

# philippine studies

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**Public Funds and Legal Equality:  
Public Funds For Private Education in a Democracy -  
Theory and Practice  
by Benigno Benabarre**

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PUBLIC FUNDS AND LEGAL EQUALITY

PUBLIC FUNDS FOR PRIVATE EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRACY: THEORY AND PRACTICE. Benigno Benabarre, O.S.B., A.B., M.A., Ph.D. Manila. Our Lady of Montserrat Abbey. 1956. Pp. 482 (mimeographed).

Father Benabarre completed this work as his doctorate thesis at Centro Escolar University in Manila. A printed edition will appear shortly; so this review wishes to bring attention to the mimeographed version as an immediate reference and to the forthcoming printed edition as a valuable addition to educational libraries. As its title indicates, the thesis deals with the principles involved in the distribution of public funds for private education and with a survey of practices at present followed in representative democracies throughout the world. The principles set the ideal, the practices reflect the varying degrees of approach to the ideal.

In the first part of the thesis, principles are established to show how private schools do have a right to equality in the sharing of funds gathered by the state for education. The point made is that an examination of the basic freedoms guaranteed by democracy (the freedom of religion, of thought, of enterprise and of association, and the primary right of parents to determine the kind of education their children are to receive) leads to the conclusion that unless there is subsidization there is no equality before the law. This part is of special help to those educators and statesmen who have not taken courses in political theory based on the *philosophia perennis*.

The second part of the thesis is the fruit of an extensive and painstaking survey of what is being done throughout the democratic world in respect to government subsidy to private schools. Through correspondence, the consultation of government releases, yearbooks and legal sources a description of the actual situation is drawn. There is much in this section to study. It provides a basis for a comparative study of various types of school organization and of the varying importance given to the teaching of religion. One can also see at a glance the prevailing climate of opinion in each democracy as regards the role that private schools should

play. In all, forty-eight countries are surveyed. For each country a description is given of the organization of education, the laws governing aid to private schools and, where needed, a history of the evolution of these laws. As one reads, one inevitably begins to contrast the progress made in certain countries with the reactionary stand in others.

The conclusion that can be reached after studying the procedures set up in the various countries for liberal grants to private institutions is that if the people of a country are convinced of the advantages of a strong system of private education, and if they believe that education without religion is an attack on freedom of religion and the rights of parents, means can be worked out in law to grant subsidy to private schools. The survey supplies many examples of how in a democratic manner equality of opportunity can be achieved.

In brief, this thesis contains data and offers an analysis of the relationship between the state and private schools which should be seriously studied in the light of our own problems in the Philippines. Until the basic philosophy presented in the thesis is widely accepted and until the financial situation is remedied to support a taxation program adequate for the support of education, there is little likelihood that the Philippines will cease to be listed among those countries which give no aid to private schools.

NICHOLAS A. KUNKEL

### KEMPIS RETRANSLATED

IN PRAISE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY. By Thomas á Kempis. Translated by Robert A. Patterson. Milwaukee. Bruce. 1956. \$1.50

Among the numerous works of Thomas á Kempis is one entitled *In laudem Beatae Virginis Mariae*. It consists of Discourses or Sermons that he addressed to his novices. The translator has selected five of these Discourses, XXI to XXV.