



Ljubivoje D. Stojanović¹

Preschool Teacher Training College “Mihailo Palov”, Vršac, Serbia

Scientific
review

Paper received: Oct 11 2017
Paper accepted: Feb 25 2018
Article Published: Jul 10 2018

Theological Contribution to Creating and Developing a Culture of Diversity in the Classroom

Extended summary

Pluralism in the classroom implies a creative responsibility of all actors in the teaching and learning process as the only path to creating multidisciplinary approaches which develop good relations and guarantee true success. This is the way to overcome all bias and superficiality, resulting in turning passive followers of narrow-minded traditionalism into creators of new reality. It is only then that traditional values and modern trends become correlative determinants. The process requires giving up all prejudices, fanaticisms, and collectivist fundamentalisms. Different religious contents should be developed to correspond to the reality, needs and interests of the modern men and women. People should not give up their personal convictions, but they should be open-minded and ready to accept the otherness of other people with full understanding and genuine respect. Different dogmas and ethical standards should not be the reason for anybody's isolation and life in a closed circle of the like-minded people. As such behaviour gives rise to conflicts with unpredictable consequences, an open society should not only give an opportunity to everyone to introduce themselves to others, but also prescribe an obligation to acknowledge other people's opinions. This does not mean that people should give up their own identity, but they are instead presented with an opportunity to overcome the innermost “identity of resistance” and become capable of sustaining meaningful correlations and sensible integrations. People will remain true to themselves and all creators will endeavour to build the identity of unity in diversity in a responsible way.

The best way to make religious pluralism become a social reality and democratic potential is to project religious freedoms through the social responsibility of adherents. This process implies a culturological approach to religious systems both in the classroom and in the social life, based on the inter-faith dialogue and tolerance. By using this approach, theology as a

¹ agapije2013@gmail.com

Copyright © 2018 by the authors, licensee Teacher Education Faculty University of Belgrade, SERBIA.

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original paper is accurately cited.

scientific discipline builds responsibly a religious identity of a given religious system as a system open to other and different beliefs. Atheism and agnosticism on one hand, and religious diversity, on the other, become creative determinants in a creative communication. This is the way to overcome uniform thinking and understand equality as the right to diversity, which in turn will make people realise that different views are not ignorance, but a choice that responsible and free individuals make.

The early 21st century re-introduction of religious contents in the school systems of the post-communist and transitional societies should be responsibly analysed by theological experts, without proselytism and ambitions to recruit new believers. Such behaviour is irresponsible and detrimental to the teaching process. To create a society of equal opportunities for everyone, it is necessary to constantly insist on the culture of dialogue and diversity. People with different opinions are not our enemies, people with different interests are not ignorant, but they simply hold different views than ours, and everyone is entitled to creative freedom. Responsibility is tested by the readiness to respect and acknowledge different opinions and it is built throughout one's life. All these ideas should be discussed and analysed openly and without denominational narrow-mindedness, ethical narcissism and academic fundamentalism. This is the only way to engage creatively all human potential, from early childhood, to an old age. An engaged theology should reconsider and identify the forms of creative multiconfessionalism that would contribute to social advancement and civilisational progress of every society and every individual.

Keywords: pluralism, dialogue, optional school subjects, ideological prejudices, unity in diversity.

References

- Adorno, T. (1979). *Negativna dijalektika*. Beograd: BIGZ.
- Berlin, I. (1992). *Četiri ogleđa o slobodi*. Beograd: Nolit.
- Biblija (2010). *Sveto pismo Starog i Novog zaveta*. Beograd: Sveti arhijerejski sinod Srpske pravoslavne crkve.
- Bojanin, S. (2011). *Tajna škole*. Beograd: Arhiepiskopija beogradsko-karlovačka – Odbor za versku nastavu.
- Evdokimov, P. (1997). *Luda ljubav Božija*. Manastir Hilandar.
- Frankl, V. (1994). *Zašto se niste ubili – traženje smisla života*. Beograd: IP Žarko Albulj.
- Juri, V. (2014). *Moć pozitivnog NE*. Novi Sad: Psihopolis institut.
- Kempijski, T. (2001). *Ugledanje na Hrista*. Beograd-Valjevo: Hrišćanska misao.
- Kristeva, J. (2010). *Neverovatna potreba da verujemo*. Beograd: Službeni glasnik.
- Merije, F. (2014). *Obrazovanje je vaspitanje*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike.
- Stojanović, IJ., Radović, V. Ž. (2015). Korelacija vere i znanja u vaspitanju i obrazovanju. *Inovacije u nastavi*. 28 (2), 35–45.

-
- Zečević, A. (2015). *Istina, lepota i granice znanja – put od nauke do religije*. Beograd: Službeni glasnik.
 - Zenjkovski, V. (2006). *Osnovi hrišćanske filozofije*. Podgorica: CID.