

Dorin Corneliu Opreș

Employing the Formative Values of Religious Education in Supporting the Educational Endeavours of the School, Family and Society

Summary of the Habilitation Thesis

This habilitation thesis means to summarise the contribution we brought to the field of religious education by highlighting the most important aspects regarding the various types of research undertaken. This paper is about the manner in which religious education is done within schools, families and society. The research begins from the reality of the presence of the religious factor in both the public and private space, an aspect that cannot be ignored by education. The more and more rapid changes of today's world are generating an increased level of expectation towards a systems of education called to train the new generations from multiple perspectives for a social existence in a highly competitive environment. Religious education has a dual purpose: 1. to present a set of values for the moral-religious development of a person and 2. to consciously give access to the family and society's values.

The thesis is organized into three main parts: the first part elaborates on the most important researches undertaken by the candidate and the results obtained, grouped in nine categories; the second part presents the strategic aspects and a series of working hypotheses for the future stages of the candidate's professional, scientific and academic development; and the third part mentions the bibliographic references associated with the contents of the previous two parts.

In the first part, there is a brief presentation of the academic development of the candidate and a list of the works the candidate has published as author, co-author and editor, together with the list of work in which the candidate has been cited to date.

Then, we emphasized the most important scientific contributions the candidate has made in the identification and development of the Christian fundamentals of modern pedagogy. We considered important the way in which the education model presented in the biblical and patristic texts offers exemplary results for the development of the contemporary generations. Of equal importance, we held the manner in which this model has been used in the development of education by the chief representatives of classic pedagogy.

Another topic took into consideration the developments brought to the didactics of Religious Education, a field of research that has been in the attention of the candidate since the first stage of the educational reforms in Romania. The pedagogic support of Religious Education as a school subject demanded the use of new didactic methods adapted to the educational reality

after December 1989. There is a strong emphasis on the way in which the research that we undertook in the field of religious didactics has contributed to the curricular paradigmatic change in Religious Education.

As part of the fourth category, we present the way in which our research has contributed to the support of Religious Education in the documents of the educational and curricular policies in Romania and the Republic of Moldavia. The thesis also presents the way in which the results of these researches undertaken in different contexts have contributed to the development of specific documents. For this purpose, we have listed all the written works to which we contributed as authors or co-authors and which were included in the main bibliographic references of the educational syllabi and bibliographical lists for the tenure and in-training exams of teachers from the two countries mentioned above.

Another component of the paper is represented by the contributions that we made in the development of curricular documents for the Religious Education taught in schools and in non-formal contexts. After 1990, the difficulty of developing the Religious Education syllabi and textbooks has been felt more acutely because in the last century the research in this domain lacked. Our research has been directed towards the identification of a set of values to support the fundament of the new official Religious Education curriculum and the development of the materials meant to teach Religious Education to groups of students that have different educational needs.

Our involvement in the field of pedagogic research is yet another direction detailed in this thesis. At the beginning of the paper, we listed the books and articles that are a theoretical fundament for the research in the field of Religious Education since these are the first Romanian materials of this type. We brought to relief the remarkable institutional effort made for the integration of the formal education to the social dynamics of the last centuries and that this has not been balanced by an equal preoccupation for the involvement of the family in this process.

In section seven of part one, we presented the results of some of our research that have provided data capable to support the reconstruction of the Religious Education curriculum through the integration of some perennial values of the society and family and of some of the students' expectations, depending on their age. We also mentioned some conclusions of various researches concerned with the part the family plays in the modern and traditional structures. We have underlined the multiple possibilities of using the potential of the family in applying methods specific to formal education. Furthermore, we presented the results of our researches regarding the possibilities of dasing the curriculum of the Religious Education, as a aschool subject, on the formative potential of the family. The last part of this section includes some of

the ethical challenges and questions raised by teenagers using means specific to the mass-media inside schools and the family environment.

We listed some aspects connected to how religious education helped the prevention of some phenomena like human traffic, HIV/AIDS infection and family violence. We also presented the results of the participation in national and international projects concerning these issues, results included in several books and articles published or presented during some scientific conferences in Romania, Italy, Greece and the Republic of Moldavia.

The last section of part one presents a series of contribution we brought to the improvement of the society's attitude in connection to the valences of religious education. We mentioned a series of books and researches that were meant to produce a change in the way in which some see the need for a new paradigm in concern to Religious Education. Moreover, we stressed the importance of the contributions we made in improving society's attitude towards the chances given to pedagogic research in the field of Religious Education.

The second part of the paper presents the main aspects regarding the plan for the evolution and development of our professional, scientific and academic career; plan based on the contribution of moral, religious and civic education to attaining the goals of formal education. Starting from the role played by the three dimensions of classic education in harmonizing the educational influence that the school, family and church/community have, we consider necessary to undertake some investigations that might lead to the re-edification of a dynamic structure capable to support the projecting and attaining some models in regard to the student's formative-educational track. An ample set of proposals for the development of our professional and scientific career refer to the dialogue between religion and the moral and civic values in the context of the contemporary education. We would also like to continue our research concerning the curricular development so that Religious Education might find an answer to other challenges, such as the multiracial and multinational structures, with which the social environment is faced. In this respect, the main areas of our research are concerned with the relationship that one has with oneself, the relationship between oneself and alterity and the relationship between oneself and the community.

26.02.2018