Eagle and the Cross*, 192–94. In the following description of the *repetitio*, the sources listed in the footnotes 25 to 30, on which it is based, are not indicated individually, as it would overburden the footnotes.

31 See footnote 4 in this article.

cities. Sometimes other colleges had to take over this role for a time³² due to wars, pestilence, or organizational issues, but these were the locations where the *repetitio* was offered for the longest time. In Bohemia, it was originally conducted only in Kłodzko (in modern-day Poland), but with the expansion of the *repetitio* around the middle of the eighteenth century, when the *repetitio* was extended to two years, four colleges were dedicated to teacher training. In order to not have first-year students with those of the second in a single location, which required double the number of professors and put a strain on the colleges' finances, students were divided between Kutna Hora and Breznice one year, and between Klatovy and Uherske Hradište in the following year. Students could be sent to attend the *repetitio* even outside of the province if one could not be organized within it.³³

The size of the groups was usually between six and sixteen students.³⁴ Some students were assigned special roles within the group. The most mature became a *manuductor* and was entrusted with disciplinary oversight of the other students. In the second half of the century, he was helped by a *submanuductor*. For academic oversight, a student from the group was assigned the role of *bidellus*, beadle, or professor's assistant; in the earlier years there was only one *bidellus*, later one for Greek and one for Latin. Apart from small tasks like helping during meals in the refectory and caring for their own quarters, the students were usually shielded from all other work both inside and outside the college.³⁵ The instructions repeatedly mentioned, for example, that the *repetentes* should under no circumstances help with the staging of theater performances. Around Easter and at the end of the school year in August, the rector would send progress reports to the provincial, who could and did dismiss unsatisfactory students. The reports described how attentively each scholastic followed lectures; how promptly and how well he answered the questions; how diligently he revised the lectures, read what was tasked (and nothing else) and fulfilled his written assignments; whether and with what success he completed public exercises and how satisfactory the invention, disposition and elocution of his composition were; and finally, his progress in Greek was noted. The

32 E.g., Vienna or Graz.

33 E.g., in 1743, during the War of the Austrian Succession, eight scholastics from Bohemia were taught the *humaniora* in Skalica in the Austrian province. See *Catalogus personarum, et officiorum provinciae Bohemiae Societatis Jesu Anno MDCCXLIII* (Brno, 1743), col. XXXI.

34 The biggest group in the eighteenth century numbered 25, the smallest 3 *repetentes*.

35 This was the usual practice in the Austrian and Bohemian provinces. In the Upper German province some of the *repetentes* were regularly deployed as catechists in the villages surrounding the college.

reports also ranked the scholastics and categorized them as above average, average, or below average.³⁶

The scholastics were assigned two professors, one for Latin and one for Greek studies. Very rarely, one professor could teach both languages. The professors were chosen for their special aptitude in the humanities. They were experienced teachers who had proven themselves by successfully teaching not only lower classes as *magistri*, but also the poetics and rhetoric classes later in their career. They usually conducted the *repetitio* for several years, from two to twelve. A good professor could be sent repeatedly from one college offering the *repetitio* to another. Most often the professors of the *repetitio* also had some additional role in the college. One of them could also act as the prefect of studies, another role that required a well-experienced educator. The Greek professor was often simultaneously a regular teacher of poetics or rhetoric for external pupils. That such a professor could conduct the *repetitio* alongside full teaching duties at the gymnasium was only possible because the intensity of Greek teaching was much reduced in the eighteenth century. While the instructions for the *repetitio* from the early seventeenth century demanded that more than three hours a day be devoted to Greek,³⁷ this was later reduced to either one hour a day or even moved to a time window originally reserved for recreation. One of the professors also had to teach history and geography. As these subjects gained prominence through Habsburg educational reforms, a third professor was occasionally added in Bohemia in the 1760s to ensure better instruction in these subjects.³⁸

The instruction started with a short phase of intense study of Latin grammar. With their professor, the students read and discussed books on syntax and phraseology and practiced translating from the vernacular into Latin. The second stage was devoted to the development of prose style through simpler prose genres, letters, and dialogues. They studied works

36 “Qua attentione lectiones exceperit / Qua promptitudine et satisfactione responderit ad quaesita / Qua diligentia audita repetiverit legendaque et non alia legerit, discenda didicetit et scribenda scripserit / An et quale exercitium publicum habuerit et qua satisfactione inventionis, dispositionis, elocutionis, nota bene a se compositum / Quousque in lingua graeca progressus sit et quo profectu?” A form for such a report survived in *Ordinatio Pro Repetentibus Humaniora Scholasticis Nostris* (1762), Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 11951, 89.

37 Cf., e.g., Pachtler, *Ratio studiorum*, vol. 4, 189.

38 On the educational reforms in Habsburg lands see Gerald Grimm, *Die Schulreform Maria Theresias 1747–1775: Das österreichische Gymnasium zwischen Standesschule und allgemeinbildender Lehranstalt im Spannungsfeld von Ordens-schulwesen, thesianischem Reformabsolutismus und Aufklärungspädagogik* (Verlag Peter Lang, 1987), 206–346.

on the theory of letter writing and read, explained, and imitated especially Cicero's letters and dialogues, but there was also a place for more recent works like Pontanus's *Progymnasmata*. This was followed by the study of poetry, starting with prosody and metrics, before moving on to poetic style, mythology, and different poetic genres, first the shorter and simpler ones, like epigrams, eclogues, and odes, then the longer and more demanding epic poems. Again, the students read model authors, commented upon them, and imitated them; they also read and discussed theoretical works dealing with poetics. The longest portion of the *repetitio* was devoted to rhetoric, proceeding in the same manner as in poetry: learning theory, reading, commenting, and imitating. The study of dramatic poetry was reserved for the final stage.

Students had to write a great deal. They were supposed to hand in Latin compositions daily and Greek ones once or twice a week. They were also supposed to produce, over the duration of the *repetitio*, a specimen of their literary prowess in every genre that had been treated in the lectures. This means that alongside the smaller literary works, they had to write an epic poem, a comedy, and a tragedy. In his account, Ignaz Cornova praised his professor for his relaxed enforcement of this requirement. He not only allowed students to choose the topics for these showpieces on their own, but he also did not insist that his students write the longer works in full. In regard to epic poems and dramas, he was content with an informative outline of the whole work, with only some portions being executed in detail. It seems that professors had quite a free hand in these and similar aspects of the study program. For example, the instructions for the *repetitio* prescribed reading and imitating classical authors like Cicero, Ovid, Vergil, Seneca, or Terence, but also neo-Latin, mostly Jesuit authors, like Biedermann, Masenius, Paulus Manutius, or Perpiñan. Cornova's professor of Latin, P. Franz Pubitschka, later famous for his multi-volume history of Bohemia,³⁹ was a strict classicist who used exclusively the Roman classics in his teaching and generally tried to keep his charges away from the pernicious influence of neo-Latin. In the same years, a professor teaching a parallel group in another college, whom Cornova criticizes heavily, seems to have taught hardly any classical authors at all, preferring to use in his exercises modern works written especially for school, like *Musa pangaea*.⁴⁰

39 *Francisci Pubitschka Priesters von der Gesellschaft Jesu Chronologische Geschichte Böhmens* (Prague, 1770–1805). On Pubitschka's later importance as a historian, see Shore, *The Eagle and the Cross*, 196–97.

40 Bernhard Pannagl, S.J., *Musa Pangaea Diversa cum Thematum, tum Carminum Genera perarrans Poeticen Docentibus in subsidium, Discentibus in prolium proposita* (Prague, 1729).

The students discussed their writings with the professor, who suggested improvements. This was done in front of the entire class so that other students could profit from the errors of their colleagues. They also had to recite or read aloud their pieces in the refectory, not only for the entertainment of other members of the college but also in order to benefit from their praise or criticism.

The Greek instruction was, as mentioned, less extensive. The students studied grammar and practiced how to teach it; translated from Latin into Greek; read, explained, and imitated the New Testament or, if their professor was somewhat more ambitious, the classical authors; and wrote short compositions based on their reading. Progress depended very much on the proficiency of the professor and his ability to motivate his students. Cornova claimed to have learned almost nothing from his Greek professor, whereas Wydra became fluent in classical Greek.

While some measure of school didactics was always included in the reading and explaining of the authors, the professors also prepared their students for classroom work in a more focused way. In both provinces, they used the book titled *Instructio privata*.⁴¹ In contrast to a much better-known guide to teaching, *De ratione discendi et docendi* by Joseph de Jouvancy, which combined educational program, pedagogy, and didactics, *Instructio privata* was a purely didactic work, a much more nuts-and-bolts practical manual for teaching. It provided detailed explanations of teaching methods, examples of individual lessons, model topics for composition, questions to ask pupils, and other quite specific instructions for each one of the six gymnasium classes. The *Instructio* was published anonymously in 1735 as the official teachers' manual of the province of Austria. Its author was Franz Wagner, a professor of the *repetitio* who had published sixteen didactic works. It seems plausible that before 1735 some other manual, possibly Jouvancy's *De ratione*, was in use. The students read the *Instructio* and their professor commented upon it, explaining and adding examples from his own teaching experience. They also familiarized themselves with schoolbooks currently used in schools.

Finally, one more aspect of the *repetitio* deserves attention. The *repetitio* was not only a preparation for higher studies and teacher training, but it was also a school of poets. A sizeable portion of neo-Latin literature was penned by Jesuits, and many of these authors acquired advanced skills and developed their literary ambitions during the *repetitio*, while working on the demonstration pieces that they would discuss with their professors

41 Franz Wagner, S.J., *Instructio privata seu typus cursus annui pro sex humanioribus classibus in usum Magistrorum Societatis Jesu editus* (Trnava, 1735). The book was reprinted several times.

and present to the collegium in the refectory. An academic study of this ephemeral literary production is complicated as it was rarely preserved and hardly anything of it was ever printed.⁴² By chance, a collection of eight manuscript volumes with prose and poems written during the *repetitio* in Győr in the years 1750 to 1773 survived, together about 2,800 folio pages.⁴³ They do not contain everything that the scholastics had written during those years but only the compositions judged to be the best of the yearly crop, which were then copied by each student's hand into the codices. The last professor of *repetitio* in Győr, P. Franc Kirina (1732–after 1803), took the manuscripts with him after the suppression of the order, thus saving them from destruction, and later donated them to the Benedictine abbey at Pannonhalma, where the majority are still today.

Given that good teachers are crucial for the success of students' education, a better understanding of the methods the Jesuits used to train the teachers for their schools could enhance the understanding of the Jesuit educational system as a whole. Further research should include an in-depth look at the selection process for the *repetitio*, a comparison of practices across all the provinces of the pre-suppression Society, a detailed study of the surviving literary production of the *repetentes*, and statistical analysis of their further careers.

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42 One exception seems to be *Exercitia poetica, Primum Religiosis Societatis Jesu Humaniora Repetentibus, Pro Thematis ingenuorum Certaminum proposita, Tum a P. Udalrico Mayer Societatis Jesu Eorundem Professore Lima studiosiore perpolitata ac demum Favente Superiorum Annutu in lucem edita* (Prague, 1693), containing poems by the *repetentes*, revised (it is not clear how robustly) by their professor. More recently, prose and poetic works written during the *repetitio* by the students in the college in Krazierai in 1695 were published: Živilė Nedzinskaite and Darius Argiletanus, eds., *Manuscriptum Crosense Anni 1695, sive Fructus Horni Meditationis Rhetoricae* (Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2020).

43 See footnote 27 in this article. For contents listing of individual volumes see Vera Szádóczki, “Neolatin elégiaköltészet a 18: századi Magyarországon; A jezsuita költészetoktatás és Makó Pál munkássága” (PhD diss., Pázmány Péter Catholic University, 2020), 333–58.