



SIPEI International **S**eminar on Ignatian
Pedagogy and **S**pirituality

The world is our house

Manresa / Barcelona
November 2nd - 8th, 2014

Lecture

CONSCIOUS PERSON

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JESUIT EDUCATION

- ✘ Society of Jesus

- + Was the need of the hour to defend Christian faith

- + *Licet debitum* of 1547 : A landmark decision

- ✘ Set a new trend in the Church and defined the works of the society

JESUIT EDUCATION

- ✘ Jesuits establish many schools and universities
- ✘ “helping the neighbours through the education of the youth in letters, learning and Christian life.”
(First Jesuits, O’Malley)
- ✘ Training of Jesuits becomes an integral part of this mission
- ✘ School masters of Europe

JESUIT EDUCATION

- ✘ *modus parisiensis* (progressive model of studies practiced in the University of Paris)
- ✘ *studium generale* which the Jesuits began to establish owing to the demand for Jesuit education
- ✘ Manifold ministries of the Society

JESUIT EDUCATION

- ✘ Need for a method of plan of studies
 - + For those entering the Society and externals
- ✘ *Ratio Studiorum*: "Method and System of the Studies of the Society of Jesus"
- ✘ Official *Ratio Studiorum* was promulgated in 1599.
- ✘ It remains as the guiding document of Jesuit Education

JESUIT EDUCATION

- ✘ *The characteristics of Jesuit education (1986) and Ignatian pedagogy: A Practical approach (1993)* have redefined Jesuit education and have challenged the Jesuits in education to make their ministry relevant and meaningful.

CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION

- ✘ Growing demands for education
- ✘ Utilitarian outlook of education
- ✘ Digital learning, home schooling, distance learning, etc.
- ✘ Knowledge explosion
- ✘ Geographical areas where illiteracy and lack of education is a serious concern
- ✘ Quality and method of education: Disparity

JESUIT RESPONSE

- ✘ Formation of human persons: primary goal
- ✘ Response of St. Ignatius to Duke of Bravia, “we tend in our colleges to stress the formation for life rather than the acquisition of knowledge.”
- ✘ Explains the purpose and goal of Jesuit Education

JESUIT RESPONSE

- ✘ *Eruditio* and *Pietas*
- ✘ The acquisition of knowledge is the *eruditio*
- ✘ The acquisition of personal attitudes to life is really what is meant by *pietas*.
- ✘ Fr. Kolvenbach: Forming men and women of competence, conscience and compassionate commitment.

CONSCIENCE

- ✘ a personal sense of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own conduct, intentions, or character with regard to a feeling of obligation to do right or be good.”
- ✘ This is the definition from Encyclopaedia Britannica.
- ✘ We are not reducing conscience to just a mechanism of defining what is morally right and what is morally wrong.

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

- ✘ An inner voice which calls every human person to a life in tune with the spirit of the Risen Christ.
- ✘ The spirit of Christ which animates, regulates and inspires human persons to a life of righteous actions and behaviours.
- ✘ A call to come near to God: Principle and Foundation

HINDU SPIRITUALITY

- ✘ An indestructible element which guides one's life and actions.
- ✘ Helping to attain union with God (*moksa*) by one's own right actions (*Dharma*).
- ✘ Form of truth which enables the person to follow the right path to ensure right moral living

ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY

- ✘ A judge which differentiates between right and wrong
- ✘ pure conscience which guides a person to good actions
- ✘ *Nafs-e-mutminah*: self which is contented and satisfied and is unified with *Allah* (Almighty)

OTHER RELIGIONS

✘ Buddhism

- + Invitation to engage in right actions in every sphere of a person's life.
- + *Nirvana*: to move towards a state of existence free from suffering and individual existence.

✘ Jainism

- + triple gems of Jainism leading to an infiniteness of existence

CONSCIENCE

- ✘ All spiritualities call upon persons to engage themselves in actions towards a realization and experience of God (Principle and Foundation)
- ✘ Every religion accepts the innate ability of persons to decide and discern good from bad and right from wrong

DISCUSSION

- ✘ Conscience: Different nuances to the understanding of the term varying with the cultural background of the languages.
- ✘ Being conscious, conscious person, *consciente* (conscious {not an adequate translation}), person of conscience. (*la conciencia*) {noun}
- ✘ Conscious (medical, social, ethical, etc.)
- ✘ Can the concept of conscious person, be understood as included in the person of conscience?

DISCUSSION

- ✘ Conscience might function as a compass that guides us
- ✘ The person of conscience can't be reduced to an ethical question of choosing between good and bad or right and wrong
- ✘ Does conscience lead us to having clear ethics, a sense inspired by the Gospel and Ignatian spirituality and serve as a guide to serve and build, putting the common good first, with humility?

CONSCIENCE

- ✘ “the capacity to correctly analyse the world and its events, so as to make correct decisions that drive us towards meaning in our lives”
- ✘ It involves
 - + Being aware of the context/experience
 - + Analysing the context/experience
 - + Choosing a response (Not only between good and bad/right and wrong but also between good choices as well)

CHALLENGES IN JESUIT EDUCATION

- ✘ Willingness of the Society to renew itself by understanding the signs of the time and responding to it in an Ignatian way.
- ✘ Education viewed by world in excessively utilitarian terms.
- ✘ Employability becoming the touchstone of deciding success in education.

JESUIT RESPONSE

- ✘ Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm
 - + experience, reflection and action
- ✘ Characteristics of Jesuit Education.
- ✘ These have become increasingly relevant to the global context today

OPPORTUNITIES

- ✘ *ERUDITIO-PIETAS*: the combination of these two words is a notable challenge. Often, the search for *excelentia* has caused us to loose our way.
- ✘ Denunciation (in the discussion) of educational utilitarianism
- ✘ *Modus Parisiensis* accepted for its merit and possibilities of forming the youth in virtue and letters.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ✘ Understanding of excellence
- ✘ Changes in the understanding of excellence and the changing concept of “quality education institutions.”
- ✘ Quest for excellence while maintaining the core values of Jesuit education.
- ✘ Changing global context and challenge to be school masters even today.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ✘ Principal and Foundation
- ✘ The way St. Ignatius dealt with the retreatants.
- ✘ Educators
 - + Different roles of educators
 - + Affectively influenced by Ignatian Spirituality and Ignatian legacy
 - + Training of educators as people of conscience

OPPORTUNITIES

✘ Parents and Associates

- + Primary Responsibility of parents
- + Changes in the outlook of families
- + Socio-cultural-religious influences
- + Need to engage parents as partners in this endeavour of formation of men and women.

OPPORTUNITIES

✘ Students

- + Focal point of our mission
- + Their understanding of success and excellence
- + Reluctance to accept what is not in tune with their value system.
- + Relevance of IPP in the formation of youth.
- + Suggestions

OPPORTUNITIES

✘ Networking

- + Jesuit schools not individual schools
- + Need to strengthen collaboration and networking among Jesuit Schools
- + Technology to aid networking
- + Suggestions

OPPORTUNITIES

- ✘ Spiritual Exercises
- ✘ Ignatian Examen
- ✘ Ratio Studiorum
- ✘ The Characteristics of Jesuit Education.
- ✘ Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm

DISCUSSION

- ✘ The formation of persons of conscience should continue to be one of the most important components of Ignatian education
- ✘ “in our schools, we tend to focus more on formation than the acquisition of knowledge...”
- ✘ The Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm as key to the formation of person of conscience.

DISCUSSION

- ✘ Placing students in a continuous process of experience, action, and reflection is the best tool to form persons of conscience / conscious individuals
- ✘ Examen: it is here in the depths of our activity, that God moves us and deals with us most intimately.
- ✘ A challenge to make the Examen and other Ignatian heritage a part of our Ignatian education.

CONCLUSION

- ✘ The formation of conscience should continue to be one of the major components of Jesuit education
 - + helping persons to find an answer to the quest for meaning and transcendence.
- ✘ The Jesuits should create and provide a 21st century learning environment
 - + Ensure their development and formation as men and women of conscience.



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