

RELIGIOUS DIDACTICS UNDER THE TERMS OF PLURALITY

Abstract

Plurality, individualisation and globalisation are the striking features of the present time. They affect the importance of the Church and religion in our society. Under these terms, religious education has to be subject-orientated and it should enable young people to overcome heterogeneity and plurality.

1. Children of Freedom - the Social Starting Point

Every day we are spoilt for choice: At the supermarket you have to choose between innumerable yoghurt varieties. The car market offers a confusingly large number of different models. And which of the numerous mobile phones is the best?

All of these questions should be considered as the signs of the times. The key words individualisation, pluralisation and globalisation accurately describe that.

The first part of the article explains the signs of the times. After a general analysis, the consequences for religion and the Church will be taken into account.

Finally, the article offers a pedagogical point of view referring to the impact of social and religious plurality on religious educational processes. The social situation of the Federal Republic of Germany, the altered role of religion in Germany, as well as, the distinctiveness of the German education system and the specific structures of religious education make up the basis of this article. Although, there are considerable differences between the social and ecclesiastical situation in Germany and Croatia, it can be very interesting for Croatian readers to discover similarities and differences.¹

¹ The question about religious education in a pluralistic society, facing the privatisation of religion is widespread even beyond the borders of Germany: L. G. Beaman / L. Van Arragon (Ed.), *Issues in Religion and Education. Whose Religion?*, Koninklijke Brill NV Leiden, 2015.

1.1. Pluralisation, globalisation and individualisation as a challenge

People living in the so-called postmodern time are not anymore determined by traditional relationships (family, religion, national origin). They are free to choose between different options concerning life and values. Over-lapping and general interpretations of world and life in general, do not exist anymore; people face different ways of living.²

The process of globalisation enhances this. Therefore people's room of living, experience and work, expands to the global world. The social-cultural dynamic of globalisation affects the following areas: Institutions suffer a loss of controlling the behaviour and the attitudes of people (deinstitutionalisation), common traditions are put back by blurring of the borders of spaces (detraditionalisation), people get more insight in foreign cultures and traditions (pluralisation), uniform design processes can be traced in fashion, music, food and economy. At least everybody has to create his/her own biography (individualisation).³

But this kind of biographical construction is very demanding. The necessary process of subjectification is not solely a chance for a more determined curriculum vitae. It presents a compulsion: The "Kinder der Freiheit"⁴ are forced to choose from a wide and varied range of possibilities and to create their own *Sinn-Cocktail*⁵: they are forced to choose. People are condemned to search for meaning. It sounds like the resurrection of the existential paradigm: "You are what you make of yourself". At the same time the fragile subject searches permanently for personal affirmation and social agreement: "I know who I am, when I am trendy." The ambitious aim is a fundamental and flexible literacy of your own life.

However, life as an individual creation has ever been limited due to the individual's dependency on institutions (labour market, social welfare state, education system). New dependencies arise and limit people's possible actions and life opportunities. In this context, it is understandable that people do not want to be tied to a political party, the Church or partner their whole life. Each selected option excludes all the others. It is therefore no surprising, that trade unions, sports clubs, political parties and churches suffer a significant loss of their members.

² Cf. K. Gabriel, Christentum im Umbruch zur "Post"-Moderne, in: H. Kochanek (Hg.), *Religion und Glaube in der Postmoderne*, Nettetal, 1996, p. 39-59; H. Mendl, *Religionsdidaktik kompakt. Für Studium, Prüfung und Beruf*, 5. A. München, 2017, p. 14-22.

³ Cf. H.-G. Ziebertz, Gesellschaftliche und jugendsoziologische Herausforderungen, in: G. Hilger / S. Leimgruber / H.-G. Ziebertz, *Religionsdidaktik. Ein Leitfaden für Studium, Ausbildung und Beruf. Neuauflage*, München, 2010, p. 76-105, hier p. 81f.

⁴ U. Beck, *Kinder der Freiheit*, Frankfurt a.M., 1997. / Children of Freedom.

⁵ People combine different things to create their own concepts of happiness, meanings and a good life.

1.2. The challenge: Development of an individual identity - handling plurality

The development of an identity in a postmodern, plural and global society is a nonlinear process, being finished someday in the period of adolescence.⁶ The individual is more vulnerable than expected in the modern age. Moreover, due to the rapid change of society, a static identity concept seems to be insufficient. Social scientists observe tendencies to a patchwork identity, based on different, every day fragmentation-experiences.

Postmodern people are forced to choose from a variety of life plans and to create a fragile and changeable identity. This means people need to create separate identities for different living contexts. Whereas occupational change was seen as an indication of professional failure, today it seems to be a requirement for multiple identities. Nowadays it is regarded as an expression of liveliness and vital reorientation.

Since life has always been in progress, individuals have to make sure that their identity constructions are the best ones. This affirmation of identity is carried out in the social context through the dynamic confrontation between your own ideas and the expectations of the others. The concept of narrative identity claims that people feel identical due to telling others the events that happen in their lives and therefore reliving the narrated things. Through the narratives, life is structured, correlations are established, contradictions are adjusted and missed opportunities are evaluated.⁷ Especially social media plays a key role in identity configuration.⁸

Supporting identity development and reassurance is a macrosocial task. Educational institutions are in charge of the fragile individuals and have to assist them in creating a new shape of life. The venture will only succeed if people learn how to overcome plurality. But it is not enough to create your own identity. To take the metaphor further you have to get all things for this life achievement on your own. As already mentioned, people have to face an unmanageable amount of possibilities. You will meet up with people and groups of people with unequal values and life decisions. So the aim is to be prepared to handle plurality. Therefore, special rules

⁶ Cf. H. Mendl, *Religionsdidaktik kompakt. Für Studium, Prüfung und Beruf*, 5. A. München, 2017, p. 71-72; H. Mendl, "Identitäts-Arbeit" als Aufgabe des RU?, in: *Zeitschrift für Integrative Gestaltpädagogik und Seelsorge*, 21 (2016) 80, p. 14-17.

⁷ Cf. H.-G. Ziebertz, Wozu religiöses Lernen? – Religionsunterricht als Hilfe zur Identitätsbildung, in: G. Hilger / S. Leimgruber / H.-G. Ziebertz, *Religionsdidaktik. Ein Leitfaden für Studium, Ausbildung und Beruf. Neuauflage*, München, 2010, p. 142-154, hier p. 152.

⁸ Cf. E. Fuchs-Auer, *Wer bin ich? Facebook als "Identitätskonfigurator"*, *KatBl*, 138 (2013), p. 180-183.

and methods are necessary. According to Hans-Georg Ziebertz, plurality in school settings can be overcome like this:⁹

- Ambiguous situations need to be withstood (ambiguity tolerance).
- To become familiar with fundamental styles and methods of reasoning.
- To be capable to see things from another perspective, to touch upon them and to learn from them.
- To be able to use traditions that are culturally present to solve problems.
- Acquire competences to master agreement as well as disagreement.

Even globalisation is a special challenge that affects plurality. In both media and face to face encounter with people from other cultures, people are confronted with ways of life and values which are unequal to their own attitudes. The numerous refugees which came to Germany in 2015 are an outstanding example of the consequences of globalisation, which intensifies the social pluralisation process.

2. Religious pluralisation and individualisation

Religion is a part of the society. Therefore, it is self-evident that religion is involved in the sketch process of pluralisation, individualisation and globalisation.

2.1. The starting point: Somewhere between secularisation and change of religion

In the process of modernisation, religion will disappear. This was, for quite some time, the predominant opinion in sociology but today it is seen from a different point of view. The problem of the secularisation hypothesis is that it only refers to the institutional form of religion.

Therefore, the existing social situation seems obvious: German churches become less important. Currently about 60% of the population belongs to the Christian religion. But conceivably, in 2025 people of different faiths and non-believers will form the largest majority.¹⁰ There is a considerable degree of confessional secularisation especially in the eastern federal states. Eberhard Tiefensee gets to the heart of it: "If the Western Germany is a kind of a disaster area (...), the Eastern Germany is its epicentre!"¹¹. Regional numbers verify the decline in reference to the church too: the number of the Church service visitors in Passau halved

⁹ H.-G. Ziebertz, *Gesellschaftliche und jugendsoziologische Herausforderungen*, in: G. Hilger / S. Leimgruber / H.-G. Ziebertz, *Religionsdidaktik*, p. 86; Cf. auch H. Mendl, *Religionsdidaktik kompakt. Für Studium, Prüfung und Beruf*, 5. A. München, 2017, p. 20.

¹⁰ Cf. <http://www.zukunftsentwicklungen.de/gesellschaft.html> (letzter Abruf 24. 11. 2016); Cf. auch zu den jeweils aktuellen Zahlen: www.remid.de.

¹¹ E. Tiefensee, *Religiös unmusikalisches? Folgerungen aus einer weithin krisenfesten Religiosität*, *KatBl*, 126 (2000) p. 88-95, hier p. 88f.

between 2000 and 2015. In 2015 only 11.7% of Catholics visited Sunday services. Compared to 2000, this is a decline of 46.1%.¹² The number of members leaving the Church, despite a slight decline, is consistently high: In Bavaria the Protestant and the Catholic Church lost more than 85,000 members.¹³ The different sinus-milieu studies drew attention in the ecclesial environment: According to the study, only a few social milieus are involved in church institutions.¹⁴ Particularly alarming in this context are the results of the Sinus-Youth study. Especially social trendsetters among young adults seem to be far removed from the Church!¹⁵

Overall, attachment to the Church decreases more and more and religious and cultural traditions are being overcome in an arbitrary way.¹⁶ Surprisingly this development may not only be found among unchurched people but also in the churchly milieu.

At the same time, distancing from Church institutions does not mean that people and even young people have not got any religious beliefs. The Shell-Youth Study can clarify this.¹⁷ On one hand, it becomes clear, that young people do not let themselves be influenced by the Church. On the other hand, numbers show that young people are reserved, but not non-religious! Religious convictions are predominant, collective religious practices are declining. Young people's relationship with God can be categorised like this: 26% think there is a personal God (close to church religions), 21% say there is a supernatural power (distant from church religions), 24% say that they don't know what or who they should believe in (doubtful) and 27% think that there is neither a personal God nor a supernatural power (unchurched).¹⁸ In pedagogy, this existing plurality of religious attitudes has to be taken seriously.

Against this background it appears more appropriate to refer to a change of religion.

In our society there are different forms of hidden or freely floating religions with an individualistic tone. In postmodern times, religion appears

¹² Cf. F. Kammermeier, L. Haus, *Die katholische Kirche in Passau hat in 15 Jahren fast die Hälfte ihrer Besucher verloren*, Passauer Neue Presse, 299 (24. 12. 2015), p. 25.

¹³ *Kirchen: Exodus noch nicht gestoppt*, Passauer Neue Presse, 163 (16. 7. 2016), p. 10.

¹⁴ Cf. Wippermann, Carsten, *Religiöse und kirchliche Orientierungen in den Sinus-Milieus 2005*, München, 2005.

¹⁵ Cf. M. Calmbach / S. Borgstedt / I. Borchard / P. M. Thomas / B. Bodo Flaig, *Wie ticken Jugendliche 2016? Lebenswelten von Jugendlichen im Alter von 14 bis 17 Jahren in Deutschland*, Wiesbaden, 2016.

¹⁶ Cf. U. Ruh, *Ein Fremdkörper? Christlicher Gottesdienst in säkularer Gesellschaft*, Liturgisches Jahrbuch, 66 (2016) 3, p. 137-149, hier p. 138.

¹⁷ Deutsche Shell (Hg.), *Jugend 2000*. 2 Bde., Opladen, 2000; *Jugend 2002*, Frankfurt a. M., 2002; *Jugend 2006*, Frankfurt a. M., 2006; *Jugend 2010*, Frankfurt a. M., 2010; *Jugend 2015: Eine pragmatische Generation im Aufbruch*, Frankfurt a.M., 2015.

¹⁸ Deutsche Shell (Hg.), *Jugend 2015: Eine pragmatische Generation im Aufbruch*, Frankfurt a.M., 2015, p. 253.

in various ways. The transformation thesis enables the viewing of plural offers in the worldview market of religion. Religion is embedded in the macrosocial process of pluralisation, individualisation and globalisation.

2.2. The force to heresy

Peter Berger explained the heretic dynamic many years ago in his book, which is called “Der Zwang zur Häresie” (1980)¹⁹. Even in the sphere of religion, people have to create their own patchwork identity. It is necessary that people choose between different available styles of religion and develop a self-responsible, individuating and reflective faith. There is a variety of choice and it is comprehensive.

You can verify this by visiting a library and comparing the numbers of theological books with esoteric ones! Moreover this diversity, which can be combined (syncretism), seems to be proof to support the thesis: It is not the end of religion. Religion is coming back, in a multiply changed form. Functions, task fields and rituals of the classical confessional religion are taken over by other institutions and manifestations (equivalent to religion).

In everyday life and in the world of media, many elements of traditional religion can be found. Religion is a topic in the public sphere as well as in religious productive popular culture (e.g. advertisement, world of cinema, in pop and rock music). Twenty years ago, in relation to the Church, Paul Zulehner mentioned that people chose suitable elements of the Christian religion. In the meantime, his observation has been confirmed by several studies: Even Christians do not agree with denominations within the Christian faith. They combine Christian elements with things of other religions and esoteric ideas that fit to their everyday life.

2.3. The task: to overcome religious plurality – to create your own religious style

The fundamental task of religious pedagogy is to support people when handling religious plurality and to foster the creation of your own religious style.

In religiously homogeneous environment, one’s own religion seems to be self-evident; in plural environment it seems to need justification. The large number of Islamic refugees who came to Germany must be regarded as a productive challenge. Thus it becomes necessary to clarify the importance of religion in your own life. The question of religion will be answered

¹⁹ P. L. Berger, *Der Zwang zur Häresie. Religion in der pluralistischen Gesellschaft*. Aus dem Amerikanischen von Willi Köhler, Frankfurt a.M., 1980. – The Greek word heresy (choice) is actually a neutral word. In the ecclesial environment it has got a negative connotation: A deviation from the right faith. In his book, Peter Berger plays with this wide semantic range!

more substantially, beyond a pure functional and anthropological term for religion.²⁰ Church communities were especially actively involved in providing assistance to refugees in Germany last year. Supporters circles were established and many volunteers got involved in helping refugees all over the world. Therefore, church communities are the places where interreligious encounters take place. Apart from the important interpersonal encounters, an intercultural clarification of the foreign and your own religion is necessary. The famous crucial question of Goethe's Faust: "Say, as regards religion, how you feel!" becomes important in a social and individual way.

It may appear paradoxical: The wave of refugees is especially really challenging to a secular and invisible religion and overall it shows its limitations!

3. Plurality and heterogeneity in school

3.1. Plurality as a whole school task

The social tendencies are reflected in school, too. Although there are areas where you may find confessional homogeneity and ethnic milieus, the federalist society becomes multicultural especially in the cities.

But even among the peers, there is a wide variation: it is necessary to assume the differentiation between living environment and learning conditions among pupils.

This also applies to all kinds of schools and school classes: Each case is unique! This postulate is supported by learning and developmental psychology as well as by fundamental social perspectives: We know that it is not possible from a universalist approach to fix cognitive, moral and religious development²¹ of children and young adults. The process is far more individual and domain-specific.

From learning psychology we know that there are different types of learners in learning groups who prefer their own ways and methods of learning (auditory, visual, motor or communicative learner types etc.). If you add more pedagogical indications, the following starting point of pupils seems to be a relevant distinguishing factor: background experiences, prior knowledge, general skills, personality traits, learning posture, learning technique, motivation and attitude, learning pace and their learning performance.²² One more thing needs to be complement-

²⁰ Cf. B. Porzelt, *Grundlegung religiösen Lernens*, Bad Heilbrunn, 2009, p. 45-108.

²¹ Cf. H. Mendl, *Religionsdidaktik kompakt. Für Studium, Prüfung und Beruf*, 5. A. München, 2017, p. 33-43.

²² Cf. H. Altrichter / B. Hauser, *Umgang mit Heterogenität lernen*, Journal für Lehrerinnen- und Lehrerbildung, 1 (2007), p. 4-11, hier p. 6.

ed, namely the distinction of gender.²³ These perspectives need to be reflected while planning the lessons. Given this, it can be rationally concluded that: There is no grosser injustice than treating different people in the same way.²⁴

In light of pupil's advanced heterogeneity each heterogenic didactic is doomed to failure.²⁵ The starting point has got more complicated, since the emergence of inclusion.

In 2009 the German Bundestag decided to join the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It is realised in different social areas, especially in the school sector. Everybody should enjoy social equality. Unlike integration, the aim is not only to put disabled children in regular classes. In fact, a new fundamental education conception where heterogeneity and differentiation are normal is acquired.²⁶

3.2. Overcoming religious plurality - finding orientation

Of course, the sketched features of heterogeneity can only be applied to pupils who visit religious education classes. Since the Würzburger Synod in 1974, German religious pedagogics assume that even the confessional religious education classes are visited by heterogenic pupils even if they formally belong to a confession: There are pupils who believe, who seek, who are sceptic and those who don't care.

Moreover, in many federal states—the concept of a pure confessional-based religious education cannot be kept up. In many cases there are religiously mixed or interreligious learning classes. Moreover, religious plurality is an inevitable reality for all pupils.

This again can be underlined by the examples of the Shell Study:

In the western Germany's mainstream there is a moderate interest in religion ("religion light"). In the new federal states, religion is not really important. However, migration culture conversely can be characterised

²³ Cf. KatBl, 140 (2015), 5: *Lernen Jungs Religion anders?*

²⁴ Cf. M. Eisenmann, *Differenzierung im Englischunterricht*, in: M. Eisenmann / T. Grimm (Hg.), *Heterogene Klassen – Differenzierung in Schule und Unterricht*, Baltmannsweiler, 2011, p. 79-98, hier p. 79.

²⁵ Cf. H. Mendl / M. L. Pirner, *Differenzierung im katholischen und evangelischen Religionsunterricht*, in: M. Eisenmann / T. Grimm (Hg.), *Heterogene Klassen*, p. 173-191.

²⁶ Cf. A. Müller-Friese, *No child left behind – Herausforderung Inklusion*, Theo-Web. Zeitschrift für Religionspädagogik, 10 (2011) 2, p. 25-37; S. Pemsel-Maier / M. Schambeck, *Inklusion!? Religionspädagogische Einwürfe*, Freiburg i. Br., 2014; H. Mendl, *Religionslehrerbildung als hochschuldidaktische Herausforderung zwischen Differenzierung und Inklusion*, Theo-Web. Zeitschrift für Religionspädagogik, 10 (2011) 2, p. 51-68; K. Metzger / E. Weigel u.a. (Hg.), *Inklusion – eine Schule für alle: Modelle – Positionen – Erfahrungen*, Berlin, 2010; A. Müller-Friese / S. Leimgruber, *Religionspädagogische Aspekte eines integrativen Religionsunterrichts*, in: A. Pithan u.a. (Hg.), *Handbuch integrative Religionspädagogik*, Gütersloh, 2002, p. 356-374; J. Schöler, *Alle sind verschieden: Auf dem Weg zur Inklusion in der Schule*, Weinheim, 2009.

by religious vitality.²⁷ According to religious education teachers in vocational schools, the growing number of refugees represents a challenge for German youth. Muslim youth affirm their religious community to a greater extent than Germans do. Many times, they feel quite indifferent about their own religion. You may ask: What do we believe in? Insofar as it is the key role of religious education today, to provide basic knowledge about your own, but foreign faith. Moreover religious education should support pupils in search of their own faith.²⁸

Besides, they need the ability to distinguish between constructive and deconstructive forms of religion. Especially dealing with different perceptions of religion, the Protestant Church says, that they should gain religious orientation.²⁹ Catholic bishops formulate it like this: religious education should convey fundamental knowledge about the faith of the Church. This knowledge should be structured and important for life and the pupils' dialogue capability and power of judgement should be fostered.³⁰ Rudolf Englert is doing this in a religious pedagogic way by making an exact determination of the relationship between configured religious knowledge (the understanding of connected knowledge base within the objective religion) and an individual religious knowledge (the individual acquisition of religious tradition).³¹

4. Religious- didactical instruments for mastering plurality

4.1. Subject- orientation: Starting and target point of learning

It is also inevitable that especially religious education has to recognise and heed the heterogeneity of pupils, too. It should enable pupils to overcome the plural world and its religious pluralism in a constructive way. Therefore Subject – orientation needs to be the starting and target point of any learning in religious education classes. Religious pedagogy in Germany seems to be prepared for all the challenges to come. In the last few years, many different principles and methods were developed. They help to cope with subject orientation and to overcome plurality in a textual and didactic way.³²

²⁷ Cf. Deutsche Shell (Hg.), *Jugend 2015: Eine pragmatische Generation im Aufbruch*, Frankfurt a.M., 2015, p. 254-261.

²⁸ Cf. F. Schweitzer, *Die Suche nach eigenem Glauben*, Gütersloh, 1996.

²⁹ Cf. Kirchenamt der EKD (Hg.), *Religiöse Orientierung gewinnen. Evangelischer Religionsunterricht als Beitrag zu einer pluralitätsfähigen Schule. Eine Denkschrift des Rates der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland*, Gütersloh, 2014

³⁰ Cf. Sekretariat der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz (Hg.), *Der Religionsunterricht vor neuen Herausforderungen*, Bonn, 2005.

³¹ Cf. R. Englert, *Der Religionsunterricht vor der Frage nach seinem Ertrag*, in: ders., *Religionspädagogische Grundfragen. Anstöße zur Urteilsbildung*, Stuttgart, 2007, p. 256-269.

³² Siehe zur Begrifflichkeit: H. Mendl, *Religionsdidaktik kompakt. Für Studium, Prüfung und Beruf*, 4. A. München, 2015, p. 149f; C. Kalloch / S. Leimgruber / U. Schwab, *Lehrbuch*

4.2. Subject: Living environment and living history, a place of religious learning

Living environment and living history are docking sites for religious learning.

In the light of a brief task: fostering identity in the middle of plurality, religious education has to offer possibilities of positioning. Pupils have the opportunity of having a close look on their own life and self-reflecting on the heart of it. Biographical learning enables pupils to look back at their life and to reflect the contexts of their own life in a critical way. Learning through other biographies fosters self-reflective learning. Because “the person in you becomes me”³³.

Dealing with life experiences and decisions of others, children and young adults, try to understand perspectives, thinking possibilities and ways of life.³⁴

Two further principles take their starting point in the plural living environmental challenges: From a gender specific point of view, the question is, if boys and girls learn fundamentally different.³⁵ A gradual decline in religious commitment arises the following question: should religious education include performative elements, since only religious experience allows us to understand religion and to make an individual positioning?³⁶

4.3. Didactics: Progressive Education, Theology for children, Constructivism

The postulate of subject orientation is a part of all didactical principles that take seriously the learning subject as an actor of its own individual learning process.

In this connection, mention can be made of all didactical educational ways, orientated towards progressive education: free-choice learning, learning circles, Montessori pedagogy. Appreciation of learning can be

der Religionsdidaktik. Für Studium und Praxis in ökumenischer Perspektive, Freiburg u.a., 2009, p. 205f; G. Hilger / S. Leimgruber / H.-G. Ziebertz, *Religionsdidaktik. Ein Leitfa-den für Studium, Ausbildung und Beruf. Neuausgabe*, München, 2010, p. 331-333;

³³ M. Buber, *Ich und Du*, in: Ders., *Die Schriften über das dialogische Prinzip*, Heidelberg, 1954, p. 7-121.

³⁴ Cf. H. Mendl, “*Identitäts-Arbeit*” als Aufgabe des RU?, *Zeitschrift für Integrative Gestalt-pädagogik und Seelsorge*, 21 (2016) 80, p. 14-17; H. Mendl, *Modelle – Vorbilder – Leitfi-guren. Lernen an außergewöhnlichen Biografien*, Stuttgart, 2015.

³⁵ Cf. *KatBl*, 140 (2015) 5: *Lernen Jungs Religion anders?*; Andreas Obenauer, *Reli für Jungs Didaktische Impuls für einen jungengerechten Religionsunterricht*, Göttingen, 2014.

³⁶ Cf. H. Mendl, *Religion erleben. Ein Arbeitsbuch für den Religionsunterricht*. 20 Arbeits-felder, 2. A., München, 2013; H. Mendl, *Religion zeigen – Religion erleben – Religion ver-standen. Ein Studienbuch zum performativen Religionsunterricht*, Stuttgart, 2016.

seen in the numerous parts of Theology for children and youth: even children are trusted to question and to change reality in a theological way.³⁷

Different models of constructivism³⁸ create a learning bracket theory to justify the concept of subject and individual reality construction among a social plurality.

4.4. Plurality: Discourse ethics, interreligious learning

Finally two methodological approaches which help to overcome plurality, not only in a textual way but also formal, will be mentioned: One aspect of good education is the ability to discuss moral and religious dilemmas.³⁹ Especially in a society, which is shaped with value pluralism, children and young adults have to choose between different competitive ethics procedures, values and standards. In the narrower field of interreligious learning⁴⁰ you will find models that enable pupils a responsible handling of religious plurality. Besides the reflective encounter and learning about other religions, the use of religious artefacts needs to be mentioned. This method derives from the Anglo-Saxon tradition. There more knowledge and experience in handling plurality is available than in Germany.⁴¹

5. Desideratum: Organisational design of religious education

There is one big challenge, religious pedagogy in Germany has to meet in the next few years: the organisation of religious education. Should it still be confessional? Is it not necessary to restructure RE because of the multi-religious situation and religious indifference in school classes?⁴²

³⁷ Exemplarisch: G. Büttner / P. Freudenberger-Lötz / C. Kalloch / M. Schreiner, *Handbuch Theologisieren mit Kindern. Einführung – Schlüsselthemen – Methoden*, Stuttgart – München, 2014; *Jahrbuch für Kindertheologie*, Stuttgart, 2002ff.

³⁸ Cf. G. Büttner u.a. (Hg.), *Jahrbuch für konstruktivistische Religionsdidaktik*, Hannover und Babenhausen, 2010ff-.

³⁹ Cf. H. Mendl, *Religionsdidaktik kompakt. Für Studium, Prüfung und Beruf*, 5. A. München, 2017, p. 116-119.

⁴⁰ Cf. C. Meyer, *Zeugnisse fremder Religionen im Unterricht. "Weltreligionen" im deutschen und englischen Religionsunterricht*, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1999; C. P. Sajak, *Kippa, Kelch, Koran. Interreligiöses Lernen mit Zeugnissen der Weltreligionen. Ein Praxisbuch*, München, 2010; H. Mendl, *Religion erleben. Ein Arbeitsbuch für den Religionsunterricht*. 20 Arbeitsfelder, 2. A., München, 2013, p. 272-280.

⁴¹ Cf. J. M. Hull, *A Gift to the Child. A New Pedagogy für Teaching Religion to Young Children*, Religious Education, 91, p. 172-188.

⁴² Translation: Elisabeth Fuchs-Auer: Thanks a lot!