Virtual Book Display
Autumn General Meeting
November 2021
Father O’Malley’s compelling narrative is at once a memoir of a rich, productive, and influential life as a scholar, teacher, and committed member of the Jesuit Order, and an introduction to the religious culture of both the sixteenth and twentieth centuries. It introduces us also, in clear, simple prose and by speaking directly to his audience, to the writer himself and to the ways in which his practice of history and his practice of living have formed a seamless whole. ‘The past,’ writes Father O’Malley, ‘tells us who and what we are.’ Memory, he tells us, constitutes identity, and the person who emerges... is a man whose own history has led him... from intellectual history to theology and church history and art history and to a clear-sighted view of the nature of historical scholarship and its essential methods.”

Hanna Holborn Gray
President Emeritus
& Harry Pratt Judson
Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus
The University of Chicago

“On a scaffold getting a close look at the Sistine chapel; in Florence during the 1966 flood; meeting a young Jorge Bergoglio; attending sessions at the Second Vatican Council. John O’Malley’s marvelous memoir of his scholarly career and his life as a Jesuit includes all of this and more. Here the historian places himself in history. And here his readers can better understand much about the American academy of the last sixty years and even more about the life of the Church.”

John T. McGreevy
Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History
University of Notre Dame

“To begin with, this is a delightful book about ‘Aha!’ moments. How a boy from a village on the Ohio River decided to enter a religious order he had never encountered firsthand. How an unplanned trip to Italy and a taste of gelato changed his field of study. How at various times a poster in a Harvard hallway, a comment at an academic meeting, and a lunchtime conversation sent his life in new directions. But The Education of a Historian is much more, a testament to the importance of history and a revelation of the ways in which a probing mind and much hard work can transform seemingly fortuitous encounters and insights into scholarly breakthroughs. John O’Malley opened new vistas in Renaissance studies, demonstrated the impact of humanism on religious sensibility, reframed our understanding of modern Catholicism, and integrated church and cultural history, winning countless prizes and honors along the way... Ultimately, he changed the way that many of us, Catholics foremost, understand who we are—and this book shows how he did it.”

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Peter Steinfels
University Professor of Religion and Culture
Fordham University

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“Why Trust Science?”
NAOMI ORESKES
With a new Preface by the author
Kūṭiyāṭṭam, the only surviving live Sanskrit theatre in the world, was defined by UNESCO as 'a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity'.

Full performances—almost always a single act taken from a multi-act Sanskrit play—range from 12 to 150 hours (in daily or nightly segments of several hours each) and display an aesthetic brilliance and dizzying complexity that are almost beyond description. Each such act constitutes an artistic whole with its own conceptual and thematic unity.

The Rite of Seeing: Essays on Kūṭiyāṭṭam reflects the work of the Hebrew University Kūṭiyāṭṭam team and of our colleagues from Tuebingen, Paris, Groningen, and elsewhere, over many years of annual pilgrimages to Kerala to watch and study this art in action. It offers interpretations of seven classical performances in the light of the actors' traditional handbooks (Āṭṭaprakāram), the Sanskrit base text, and the artists' oral commentary that emerged naturally in the course of many days of attentive viewing. The essays are accompanied by links to extended performance moments, so that readers can see with their own eyes something of what we have seen in Mūḻikkuḷam and Kiḷḷimaṅgalam. Interpretative essays of this kind, although plentiful in studies of Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Chekhov, have never been attempted for Kūṭiyāṭṭam. The book is thus meant to introduce Kūṭiyāṭṭam to new audiences and to offer pathways for beginning to explore the riches of this unique and still vital tradition.