

The AVEPRO Evaluation Committee Report

The Catalunya Faculty of Philosophy Evaluation Committee which was appointed by AVEPRO, after having paid its visit to the Faculty, confirmed the broad lines set up by the self-evaluation report and identified the following problems:

1 - The Faculty integration, as an ecclesiastical institution, in the Ramon Lull, as a university of Christian inspiration.

The Committee remarked a strong desire to improve the integration in the University through a broader transversality in the services offered by the Faculty, for instance, by sharing subjects of Christian thought in other units of the University or by making use of the Ramon Lull Ethos Chair.

The more imposing presence of the Faculty in the University would allow an increase in the number of teachers in the Faculty and also in the number of philosophy classes at the university, perhaps, by integrating the Faculty teachers, who are lecturing these subjects in other units.

2 ó Faculty Seat in the Diocesan Seminar of Barcelona

The Committee noticed that the Faculty of Philosophy is located in the same place of the Faculty of Theology, in excellent facilities, in the city center, next to the central building of the Barcelona University.

The great majority of the first cycle current students are seminarians, who only attend the philosophical biennium, which is propedeutic to Theology, and this fact seems to strongly reinforce the instrumental character of Philosophy when compared to Theology, threatening the suitable autonomy of a Faculty of Philosophy.

The Committee was surprised to learn that the Faculty of Theology does not belong to the Ramon Lull University. Perhaps, its eventual integration would facilitate its economic cooperation and the promotion of cultural activities with the teachers of Philosophy.

The Committee had the opportunity to appreciate the Geological and Paleontological Museum, which is located in the same building of the Faculties of Theology and Philosophy. Perhaps, it would be worth developing and reinforcing its academic use and to open it, as much as possible, to people who show interest in Geology and Paleontology.

3 ó Small number of students, namely in the final year of the first cycle

Due to the fact that all the seminarians ó increasingly less in this last period ó are enrolled in the Faculty of Theology after their philosophical biennium, this creates a problem of a critical mass deficit (in an academic, economic and financial point of view) and makes the institutional quality of the Faculty of Philosophy difficult. The Faculty excellent facilities could welcome much more students.

The Committee remarked that some initiatives have been taken not only to attract new target groups (degree of specialization, for instance) but also more lay students (reactivating the first cycle in Humanities, open day, expo learning), that could even be improved with a clarification of job opportunities and career prospects.

4 ó The small number of teachers, from which only two are full time job.

This situation hinders not only the external projection and the stronger internal commitment to the Faculty, but also the teaching staff internationalization, despite the fact that some of the teachers have obtained academic degrees in foreign universities (Germany, United Kingdom, Italy).

The Committee had a positive appreciation on the teaching staff accreditation by agencies and also on the recognition of the need to ask to the dioceses ó in the case of priests ófull time job teachers.

In spite of all the referred difficulties, the Faculty has been publishing for the last 15 years a bi-annual journal of good quality, with important and current issues, with articles written in several languages (for instance English, French, Castilian, Catalan, Italian, German), indexed in several places (the German IBZ and IBR, Philosophers Index, Repertoire Bibliographique de la Philosophie, Latindex of the Autonomous University of Mexico, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas de España). The Scientific Council is international and so are the articlesøauthors.

Among the teachers, Francesc Torralba is well known in social life and has been appointed as the Pontifical Council of Culture of the Holy See.

5 ó The need to develop cooperation with other national and international universities

In spite of some positive initiatives such as the project of the Joint Doctorate in Humanities with the University of Comillas and with the University of Deusto, the Campus Mundi and the cooperation with Italian

universities, such as Lumsa and the Sapientia, it is important to improve the teachers and students' mobility.

6 - The will to develop research, taking advantage of the Library

The Committee was pleased to note the existence of the research group "Filosofia y Cultura" (with several working groups), the established incentives to publishing, the great and reasoned interest in pursuing the Holy See recommendation to develop metaphysics and to promote philosophy as a cultural heritage of humanity.

Even if the need of publishing to academic promotion (sexenios) is well-known, it would be positive to increase teachers' presence in public life, intervening on current issues, and so demonstrating the social function of philosophy.

It will be positive to capitalize the excellent Geological Museum to develop research in the field of the history of science and the philosophy of Nature.

7 - The opportunity of cultural services

It will be advisable to capitalize the Faculty's strong relationship with the Holy Family Church and with the millions of its visitors to develop cultural activities related with art and with family.

Recommendations

Considering that the Faculty of Philosophy deeply wishes to maintain its ecclesiastical and philosophical identity, it has to study the way this can be met with the need of a greater integration in the Ramon Lull University, developing teaching activities in the other centers of the university and, at the same time, the need to increase the number of its students as a condition of economic and financial sustainability and also as a condition of the development of its teaching staff (more teachers and more dedicated to the Faculty and to the University in an exclusive basis).

If it is not possible to achieve this purpose and to obtain an adequate critical mass of students and teachers, the Faculty would have to consider the alternative hypothesis of becoming an Institute which would be integrated in other University.

This recommendation is not only addressed to the Faculty of Philosophy but also to the Ramon Lull University, because the solution to this problem depends from both.

The Committee had the opportunity to be hosted by the Rector of the University and to speak to him about the present situation. Having in mind the ecclesiastical nature of the Faculty, this recommendation must also be addressed to the Great Chancellor.

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