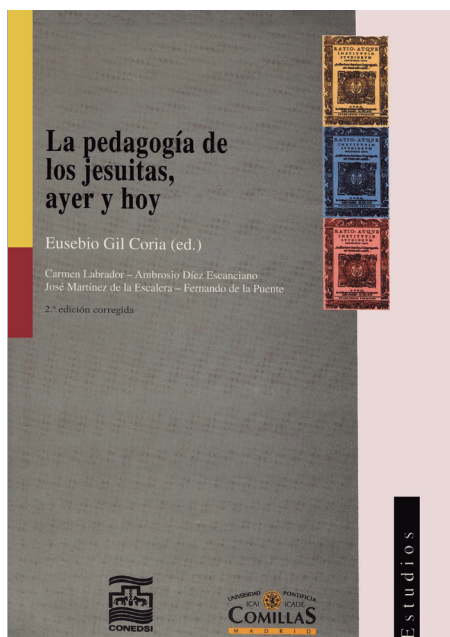




The Pedagogy of the Society of Jesus before the Challenges of our World



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The actuality of a tradition

The Society of Jesus lays claim to a venerable tradition in the field of education. From its beginning in 1540, the Jesuits discovered, in their founding and development of educational centers an apostolic ministry which, though not contemplated among its initial pastoral activities, became a central feature of the newly founded Institute. They created an educational model that implanted, in all of its schools, one that was based on the Parisian model and the study of Humanities, a field of studies that also included the sciences. The schools charged no tuition and were models of adaptation, such was the Jesuit educational in its beginnings.

The pedagogical program was established in the *Ratio Studiorum*, whose definitive version was pub-

lished in 1599. The content of this document was not at all doctrinal, but rather a collection of practical rules and procedures that were the result of a half of a century of experience in the field. Without a doubt, the project responded to the educational necessities of a world that was, at that time, facing the "first globalization", and the Jesuit plan offered a program of studies, both universal and unified, that wove cultural connections from among the various educational centers they held throughout the world. Father Manuel Revuelta González offered his teaching regarding these issues of Jesuit pedagogy in this same section (n. 341, October, 2011) and it is to the pages of his studies that we will refer given that his work explains the plan of studies, the didactic methods, as well as the larger pedagogical principles inherent in the Jesuit educational program.

This innovative activity enjoyed a considerable success and reached an indubitable prestige for the quality of the teaching that was imparted, however, the expulsion and subsequent dissolution of the Society of Jesus ended this project. The importance of the educational apostolate of the Society was reflected in the Papal Bull that called for the reestablishment of the Order in 1814 by Pius VII. Although there was no reference in the foundational documents of the Order to the question of education, the Jesuits' dedication to the formation of the youth appeared as one of the priorities of their apostolic work at the dawn of



José Alberto Mesa, SJ (ed.)

LA PEDAGOGÍA IGNACIANA

Textos clásicos y contemporáneos
sobre la educación de la Compañía de Jesús
desde san Ignacio de Loyola
hasta nuestros días



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the 19th century. However, in spite of the enthusiasm with which the Jesuits resumed this labor, the struggles and the difficulties were great and diverse. The political upheaval of that century and the following, as well as academic vicissitudes that accompanied the passage of these centuries, in a number of countries, presented a scenario of great instability. Also, the conservation of the *Ratio Studiorum* became inviable not only for the validity of different grades but also for the advances in knowledge, which demanded new courses and new pedagogical methods that were being applied in a very uneven and disconnected way. Again, Father Manuel Revuelta González analyzed these vicissitudes in a magisterial summary (n. 346 August, 2012). Notwithstanding all of these challenges and changes, the educational institutions of the Society of Jesus continued to cultivate Ignatian spirituality, demand high academic rigor, and seek the integral formation of the student.

Ignatian pedagogy

In harmony with what was presented by the Second Vatican Council in terms of educational material, the Fathers Generals and the General Congregations indicated that the educational tradition ought to accommodate itself to the new circumstances of the world without losing contact with its roots. In this way, it is necessary to refer to two documents: *Char-*

acteristics of Education of the Society of Jesus (1986) and *Ignatian Pedagogy, a practical approach* (1993). Similarly, it is important to point out the use of the terms "Ignatian pedagogy" that began to supplant that of "Jesuit pedagogy". If we have maintained that formula in the title of these pages it is due to the fact that our article seeks to be a continuation of previous articles cited by Father Revuelta and to be a small homage to his scholarship and his teaching.

Father Pedro Arrupe affirmed that the Jesuit school ought to provide its students a certain Ignatian way of being, that is, a certain style marked by the vision of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola. This was the beginning of a "creative faithfulness", invoking the tradition of flexibility and respect for the context, which was brilliantly summarized in giving clarity to the educational mission as "forming men and women for others". The Society of Jesus has redoubled its efforts to promote the fundamental principles of Ignatian pedagogy adapted to the reality of the world. Certainly, the documents referred to above have become the successors of the *Ratio studiorum* in that they provide a uniform language and a clear set of goals for Jesuit education. As a result, during these years, the majority of the Jesuit colleges and universities have incorporated new programs, maintained by the collaboration of Jesuits and lay men and women, a collaborative effort that was in and of itself an innovation, with the objective to promote social justice, critical thinking, and the preferential option for the poor. The above mentioned document published in 1993 is often referred to as the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP). The active pedagogy proposed is centered around 5 dimensions that are oriented to good pedagogical practices. These dimensions are not meant to be a formula that eliminates the search for other options or practices, but it does suppose a kind of criteria in order to select best-practices and serves as a framework to guide the relationship between teachers and students. In this way, the text promotes a respect for the particular context of learning, integrating — by way of practical activities — knowledge and emotion in order to foment a significant learning experience, stimulating a reflection that allows both teacher and student to deepen their learning, and incorporating practices that create the conditions necessary for decision-making and commitments, so that there can be at the conclusion of the educational process an evaluation not only of academic topics covered, but also the personal and human elements that have been included in the educational experience.



[1st text]

According to good Jesuit tradition, the time has now come for a repetition — a summing up. I have sought to reflect with you on the challenges of globalization to Jesuit universities as institutions of learning, service, and research. First, in response to the globalization of superficiality, I suggest that we need to study the emerging cultural world of our students more deeply and find creative ways of promoting depth of thought and imagination, a depth that is transformative of the person. Second, in order to maximize the potentials of new possibilities of communication and cooperation, I urge the Jesuit universities to work towards operational international networks that will address important issues touching faith, justice, and ecology that challenge us across countries and continents. Finally, to counter the inequality of knowledge distribution, I encourage a search for creative ways of sharing the fruits of research with the excluded; and in response to the global spread of secularism and fundamentalism, I invite Jesuit universities to a renewed commitment to the Jesuit tradition of learned ministry which mediates between faith and culture.

Father Adolfo Nicolás

Remarks for *Networking Jesuit Higher Education: Shaping the Future for a Humane, Just, Sustainable Globe*
Ciudad de México, April 23rd, 2010

[2nd Text]

These four adjectives express the “human excellence” that the Society of Jesus wants for the youth who society has entrusted to us: competent, professionally speaking, because they have an academic background that exposes them to advances in science and technology; of conscience, because in addition to knowing themselves, thanks to developing their ability to internalize and cultivate a spiritual life, they have a consistent knowledge and experience of society and its imbalances; compassionate, because they are able to open their hearts to be in solidarity with and assume the suffering of others; and committed, because, being compassionate, they honestly strive toward faith, and through peaceful means, work for social and political transformation of their countries and social structures to achieve justice.

Father Adolfo Nicolás

Allocution of Father General to the 8th World Congress of World Union of Jesuit Alumni/ae
Medellín, Colombia

[3rd Text]

The fundamental motive and goal of our schools is for the service of the mission. Today this mission implies the service of faith, justice and care for the environment. We need to ensure that our schools continue to be focused on the mission so that they can educate the current and future generations in our integral tradition. We recognize that our schools feel a tension or experience the distance between what service to the mission implies and the desire to continue to be relevant for our students, parents as well as to the society in general. This tension has always existed and been present in our history, and it has always challenged us to give creative responses. The actual context in which we are living requires of us a serious discernment in order to guarantee that our mission of reconciliation and justice is reflected in our schools. Given the arrival of artificial intelligence, the 4th technological revolution and its implications for the human experience and the changes that are involved in work conditions, it is essential that our schools ground themselves in the humanist tradition in which Jesuit educational centers have always been a part.

Father Arturo Sosa

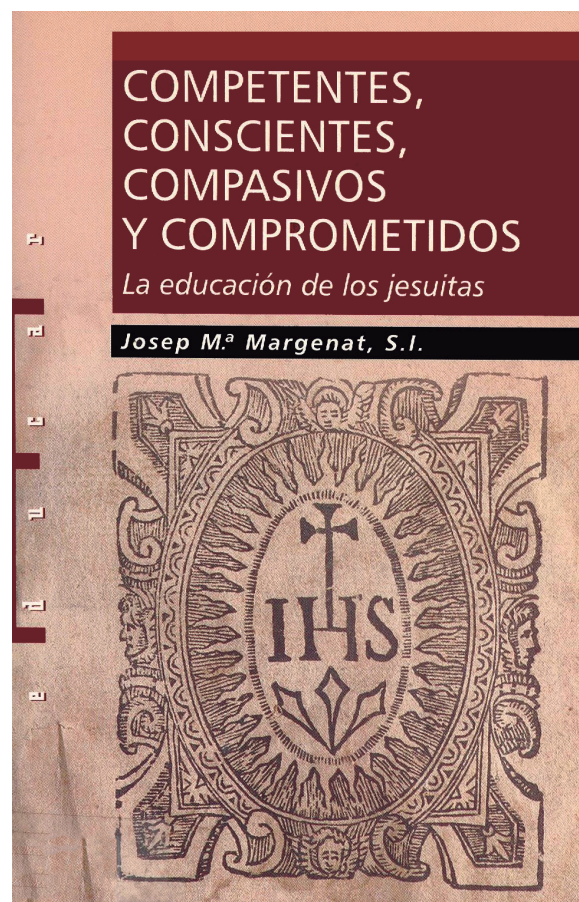
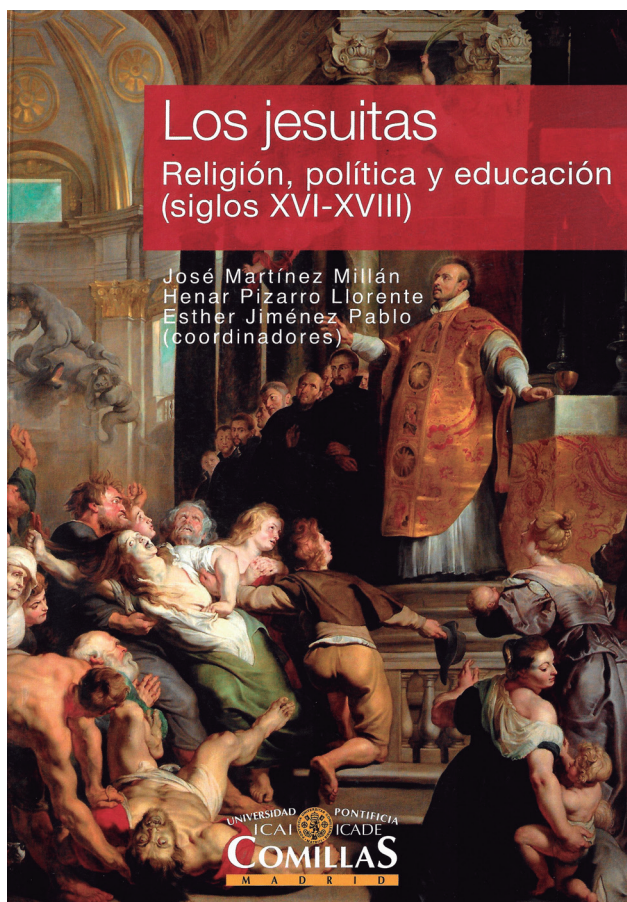
Jesuit Education: Forming Human Beings Reconciled with their Fellows, with Creation and with God
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, October 20th, 2017

[4th text]

Interculturality makes us experience universality more fully, because it incorporates cultural differences as the revelation of the face of humanity created in God's image, and it is enriched by the ever-greater exchanges among them. Interculturality isn't an end in itself, it's the means with which we can create the conditions to fully experience humanity, contributing to the humanization of individuals, cultures and peoples. This is more than just recognizing the existence of many cultures in the future and the past (multiculturalism). It comes from building bridges and fluid conversation among them. This is a complex process that can't be free from conflict, one that's not just a “meeting of cultures” to create a supra-meta- or transcultural space. Rather, it is a “reciprocal exchange between cultures that might help transform and enrich all those involved.” Still, this is not about excluding or substituting enculturation; it is more about deepening it, because no one can offer others what they do not have.

Father Arturo Sosa

Jesuit Education: Forming Human Beings Reconciled with their Fellows, with Creation and with God
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An essential source that approximates us to Ignatian pedagogy are the body of writings authored by the most recent Fathers General (Kolvenbach, Nicolás, and Sosa). Father Kolvenbach connected the Jesuit tradition with the Humanist tradition when he suggested that the Society of Jesus ought to educate men and women that are conscious, competent and capable of making compassionate commitments in the world. Father Adolfo Nicolás, referred on numerous occasions in his discourses to these 4 C's, explaining and deepening the meaning of each one of them. Of *conscience*, given that in addition to knowing themselves on account of their cultivation of an interior life and spiritual life, students might possess a conscious and experiential based knowledge of the problems that affect society. *Competent* in the work field, as a fruit of an excellent academic formation. *Compassionate*, especially in terms of being able to demonstrate solidarity with others. *Committed*, given that, given the premises above, students will seek to impulse the social and political transformations necessary to achieve a more just society. And this committed pursuit of justice will result from their faith, and their sincere use of peaceful means [text #1]. Certainly, Father Kolvenbach reinvigorated the four pedagogical principles that Father Ledesma formulated in the 16th century: *utilitatis* or practical education, *justicia*

o social-civic commitment, *humanitas* o the formation of the person, and *fides* or religion.

The 35th General Congregation that elected Father Adolfo Nicolás as Father General of the Society of Jesus insisted in the mission of the service of faith and the promotion of justice, but it introduced new concepts in relation to the global context, that is new technologies, ecological issues and a new sense of internationalization. As a result, Father Nicolás urged for innovation in education, and, in his discourses and writings, reiterated that it was necessary to educate young men and women so that they could face the challenges of the world, a world in dire need of faith, justice and reconciliation with a sense of universality, depth and imagination. The three tools would make it possible to resist the superficiality of thought so characteristic of present society [text #2].

Father Arturo Sosa was chosen as Father General of the Society of Jesus in the 36th General Congregation in 2016. In his discourses and written texts the Venezuelan superior of the Jesuits has insisted that challenges need to be met in a new context where education is developed and to those for whom a response needs to be given.

Challenges and opportunities

The recently published book, edited by José Mesa SJ, titled *La pedagogía ignaciana. Textos clásicos y con-*



temporáneos sobre la educación de la Compañía de Jesús desde San Ignacio de Loyola hasta nuestros días offers us the milestones of a time-honored educational tradition which, in the words of John O'Malley, "will not make decisions for us, but it will offer, I believe, a privileged point of view from which we can take them" (p. 438). This timely work has become an obligatory reference for all those that are interested in discovering how to respond to the many challenges that education currently faces.

In the paradigm change that our world is currently experiencing, Jesuit education, faithful to its tradition, needs to evolve, for that which, among other issues, we can extract 5 aspects that both offer challenges as well as opportunities that need to be faced and resolved. First, the globalized and ever-increasing interdependent world requires of us, especially in regards to issues such as the environment, the economy and human rights, decisions and postures that are global in scope. In the same way, the interconnected world in which we live demands that the issues of isolation, exclusion and marginalization be considered. For all of this, we have to work hard to educate our students to work for and by way of cooperation, solidarity, and reconciliation.

At the same time, and as a consequence to globalization, we have to orient all educational centers so that they grow ever more agile in networking. This form of collaboration, ever attentive to the local context, will open education to cooperation on

an international scale, such that the students will be ever-more conscious of their role as global citizens and their responsibility to work in solidarity with others. As a way to follow-up on this aspect of Jesuit education, various initiatives have been developed. Perhaps some of the more important ones are the International Colloquium on Secondary Jesuit Education (ICJSE in 2012); the International Seminar on Pedagogy and Ignatian Spirituality (SIPEI) in 2014 as well as the International Congress for Delegates of Education of the Society of Jesus in 2017 [text #3].

Thirdly, Ignatian identity needs to be sustained in educational centers, as well as the apostolic inspiration and Ignatian charism so central to this identity. This issue is an essential one, especially in those areas in which the Jesuit presence is limited. As a result, the active collaboration with lay men and women, begun many decades ago, acquires a whole new meaning. There are various documents that deal with this question and it is important to note the development of many programs to foster and reflect upon this topic. One such example is the Master's program in Ignatian pedagogy, which began in the academic year 2019-2020, organized and coordinated by EDUCSI, Universidad de Deusto, Universidad Pontificia Comillas, and Universidad Loyola Andalucía.

The care for the environment, considered a part of the mission of reconciliation, presents not only a

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great challenge, but also a wonderful opportunity. Some centers have incorporated in their programs an ecological concern, changed their administrative practices and policies, thereby making them more green, as well as designed structures and facilities that save energy. There is no question: schools have become an incredibly important tool to form and sensitize young people to pressing ecological issues. The result of this has been a noticeable participation and implication by the part of young people in movements related to the environment.

And lastly, technological changes have brought new ways to learn and to teach. This issue does not only mean that new resources have been used in the classroom, such as smart boards or other electronic devices, but it ultimately has required us to rethink education, rediscovering, as it were, what it means to teach and to learn. This is an urgent issue given that new technologies are, in their own way, creating a new culture with new mentalities. As a result, new educational models are being developed, such as on-line courses and other novel formats of student attendance. But what is even more clear is that we are witnessing a kind of break in the traditional relationship between educational activities at school and those activities done at home. Spaces are more fluid for the student and his or her learning. As such, experiences denominated “hyper-classrooms” are being implanted where various teachers and students move freely, incorporating the technology most suited to the subject matter.

It is in the context of universality where education needs to be considered; as such, education should be oriented to foster the growth in the interaction of various human groups, the respect for diverse cultures, and the desire to provide a shared vision of all the interests of the human family. Intercultural education will make it possible to open up these new spaces. It is not in vain that “the spiritual contribution of religions, understood as a dimension of cultures, will allow for the overcoming of fundamentalist perspectives. This is what, in 2008, the 35th

General Congregation discovered and to what it has invited us to live in our cultures of religion in order to find, recognize and create dialogue with one another” [text #4]. Universality understood in this way can become the path towards social justice, fraternity, and the peace of which depends the future of humanity •



Spanish version



All texts have been extracted from the book of José Alberto Mesa SJ (ed.) (2019). *La Pedagogía ignaciana. Textos clásicos y contemporáneos sobre la educación de la Compañía de Jesús desde san Ignacio de Loyola hasta nuestros días*. Mensajero-Sal Terrae-Universidad Pontificia Comillas (pp. 573, 582, 614, 628)

TO KNOW MORE

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