

UPF Event

Stockhol, Sweden, 29. June 2014



UPF Sweden started to sponsor a series of talks regarding on the topic: The role of Religion and spirituality in today's and tomorrow's society.

The meeting was held in the old historical house of Stocksundstorps gård, which is open for art presentations, music events and talks about values and life. At this first meeting 15 people attended who had all different backgrounds.

The discussion was introduced with a 20 minutes presentation that reflected on the need for an interfaith dialogue both from an individual, a religious and the society's perspective. The problem in Sweden has been that for many years religion, Christianity has been increasingly marginalised in our society. This means that materialistic values and perspective are on the forefront of the public agenda. Religious people once developed the schools with a spiritual understanding on education. Today education is simply about how to get a job because life is about making money. This has led to a short-sighted and a materialistic view in our which in turn led to people living a hedonistic orientated lifestyle. This development is increasingly spreading all over the western world. The problem has also been that religious representatives themselves also

have viewed religion in a doctrinaire way and thus focusing more on people's disbelief instead of developing people's beliefs and their spiritual senses. In this way one could argue that religious representatives themselves have made the religious agenda less relevant for today's society. The paradox is that when one tends to adopt the religious perspective to a more "modern" perspective the result has made themselves more irrelevant by not having anything to offer.

So the question remains are there a deeper spiritual way of life that transcended all religious and maybe also philosophical traditions. As UPF members we know there is. The challenge is however to address these questions so that people can open their minds and go beyond their own concepts. This is obviously a challenge today as people have such a superficial understanding of what religion is.

The learning experience from the meeting is, that with words one can only convey so much. Most important after all is the emotional experience we have when sharing about issues that have the possibility to give a transcending experience and insight how to live a meaningful life. After all this is what religion and maybe all education is about.