

NON-RELIGIOUS COURSE IN MORAL EDUCATION

(1 period/week)

GUIDELINES FOR THE 4TH AND 5TH YEARS OF

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

A. INTRODUCTION

Whilst the general goals of the secular moral course have been defined for the first three secondary years ("cycle d'observation"), it is essential that those of the crucial middle years (4th and 5th) of the secondary school be laid down.

They may be summarized as follows :

- (1) To help pupils recognize that although the need for affirmation of SELF through OPPOSITION is a NATURAL one, it is NECESSARY to progress beyond this stage.

This first step which leads from the INDIVIDUAL to SOCIETY aims to

- encourage a sense of security in adolescents;
- free them from guilt while enabling them to understand that to explain is not to excuse;
- make them aware of the interdependence which exists in all situations.

- (2) They must thereafter recognize for themselves that although it is NORMAL

"to break away from the world of adults",

this entails moving towards a state of individual freedom. This may be ACHIEVED by :

- the search for balanced tolerance;
- the discovery of their own authentic way, so that they may REALISE the need for co-operation based on FREE-WILL.

(3) At this stage, a process of theoretical analysis will be indispensable. It will involve the adoption, in a progressively intelligent fashion, of the concepts discussed. They will have to be clarified and set, where necessary, in their historical context. Similarly, one may call upon a number of major lines of thought in the fields of moral philosophy, psychology, politics, economics and sociology.

The main objective, a better understanding of the self and of the world in which we live, will therefore be attained in a twofold way : on the one hand, by the historical approach and, on the other, by the conceptualisation of the knowledge thus gained.

B. THEMES

I. Communication : signs, codes, languages

Problems resulting from disorientation :

- culture and languages;
- morality and codes of conduct.

The various cultural forms :

traditions - customs - laws - habits - folklore - arts...

Awareness of a few major concepts of Man and the World.

The NATIONAL adolescent, the EUROPEAN adolescent :

similarity in diversity.

II. Self-knowledge through the emotions, sexuality and the imagination

- discovery of feelings, sentiments, emotions, love;
- the couple and its dynamics;
- puberty;
- needs, desires ...
- femininity and masculinity;
- sexual prejudices;

- the unconscious;
- the subconscious;
- ideals;
- the collective unconscious (myths, legends, proverbs ...).

III. The individual and social groups

A. Involvement and creativity : from unconscious integration to conscious integration

- the family :
 - yesterday, today, tomorrow;
 - here, elsewhere;
 - its rôles : economic, educational;
 - its effects : reassurance, alienation;
 - responsible parenthood : birth control, abortion, adoption, single mothers or fathers;
 - marriage, cohabitation, divorce, celibacy, ...
- the working environment :
 - the trade-union movement and sectarian interests;
 - independence, joint management, participation;
 - class consciousness.
- political life :
 - political options;
 - pressure groups;
 - citizens' rights and obligations;
 - fatherland, nation, federation;
 - national, European, international consciousness;
- leisure :
 - spectator and creator.

B. Problems connected with individuals and social groups -

- minorities;
- fringe groups;
- delinquency.

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