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Power and violence in Ignatian education

Abstract: Since 1548, Ignatian education has been offered in thousands of educational institutions run by the Society of Jesus. The aim of the article is to identify manifestations of power and violence in this education. The author uses the historical method, analyzing the documents produced by the Jesuits before their suppression in 1773, when a relatively uniform system of teaching and upbringing was in force in their institutions around the world. The author notes that Ignatian education was inspired by the spirituality and experiences of the founder of the Order, Ignatius of Loyola was as a self-demanding man, determined and at the same time sensitive and open. He created a thriving, highly hierarchical institution with a global reach, but able to flexibly adapt to local conditions. Despite their laudable aims, Jesuit schools offering Ignatian education have been marked by symbolic, structural and physical violence, and most Jesuits have sided with those of power and importance for centuries. It was only in the 20th century that they took a more decisive stand on the side of those most in need.

Keywords: Power, Ignatian education, Jesuit schools, Violence at School.

Introduction

The Society of Jesus was approved in 1540 by the papal bull entitled *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae* (To the Government of the Church Militant), which already in its wording contains the dimension of power and violence. The Jesuits are still the largest religious order in the world and form an organization dealing in a special way with education. They currently run 2,521 schools of various types and 189 universities and colleges (Jesuit Global

Network of Schools; see ICAJE Reports 2022). Today, the education offered in these institutions is more and more often called Ignatian education (not Jesuit education), because this term refers to the figure of Ignatius of Loyola, his educational experience and the principles formulated by him. In addition, in the educational institutions currently run by the order, the education of students is primarily taken care of by non-Jesuits, who constitute 98% of faculty and staff.

This article attempts to discover practices of power within the education proposed by this religious association, understood as the ability to control or direct the people (students), and violence, understood as a form of exercising this power.

In the search for traces of power and violence in Ignatian education, I use historical research, examining the primary documents produced by Ignatius of Loyola and the Old Society of Jesus before its suppression in 1773, because only until then the education offered by the order was relatively uniform around the world and was carried out essentially according to the school act of 1599 called *Ratio studiorum*. After the restoration of the order in 1814, its education took many new forms, depending primarily on the educational regulations in individual countries where the Jesuits operated.

Despite the vast literature on Ignatian education, I have not come across studies dealing directly with the subject of power and violence, although in many works these matters are raised on the margins of the main considerations. An example may be an excellent book by Silvia Mostaccio (2014) who shows the relationship between obedience to authority and obedience to one's conscience within the Jesuit thought in the 16th and 17th centuries.

It should be mentioned that Michel Foucault devoted several paragraphs to Jesuit education in his well-known work entitled *Discipline and Punish* (1978, pp. 146-147). He concentrated on discipline in Jesuit colleges during a period he called the Great Confinement (1600-1750). He stated that this discipline took the form of a day-long watch over all students (panopticism), institutionalized forms of denunciation, physical punishment, transformed into a "technology of the body" that was able to influence students' souls. In the present article, I use some of the analyzes proposed by Foucault.

Concepts of power and violence

Power is a concept that has various connotations. It has been viewed by Hobbes, Durkheim, Simmel, Follett, and other conservative social philosophers as a positive phenomenon. Liberals such as Marx, Mosca, Mills, and Dahrendorf have seen power as negative. In 20th century, various attempts

have been made to decompose the concept of power, and numerous classifications and typologies have been proposed (Mudiappasamy Devadoss, Muth, 1984, p. 380). I do not intend to join this discussion. I accept a general definition of power as the ability of an individual, group, or institution to influence or exercise control over other people and achieve their goals despite possible opposition or resistance. At the same time, the collective dimension of power, which Hannah Arendt pointed out, is important for my considerations about power in Ignatian education. She states: "Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and it remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. When we say of somebody that he is >in power< we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name" (Arendt 1972, p. 143; see Jones 2010, p. 20). For centuries, the Jesuit order was extremely compact in terms of ideology and organization, bonded by obedience, therefore all its actions, including those exercising power, and probably also the use of violence, should be seen not as results of the decisions of individuals, but of the whole group.

The above mentioned "definition" of power corresponds very closely with the description of upbringing (education) formulated by Florian Znaniecki. He understands education as: "some activities, fulfilled by some people with the intention of calling, inhibiting or modifying, immediately or in the future, certain activities of other people [...] In other words, education is a activity seeking to influence human behavior" (Znaniecki, 2001, p. 3). In this sense, education would be nothing but a form of exercising power over representatives of the younger generation to transform them according to the ideas of the older generation. It can be assumed that this is how Jesuits have understood education for centuries. Their goal was to raise young people entrusted to them into well-educated and pious individuals, capable of transforming the whole society.

And what is violence? It is difficult to define it as an isolated and independent concept because it is used in many different contexts. Arend states that „violence [...] is distinguished by its instrumental character. Phenomenologically, it is close to strength, since the implements of violence, like all other tools, are designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural strength, until in the last stage of their development they can substitute for it (Arendt, 1972, p. 145). Interestingly, Arendt does not understand violence as a manifestation of power or dominance, which is orienting to force people to do certain behaviors or to stop them from some behavior. Paul Ricoeur emphasizes that for Arendt violence is a manifestation of the consumption

of power, a sign of its weakness: "Rule by sheer violence comes into play where power is being lost" (Arendt, 1972, p. 152). The relationship between power and violence can be laconically expressed: if no power, then violence (Jones, 2010, p. 23).

Violence seems to be an indelible part of human history. However, it is necessary to distinguish between unjustified and justified violence. At this point, it is worth recalling the definition of the state according to Max Weber: "a relationship of rule (Herrschaft) by human beings over human beings, and one that rests on the legitimate use of violence (that is, violence that is held to be legitimate)" (Weber, 1994, p. 311; see Jones, 2010, p. 20). Examples of justified use of violence can be found in the activities of state institutions: army, police, courts that use violence to prevent behavior considered criminal or to punish these behavior. Also in education, violence cannot be avoided when it seems to be the only possible means to protect children from some harm or the only method of maintaining the order necessary to perform the school's tasks. At the same time, distinguishing justified and unjustified violence can be conceptually easy, but there are few situations in which this distinction can be done without any doubt. In any case, even if violence is an inalienable component of life, it should be seen only as a bad necessity (Kolakowski, 2008, p. 77).

Ignatius of Loyola – a powerful leader

Ignatian education is undoubtedly rooted in the educational experiences and spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556). He came from a proud and influential noble Basque family. He was raised as a future "leader". The term then meant someone who gave orders to others, who had the desire to be "worth more" (*valer mas*), to demonstrate that he was stronger, more powerful, richer and more important than others (Garcia Mateo, 1991, p. 27).

In his youth, Ignatius continued the knight-soldier traditions of his family, including those less glorious ones such as participating in duels and engaging in numerous love affairs. In May 1521, he was among the defenders of the fortress of Pamplona besieged by the Spaniards (Loyola, 1997, n. 1). When all his companions wanted to surrender in exchange for their lives, Ignatius convinced them to defend themselves to the end. The fortress was only surrendered when a cannonball shattered Loyola's leg.

As a result of many weeks of treatment, it turned out that "he was left with one bone above his knee mounted on top of the other. Thus the leg was left shorter and the bone at that point protruded so much as to be something ugly" (Loyola, 1997, n. 4). Ignatius then ordered surgeons to cut off this

bone, naturally without the use of anesthetics. The image of Loyola, who submits himself to "this torture" at his own request, has deeply embedded itself in the minds of the Jesuits. His courageous decision to undergo surgery was undoubtedly a manifestation of his inner strength and determination, which he showed throughout his life, also later as the superior general of the order. Before making any decision, he thought and prayed for a long time, but then acted quickly and decisively, and nothing could distract him from the goal once set.

During the long convalescence after the Battle of Pamplona, Ignatius experienced a religious conversion and decided to replace the service of the earthly rulers with the service of the "King eternal", in order to conquer with him "all the land of unbelievers" (Loyola, 2017, n. 93). It was his reaction to the sense of insecurity that arose in the society of early modern Europe, affected by fanaticism and religious wars, political hatred and questioning of all authority, a deep moral decline in which Catholics lost entire territories to Protestants. The order founded by Ignatius was to compensate for these losses by gaining new followers and new lands in mission countries.

In his Spiritual Exercises, with the help of which Ignatius formed candidates for his order and other people significant in society and the Church, he assured several times that in this service of "King eternal" one should be prepared for hardships and suffering, that violence was needed "against […one's] own sensuality and against […] carnal and worldly love", while "bearing all injuries and all abuse and all poverty of spirit, and actual poverty" (Loyola, 2017, n. 94). This was a new kind of power: instead of being stronger, richer and more important than others, the retreatant was to become more connected to the humiliated, powerless and poor Christ.

Loyola remained a man of great contrasts, reflecting the spirit of the 16th century in which he grew up. To him governance could mean either cordiality or harsh repudiation. He often surprised people with his reaction to affairs: sometimes he insisted strongly on obedience, sometimes he was mild and gentle. Well known was his steadfastness or, rather, stubbornness (Friedrich, 2014, p. 134). His Spiritual Journal reveals him as a man of good calculation, a demanding superior, a strict ascetic and at the same time a contemplative, recalling that during his mystical experiences he cried seventy-five times (Loyola, 1958). Loyola combined strictness, adherence to rules, respect for authority with simultaneous flexibility to new challenges, forbearance and delicacy. This tension between exercising power and being gentle spilled over to the order he founded, even becoming his hallmark.

Initially, neither Ignatius nor his companions intended to engage in education, but to devote themselves to "helping souls", i.e. charity and pastoral work. They soon discovered, however, that the privileged way of this "helping souls" would be to educate the youth. Moreover, they came to the conclusion that through good education based on the values of the Gospel and Renaissance humanism, it would be possible to raise the standard of living of entire societies (Ribadeneira, 1965, p. 475). At the same time, the Jesuits were convinced that they were to educate the boys entrusted to them to be future leaders of the Church, state and society, for the benefit of all citizens (Polanco, 1965, p. 419). The position of leaders was easier to achieve in the future for students from the wealthier classes, which is why the Jesuits kept a special preference for them. In this sense, they sided with powerful and influential members of society.

Ignatian education was carried out in hundreds of colleges, seminaries and various types of boarding schools run by Jesuits. These were hierarchically organized institutions with great power of the rector, who could not, however, fulfill his own whims, but had to consult his advisers on more important matters and was subordinate to the superior general of the order (The Constitutions of the SJ, n. [326]). The latter received annual information on the rector's activities through official, confidential letters written by appointed Jesuits. The structure of multi-level dependencies ensured the smooth functioning of the entire institution. In colleges, the responsibility for the education and upbringing rested in the hands of the members of Society of Jesus, lay people were entrusted with only some functions. The educational program was structured, clear and well known to students and their parents. All this created the image of a powerful institution, effectively influencing its pupils.

The school curriculum as a tool of symbolic violence

In trying to indicate manifestations of power and violence in the Jesuit school system where Ignatian education was offered, I follow the article by Conrad Hughes (2020) who explores the relationship between violence and education. He does this by referring to some of the literature in critical pedagogy that investigates how contemporary schools are violent in modes that are symbolic (non-physical), structural, and physical.

I know that applying contemporary analysis to earlier educational trends is a risky operation. However, I am inspired by Foucault, who places the former Jesuit education in his account of the successful historical metamorphoses of the school. This education could be seen as one of the stages on

the way from "harsh and relatively inflexible to mild and ostensibly gentler practices; and, perhaps most importantly, a shift from negative to positive conceptions and practices of discipline" (Deacon, 2006, p. 179).

Following Bourdieu (1988), Hughes notes there is already some form of violence in the curriculum offered by individual schools. This violence is not a deliberate action by the school authorities, rather an unconscious reinforcement of the status quo that is seen as the "norm" by the students. I have no doubt, that every curriculum contains a form of ideological domination and indoctrination, i.e. it imposes on force specific beliefs and norms to children, which are largely intellectually vulnerable beings. However, any initiation in culture is an indoctrination, so it cannot be completely avoided. Maybe we should distinguish between indoctrination in good principles, beliefs and norms and indoctrination in bad ones. Only the latter would be called violence in the strict sense. Although the distinction between the positive and negative content of indoctrination will always be historically and culturally conditioned, it seems that we can carefully accept indoctrination aimed at obtaining attitude of respect and tolerance towards others and we should definitely reject the one that propagates various forms of enslaving other people.

In the case of Jesuit education, the curriculum was included in the *Ratio studiorum*, which was in force in all Jesuit schools (and universities) around the world. It provided almost exclusively linguistic education (learning to speak Latin correctly and beautifully), and omitted real knowledge (natural sciences). Jesuit schools for a long time dealt with unrealistic issues and used the method of unreflective, purely memorized learning of the material. The aim was to form a pious and eloquent erudite (Bednarski, 2003). This was done through formal and grammatical education, contact with moralizing ancient humanistic and philosophical literature, supplemented with elements of real knowledge in the field of mathematics and natural science, which, however, served only to prepare the speaker.

Did such a curriculum hurt students or mislead them or gave them a distorted picture of the world? Certainly not directly, because most of students came from the nobility, and the latter did not expect a practical education that would give them, for example, the opportunity to become a teacher or start a career as a petty official. The Jesuit school was supposed to equip its students with skills such as composing and delivering a speech from memory in Latin, writing a private and official letter, and taking part in conversations and discussions. All this was to facilitate moving around in the noble world, which was dominant in all areas of social life.

The Jesuit school fulfilled these tasks well, although it used some forms of didactic violence, such as strictly defined material to be mastered in each class, daily checking of tasks, a highly structured schedule of the day, semester and year, promoting strong competition between students, the institution of secret informers among students (Nadal, 1965a, n. [20]), a demanding system of assessment and punishment up to expulsion from school. In total, the Jesuits did not hesitate use a certain violence in the implementation of their curriculum. They justified their methods of upbringing and education by pointing to a clearly marked, specific purpose of their activities - raising students on pious and well-educated individuals (*viri pii et docti*). This does not mean that the Jesuits doubted the ethical correctness of their methods. On the contrary, they were convinced of their effectiveness and benefits for students. They set goals that in their opinion were good and tried to achieve them by methods that they considered optimal. In this sense, their symbolic violence was well deliberated, which distinguishes it from that described by Bourdieu, who pointed out that the imposition of the norms of the group possessing greater power on the other group is often unconsciously agreed upon by both parties. Students of Jesuit schools had no doubts who governed their school and what was required of them.

Structural violence at schools

Hughes, following Foucault's thought (1978), notes that the traditional layout of schools was based on the architectural map of the prisons. They served the function of herding and controlling large numbers of people. Jesuit colleges that educated hundreds and sometimes thousands of students also had these characteristics. The buildings were spacious, with wide corridors and large classrooms that could accommodate up to several dozen students. In the classroom, ten students sat in long, parallel desks. On the edge of the desk sat a student called a decurion, who questioned his classmates on the assigned memory quota, noted down the lack of tasks and possible absences, and then reported it to the teacher (Nadal, 1965b, p. 199). Foucault notices that the "decury" was an unit of the Roman army. "It was this unit that the Jesuits took up in the scenography of their schools, thus reintroducing a military model" (1978, p. 315).

In the four corners of the room sat syndics, whose task was to ensure order in the classroom and report shortcomings to the Jesuit teacher. The class was visited at least twice a month by the school principal, who controlled the implementation of the program by the teacher and the progress of the students (*Ratio studiorum*, Rules for the Prefect of Lower Studies,

n. 6). In the corridors, the prefect of the courtyard kept discipline. Generally, students remained throughout their stay at school under the watchful eye of the Jesuits or their assistants, among whom there were (at least in the 16th century) secret informers (Nadal, 1965a, p. 22).

When the students lived in boarding schools, prefects and their assistants from among the Jesuits watched over the order in them (Bednarski, 2003). On the other hand, in private boarding houses, students had tutors employed by their parents, who were often very demanding of their pupils and did not avoid flogging them.

All in all, students were supervised and controlled at all times, which was supposed to contribute to maintaining order in the school, and at the same time to teach them immaculate behavior in line with social expectations. The latter goal was achieved with difficulty, as evidenced by numerous violent brawls caused in cities by students of Jesuit schools, clashes and conflicts with students from other schools, with Protestants, Jews, townspeople, and even physical attacks on the Jesuits themselves. In the case of Polish Jesuit colleges, this low effectiveness of continuous monitoring of students was probably due to their Sarmatian habits. Most of them belonged to the nobility, which valued freedom and the belief that all nobles were equal, had their honor and could not be subjugated.

Social exclusion

Since Jesuit colleges were free of charge before the suppression, they were generally open to boys from all social strata, from rich and poor families, from different religions and nationalities. Especially in the 16th century, these schools actually gathered young people who were socially very diverse (mostly sons from bourgeois families), then gradually there were more and more representatives of the nobility and magnates in these institutions, although all the time they also educated individuals from outside this dominant group.

Essentially, all students were to be treated equally by the Jesuits. The *Ratio studiorum* states that upon admission to the school, the principal "should exclude no one on the grounds that he is poor or not of noble blood" (Rules for the Prefect of Lower Studies, n. 9). Moreover, it was emphatically repeated that teachers and professors "should not look down on no one, attending to the education of poor students just as to that of the rich" (Rules Common to Professors of the Lower Classes, n. 50 and Common Rules for Professors of the Higher Faculties, n. 20).

On the other hand, the school principal was clearly instructed that when assigning desks to students at the beginning of the school year: "he

should assign the better (*commodiora*) seats to those of noble families" (Rules for the Prefect of Lower Studies , n. 29). Although such a solution may seem grossly unfair today, perhaps the Jesuits in their programmatic egalitarianism could not go so far as to seat a wealthy magnate in the same school desk next to a poor nobleman, a modest burgher or (completely improbable!) a peasant. It was enough that all students had to be in the same class, do the same homework, sing the same songs, take part in the same theatrical performances.

The ostentatiously worse treatment of poorer students could have taken place, since the Polish provincial Stefan Sczaniecki reminded teachers of the lower grades in 1715 that "poor students must not be used for work in the college (unless they are adequately paid), much less for private classes" (Sczaniecki, 2001, p. 59).

There is an interesting account by Pietro Antonio Adami (1661–1722), who spent five years in the Jesuit high school in Bologna in the 1670s (Fabrini, 1946). He writes that teachers warned pleb students to keep their contacts with nobles to a minimum, especially in such matters as borrowing or accepting money or exchanging books. If someone broke this rule, they risked expulsion from school (Grendler, 2016, p. 38). The author of the manuscript summarizes: "students from the nobility had priority in everything and over all students" (Fabrini, 1946, p. 25). It can be assumed that once again admirable principles had to give way to practical life pragmatics.

Jesuit schools were open to students from various religious denominations, especially Protestants. In the case of Polish Jesuit colleges in the 16th century, many of them had numerous students of dissenters. Jesuit teachers approached these students with a large dose of tolerance, which was probably due to the desire to convert them to Catholicism, as well as to win over their influential parents. In the 17th century, after the victory of the Counter-Reformation in Poland, openness towards dissenters began to decline. A drastic example of a change in the atmosphere was the public burning of Calvinist books in the school yard in 1611 by students of the Jesuit gymnasium in Kamieniec Podolski (Załęski, 1905, vol. 4, pp. 114–115).

The number of students of dissenters in colleges was decreasing for various reasons, but probably also because they risked being damaged emotionally and psychologically not just by student-led violence but also by acts of exclusion by the school community. This may seem like a distinctly different form of violence, violence against the "religious other". However, there is no confirmation that it was stimulated by the Jesuits themselves, whose main goal was to convert Protestants to Catholicism, not to antagonize them.

Physical violence

The students at the Jesuit schools had to face also less sophisticated forms of violence — shouting and even physical violence. In 1715, the Polish provincial Stefan Sczaniecki warned teachers of Jesuit schools not to shout too loudly when admonishing students, and to avoid too harsh and offensive epithets, especially such as: "you thief, you pig, you stupid, etc." (Sczaniecki, 2001, p. 56). The author was well acquainted with the difficult situation in Polish Jesuit schools at the beginning of the 18th century and he wanted to reform them. It can therefore be assumed that the examples of verbal violence against students that he included in his manual were not his invention, but he took them from school practice.

What casts the greatest shadow over Jesuit schools is primarily physical violence. The first Jesuits, under the influence of Renaissance (Erasmus, Vives) and ancient (Quintilian) humanists, were convinced that a school teacher should above all be kind and gentle towards his pupils and "as far as possible he ought to proceed in a spirit of leniency and to maintain peace and charity with all" (The Constitutions of the SJ, n. [489]). At the same time, in the colleges they established from 1548, the Jesuits used, albeit reluctantly at first, physical punishment of students, because at that time these were generally considered an indispensable educational measure, especially in relation to younger boys. When in 1557, in the first college in the world, in Messina, the Jesuits introduced an experiment consisting in the complete abandonment of physical punishment, the parents of the students strongly opposed it, so the old discipline had to be restored in order to "keep the children in fear" (Tacchi Venturi, 1951, p. 356). The Jesuit college in Messina was a kind of model for all their subsequent colleges, as was the Sturm gymnasium in Strasbourg for the Protestant schools. If the Jesuits had insisted on not using physical punishment of students, they would probably be the only school in the world free of physical violence and could set a completely new trend in European education. Apparently, however, it was too early for this, and pragmatism prevailed in the Ignatian education. The Jesuits wanted to please the students' parents and not to expose themselves to the University of Catania, which wanted to close their college at all costs for fear of competition (Grendler, 2002, p. 122n).

Physical punishment in Jesuit schools has therefore been used for centuries, however, it was controlled, part of a closed system with its own rituals, nomenclature and spiritual references. According to Ignatius, the Jesuits could never inflict punishments personally, as this would diminish the respect of the pupils towards them and undermine their trust. Loyola

therefore proposed that colleges employ a paid non-Jesuit disciplinarian (*corrector*) to inflict punishments ordered by the teacher and keep the boys in fear (Loyola, 1905, p. 668; The Constitutions of the SJ, n. [397]).

In the first Jesuit schools, physical punishment could only be applied to students of the younger grades, while in the case of older students, mild persuasion was to be enough, and when it was ineffective, the delinquents were removed from the school. Also with regard to the younger students, physical punishment (in the form of the number of strokes ordered by the teacher) was an exceptional and final educational measure when other means of persuasion had failed. The provisions of the *Ratio studiorum* formulated the principle that the teacher "should not be quick to punish nor overly eager about finding things out. Rather he should look the other way when he can do so without harm to anyone" (Rules Common to Professors of the Lower Classes, n. 40). The teacher could not, however, not react to obvious violations of the school order, which he considered essential for high academic performance. This type of behavior found acceptance and even recognition in the eyes of parents who used to say: "Jesuit Fathers beat well, but they teach even better" (Rolnik, 2022, p. 183).

It is difficult to say unequivocally how Jesuit schools fared against other schools in terms of the use of physical violence. Robert Schwickerath writes that the use of the rod in Jesuit schools "was by no means so frequent as in nearly all other schools. […] Compared to what was done in the great public school of England and in the gymnasia on the European continent, the practice of the Jesuit colleges was exceedingly mild" (1904, 617). In turn, some Polish diaries from the 18th century show that strict discipline prevailed in local Jesuit colleges, in stark contrast to the principles from the beginning of the order (Rolnik, 2022). It is clearly described by the well-known Polish writer and politician Józef Wybicki, who until 1762 was a student of the Jesuit college in Stare Szkoty on the outskirts of Gdańsk: "The [students] were really beaten every day: I always heard a groan; the requests of the students and the hardness of the teachers were the usual picture of the school… It was real hell" (Wybicki, 1927, p. 11). The author paints a grim picture of one of his Jesuit teachers in the oldest [rhetoric] class, Jan Działowski, an "insolent tyrant" who "indulged in our class the wildness that was typical in the infima [youngest class]. This Jesuit liked to beat students and came to us with a cat o' nine tails" (Wybicki, 1927, p. 13).

If we recall the thought of Arendt, stating that violence appears where there is a lack of real power, we can assume that the Jesuit mentioned in the diary (and many of his companions) reached for physical violence because he

lost confidence in his power contained in the mission of teaching entrusted to him by the order, he lost his faith in his own extensive education, and in humanistic educational methods proposed by Ignatius of Loyola. Doubt in this power pushed him to violence. Unfortunately, we cannot rule out the distorted psyche, which made him find pleasure in breaking children.

On this occasion, it should be noted that the use of corporal punishment was a typical educational method in Catholic schools (as well as in almost all others) at least until the mid-1960s (until the Second Vatican Council), when it slowly began to be phased out due to changes in the perception of students and the discovery of their dignity. In the case of the USA, it was only in 2011 that church authorities prohibited the use of physical punishment in St. Augustine High School in New Orleans. It was probably the last Catholic school in the country to resort to physical punishment. Interestingly, the decision of the Bishop of New Orleans to waive penalties met with strong resistance and protests from the school board, parents, graduates, and even students who pointed to the benefits of this educational method (Cabaniss, 2011).

In the use of various forms of power and violence, the Jesuits were inscribed in the spirit of the era and succumbed to the then interpretation of the Bible, which expressed the belief in the positive educational effects of beating the pupils. They forgot not only the guidelines from the beginning of their order, but also the attitude that Jesus had towards children, the one whose name they proudly included in the name of their Society. Undoubtedly, Jesus used violence when he "made a whip cut of cords" and chased the merchants from the temple (John 2: 15) or when he verbally attacked the Pharisees calling them: "blind fools", "whitewashed tombs", "snakes", " brood of vipers "(Matthew 23). He had no indulgence for people with power and influence, but he was good and sensitive to children. Many Jesuits have lacked this attitude for centuries.

Conclusion

The Jesuits, who often meditated on serving the "King eternal" in humility, stood in their vast majority (although not all!), for centuries on the side of those in power, on the side of influential people: they were with kings and rulers as their confessors, advisers and astronomers, they were with the Chinese emperor as his court mathematicians, they were with the popes as their theologians, they were with the magnates and nobles as educators of their sons in hundreds of colleges scattered around the world.

It seems that only after the Second Vatican Council did the Jesuits significantly shift the main emphasis of their mission to the "preferential option for the poor", for the powerless. They decided to combine the proclamation of faith with the promotion of social justice (Arrupe, 1973). They created the Jesuit Refugees Service, opened hundreds of the "Fe y Alegria" schools for underprivileged children in the third world. It even seems that Ignatian education is today more creative and dynamic in countries where formal education is a form of empowerment, an instrument of emancipation and social promotion, where the first need of a child is not so much to be treated as a partner, but "to have a notebook and a pencil", to get a diploma that will become a ticket to a better life. Such education is often associated with high demands, imposing a certain style of thinking, acting and behaving on students. Even if this imposition is a manifestation of power and symbolic or structural violence, it often seems inevitable for students from disadvantaged backgrounds with little cultural capital.

In western colleges and high schools for students from wealthy families, the Jesuit put more emphasis on shaping people who are distinguished not only by intellectual competence, but also by conscience and compassion (Ignatian Pedagogy, 1993), according to the recommendation of one of Ignatius of Loyola's successors in the office of general of the order - Pedro Arrupe, who stated that Jesuits should educate "men and women for others and with others" (1973).

It is easy to say that we want an education and a world without any form of power and violence. However, no one has so far formulated a reasonable proposal on how to organize such an education and such a world. If we wanted to condemn all power and violence without distinction, we would have to question life itself. Of course, one should strive for a world in which violence will be directed only against slavery, crime, aggression, and not against the children (Kolakowski, 2008). However, it would be too simplistic to understand the typical Ignatian tension between exercising power and being gentle in such a way that one must only apply violence to some people and only gentleness to others. Rather, each person deserves to be treated with love, which Ignatius of Loyola called *caritas discreta*, which could be translated as prudent love, not devoid of realism.

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