

Catholic Experiences and Educational Realities

Jesuit Student Cultures and Academic Routines in Central and East-Central Europe from the 16th to the 18th Century

Date: November 29 and 30, 2022

Location: Charles University, Prague, Carolinum

Organizers: Centre for the History of Education, Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences; Institute of History and Archive of Charles University, Prague; Chair of General History of the Early Modern Period, University of Potsdam

The history of the Jesuit Order and Jesuit efficacy at higher education institutions constitutes a success story of the early modern period. The new and particularly dynamic Order linked humanistic education with missionary zeal and enjoyed a virtual or real monopoly in higher education throughout many European countries. A prerequisite was the development of a distinctively Jesuit college and university model, which had begun to spread across all of Catholic Europe in the mid-16th century. It originated in Portugal, Spain and Italy, and almost simultaneously in overseas territories. The Order, initially founded for missionary purposes, devoted itself wholly to the Catholic Reform and understood its role as a propagator of the decrees of the Council of Trent. The Jesuits devoted themselves above all to training priests, which had come to a standstill since the 1520s. The underlying cause of this decline was the faltering humanistic reform and transformation processes within the Reformation, which resulted in the demise of universities that had remained faithful to the Catholic Church. In principle, there are three types of Jesuit efficacy at higher education institutions: (1.) Jesuit colleges without papal and imperial university prerogatives, i.e. the right to confer academic degrees; (2.) 'pure' Jesuit universities with merely two faculties – philosophy and theology –; (3.) integration of Jesuit faculties or individual Jesuit professors into already existing universities. The remarkable success of the Jesuit Order is based on a cluster of complex reasons, briefly summarized as:

- from a socio-historical perspective: the Jesuit college system, in particular the conclusions drawn from the *'modus parisiensis'* for the restoration of boarding-school-like dormitories in monastic tradition, i.e. in the context of shared dining, shared lodging and shared studying
- from the perspective of educational history: the special skills of the Jesuits who regarded themselves as erudite polymaths, especially evident in normative curricula and education geared towards the target group
- from an economic historical perspective: the issue of managing expenses between the financial foundation of Jesuit colleges and principled non-remuneration related to Jesuit teachings

The planned conference, which will also be held to mark the 400th anniversary of the acquisition of Charles University by the Jesuits in 1622, aims to explore a range of topics that have so far received little coverage in academic and educational history research. The organizers are primarily interested in reconstructing student life and mentalities at Jesuit colleges and universities influenced by Jesuits, i.e. Jesuit student cultures, which – according to research findings – were shaped by very different institutional, social and cultural conditions than those at Protestant universities. Jesuit students were considerably more limited in their lives inside and outside *lectio* and *collegium* due to the restrictive nature of the boarding school and were considered to be more conformist than Protestant students. To the latter, research has attested deviant conduct - a particular *"Standeskultur auf Zeit"* (MARIAN FÜSSEL).

In light of the already well-researched Protestant student cultures in the early modern period, the planned conference will, for the first time, explicitly focus on Catholic experiences and educational realities of student cultures shaped by Jesuits.

Possible questions within this context are:

- What pedagogical and didactic practices were applied in the classroom? The implementation of the "*Ratio studiorum*" (1599) and the significance of the school theatre – which was exclusively performed in Latin – should be emphasized here.
- How was the ambition of the Tridentine ideal of priesthood realized in the scholarly practice of theologian education? Did it distinguish between internal students (offspring of the Order) and external students?
- What kinds of piety practices existed? For instance, the efficacy of Marian student sodalities (congregations) or the worship of student saints Stanislaus Kostka and Aloysius de Gonzaga could be investigated.
- How rigid was the disciplinary system exerted on Jesuit students in terms of academic jurisdiction, for instance? Especially noble students did not necessarily face the constraint of staying at the Jesuit college and possibly claimed their own class-specific customs.
- What types of non-institutionalized teacher-scholar/student relationships can be traced? What role did kinship or nationality play here?
- How was studying at Jesuit colleges and Catholic universities financed? What role did scholarships and endowments play?
- Given the substantial body of documented research on Protestants at Catholic universities and Jesuit colleges, the question arises as to what extent religious conversions were successful. How were those successful conversions communicated externally?

The international conference will be organized by the Center for the History of Education at the Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences (Prof. Dr. MARTIN HOLÝ). Dr. MAREK ĎURČANSKY (Institute of History and Archive of Charles University) and Prof. Dr. MATTHIAS ASCHE (Chair of General History of the Early Modern Period at the University of Potsdam) are involved in its organization.

Time limit for presentations: 20 minutes

Conference languages: German and English

Please submit your proposals for presentation (abstract of no more than 3,500 characters) to cdv@hiu.cas.cz by May 31, 2022 at the latest. The organizing committee reserves its right to select submissions from among those received.