





RÉGIÓ ÉS OKTATÁS III

EDUCATION AND CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE  
AT FIRST GLANCE



**RÉGIÓ ÉS OKTATÁS III**

**Education and Church in Central and Eastern  
Europe at First Glance**

**Edited by Gabriella Pusztai**



Center for Higher Education Research and Development  
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GABRIELLA PUSZTAI

## FOREWORD

At the University of Debrecen there have been researches about the role of churches in education since the second half of the '90s. During the first in-depth research in Hungary and then in the Carpathian basin it became evident that the question was worth elaboration in the countries of political transformation. Important antecedents were EU publications issued in the '90s that undertook the task to overview and compare parts of the national education systems that were run by non-governmental actors. These publications dealt with the present situation of these non-public schools in European education systems and beside the most important statistical data they also gave a comparative analysis of the legal measures concerning the legal frameworks, types of schools, conditions of school foundation, state support from public funds, relationships with state curricula, recognition of school leaving certificates and status of teachers (Eurydice 1993, Saha 1997, Eurydice 1999). They dealt, however, only with the then EU Member States and because of the special methodology, they were not really sensitive to the cultural traditions of the individual countries. Obviously they did not advert to the topic either, how religious education appears in the public education system or how public schools relate to the religious freedom of students belonging to various denominations. During a comparative analysis certain historic characteristics, e.g. religious, denominational composition of a given country, the circumstances of the evolvement of the modern state and state administration can help analyse not only the extent (Archer 1979) and support of the school system run by churches and other non-state actors but the present characteristics of religious education in state schools (eligibility, fit in the timetable, conditions of joining and dropping a course) as well (Tomka 1992).

There are a number of sharply contrasting views on the respective roles of the Church and the State in education in. According to one paradigm the Church and the State have been rivals since the very beginning, and the past two centuries have been all about the struggle between the old and the new dominating groups (Archer 1979), whereas according to another view certain social interest groups, leaning on the bureaucratic state for support, have got rid of the Churches in the first step in order to achieve civil rights (Polanyi 1944), and later they have gradually limited the role of the state as well (Molnar 1990).

The two views agree that the social role of the Churches has diminished significantly during the last century. One of the views regards the present time as the era when the power of the state is at its peak, as the final step in the two hundred-year process of 'nationalisation'. According to the other view public thinking has become pluralist, religion has become a private matter and the Churches have changed into voluntary social organizations. The state, having lost its role as a proprietor and a moral authority, functions only as a coordinator, a 'book-keeper' serving public security (Molnár 1993).

The essence of the Archerian theory, which is based on a historical statistical analysis, is the competition between different social interest groups – between the dominating ones and their challengers – for the control over the educational system. One of his two models is the Russian and French one based on a restrictive strategy; the other one is the English and Danish one exemplifying the substitutive strategy (Archer 1979). Regarding the position of denominational schools in Western European countries, the abovementioned EU publications reflect a flattening of fault-lines between the earlier historic models (Pusztai 2004). In this new casting, the state – instead of being a competitive player – appears everywhere as a coordinator. Its new role is defined by the constitutional principle of respecting human rights, namely the right to religious freedom and the right to education. These publications clearly show that at the millennium EU states understood providing and financing free and compulsory education as public tasks. In European countries the freedom of education means, on the one hand, free founding, organizing and choosing a school by citizens and the existence of private schools, and on the other hand the growing number of private schools with state support (Eurydice 2000: 100). It was a clear basic principle, too, that while creating the frames for compulsory education modern European constitutional states regard pluralism and the freedom of belief as constitutional principles, and did not attempt to have power over the ethos and organization of education. They try, however, to provide for the fulfilment of curricular requirements set by law and they consider ensuring the right of citizens to education as their responsibility. As a consequence, the situation of non-state schools and the extent of state support from public funds are not defined by the ideology conveyed by the school or the identity of the maintainer but their relationship to the state curricula. In the education system, real clear-cut confines are not to be found between the public and private sectors but between supported schools fulfilling substantial requirements and those very different and as such self-financing schools. The dominant EU conception emphasizes both providing for the parents' right to choose non-state institutions and guaranteeing the right to establish private schools.

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In the EU Member States private schools were mainly run by non-profit organizations at the millennium. Those are not interested in profit making and thus the adjective ‘private’ only refers to the fact that they are not owned by the state. In the European education systems the non-governmental sector is strongly proportioned according to its legal status. They can have two to four poles with the highest differentiation in the Italian system. In the various European states the private sector in the strict sense – the institutions of which are organized, financed and controlled exclusively by private persons or bodies – is small. Parallely, however, another sector was taking shape that is neither public nor fully private as considering both their financial sources and controlling they are closely related to the government – denominational education institutions can generally be classified into this group.

At the millennium the share of churches was varied in the private education sector of the EU countries. Their privileged position in many countries (Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Spain) can also be shown by the fact that denominational schools at founding – considering the value-preserving and community-creating roles of the churches – did not have to prove that ‘their activity is of public interest’. Laws on education of the various Member States interpreted the relationship between the education government and the churches pursuing socially useful activities as partner and contractual relationships between two independent institutions. Churches are naturally present in the public sector through religious education, and in certain countries even beyond that – in Ireland e.g. all public schools are of religious nature and thus the field for religious education is not exclusively that of denominational schools (Hull 1995). In UK data denominational schools run by non-state actors but financed from the state budget were not even called private schools and were simply count to the public sector. In Ireland a special partnership emerged between the state and private maintainers to provide for education in poorly institutionalized regions. Thus the state-supported private sector essentially falls in with the public sector (Eurydice 2000).

In Europe state-supported private education is a natural complement to the public sector and provides for denominational or ideological alternatives. According to this principle, parents can freely choose them for their children. According to issuing certificates and organizing exams private schools usually enjoy the same rights as state schools. However, the state monopoly of examination still prevails in systems that have more centralized education traditions (France, Greece, Scotland). In this case, too, the relationship with the state curricula plays a decisive role in Italy and Austria. It means that schools following the state curriculum can enjoy the right to organize examinations. As for controlling the function of private schools the

tendency is – according to the principle of subsidiarity – to strengthen local or social (school users’, school communities’) control and to weaken the influence of central (ministerial) bodies or bodies subordinated to the centre (school inspectorate). The influence of central governmental bodies is still the strongest in France but efforts for decentralization have already appeared there, too. It strikes, however, the public sphere, as well.

Parallel to enforcing students’ right to education, the streamline of European law-making on private education focuses on providing for the right to belief and religion<sup>1</sup>. States consider denominational and other private schools as institutions that work on the basis of a curriculum identical to the state one and are able to provide a service that cannot be given by the state itself. This way they offer more educational options for parents that they can choose for their children. States support private schools to pull down barriers to citizens of less wealthy background and adhering to religious or other ideological education, and thus hinder discrimination that would evidently come up anyway. So states provide for the right of freely chosen education by financing otherwise fee-paying private schools. The abovementioned facts also support the basic principle of co-financing, namely to avoid double taxation of students going to non-state institutions. On the one hand, if the state subsidy covers the running expenses of a school and the salary of teachers, fees can only be gathered to a limited extent or no fees should be paid at all. On the other hand, it also affects the right of private-school students or their parents to support.

The basic principle of public financing of private education in Europe is task-oriented, which means that financing is provided on the basis of the number of students. The amount is defined in comparison to that of the public sector. Mainly a minimum amount is set that at most places must be equal to the sum given to state schools. It is only the French system that emphasizes an upper limit. Financing personnel expenditure and material expenditure are quite often not on an equal footing. The previous is usually taken over by the state in a greater extent – or even as a whole –, which aims to support employees in the private sector on the basis of the principle of same salary for the same job.

The status of private school teachers is usually not that of a public servant but in most cases compares to it in order to support legal certainty of employees. Relevant rules cover labour-time, salaries, career system and pension contribution. The Austrian situation can be taken as an exception where private school teachers are also public servants.

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<sup>1</sup> In certain European countries it is not majority but minority confessions that run private schools (in Great Britain, Ireland, Denmark and protestant German *Länder*).

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Since these basic principles and practices are becoming general, the most important tendencies are a new interpretation of the responsibility of the state towards education, ‘acknowledgement and virtual assimilation of church-established institutions into the public sector’ (Eurydice 1993:6), wide-scale support for the rights of parents and the school users’ community. On this basis and because of the influence by the coordinating role of the state, the situation of non-state – i.e. mainly denominational – education institutions in the present Western-European education systems show more similarities than differences, however, some hints of the previous characteristics of the restrictive type can still be found e.g. in the French system. All of them are rather examples of the Archerian substitutive form that integrated into a national education system where parallel institution networks work with a support from the central budget while maintaining their individual image, embodying cultural and value pluralism and fulfilling their tasks set by law.

The analysis of the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) data gave new impetus to European researches about the role of churches in education. The PISA report showed that in three quarters of the countries private schools produce higher results than public schools (Preuschoff & Weiss 2001). Thus studying these schools bears a promise of a strategy leading out of the crisis caused by the crushing results. Several research centres are now working on explaining the efficacy of denominational schools. This undertaking can be hallmarked with the names of Róbert Péter and Rense Corten and others in EUI following Jaap Dronkers’ initiative (Dronkers & Róbert 2004, Corten & Dronkers 2006), and Olaf Köller, Claudia Standfest and Annette Scheunpflug in Germany (Standfest et al. 2005). Although PISA surveys were not conducted to provide for sector comparison, these databases opened a new era in studying European denominational education as they also make it possible to reveal substantial characteristics of the sector that are independent from country boundaries. It is problematic, however, that in the PISA database there are a lot of sensitive indicators that are not associated with variables on particular denominational maintainers and thus it is only possible to compare state supported private schools, independent private and public schools. But as the first sector is almost made of denominational schools, we can surely base our arguments about the characteristics of denominational schools on this analogy.

Nevertheless, the bird's-eye perspective given by the international output surveys remains superficial as this approach is not sensitive to particular local meanings that are not only influenced by the differences of the historic and legal frameworks but also by the interpretations of roles in the social, cultural and education system that arise from the extent of the

concerned school sectors, their heterogeneous or homogeneous denominational characteristics or their regional position. It was exactly a comparison between denominational schools in the Eastern and Western German *Länder* that drew attention to the fact that one must be very careful even if studying regions that speak the same language but look back on different (recent) history (Standfest 2005). And it is almost impossible to build as many control variables in the regression equations of the admirable statistical analyses as could reproduce this countrywide or even regional variability. Another barrier to utilize the results of these surveys is that – unlike in the majority of US surveys – there is no possibility to follow-up interviewed students and thus to provide for longitudinal observations or network approach analyses, although analyses of the social impacts of denominational education usually emphasize the importance of long-term impacts or spillover impacts that spread along networks of relationships.

Since the millennium the research centre of the University of Debrecen has been striving to reveal the role of churches in education in the Central- and Eastern-European region. The research group at the UD was already led by this aim when editing the 2005 *Educatio* special issue about the topic (Pusztai & Rébay 2005). Evidently, it would be necessary to follow the methodology applied by international organizations conducting comparisons, which means that first we have to elaborate indicators that are the most proper and characteristic to comparisons. Then with the help of these indicators we shall go on with the description of the school systems. We find it important, however, to emphasize that while studying religious education in the denominational schools of the region one should consider region-specific dimensions that are characteristic to this part of Europe. Just to mention some of them, such dimensions are e.g. the role played by denominational education in providing equal opportunities for minorities in education, differences in the traditional relationships between the state and the various churches, or territories that had been developing under different education policy models and got among common state boundaries because of the political changes of the 20th century as well as the some decades during the communist power. These characteristics must be explored by accurate case analyses that are capable of considering the respective historic and cultural traditions of the various countries, their different ethnic and religious or denominational compositions and the determination of the education systems by various education policies. In order to reveal local meanings we tried to find already in this issue researchers who have experience and special sensibility to examine the relationship between churches and education in the region. We asked them to interpret the question of the role of churches in education in the context of a particular country or region. We did not press a system of outer, strange criteria or our logical schemes on these cooperating

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researchers but learnt about the methodological means and theoretical constructions used by them to examine the topic as educational systems differ in the meaning that the people involved in educational politics give to the phenomena surrounding them. Accordingly local scientific disputes and narratives of researchers that are often out of international comparisons came to the surface. A mutual understanding of them can base a common future way of research thinking.

These studies have a common characteristic namely these authors try to interpret the role of churches in education by searching for its social function or common social utility. Most references are made to the function conveying values and helping social integration. In post communist countries it is a common denominator that the authority of state schools has sagged since they were mediator for the totalitarian ideology for decades. It is a particular paradox that societies in this region react with increased fretfulness and distrust schools in their value-conveying role, although wide social layers (e.g. the losers of market transformations, victims of family or professional harms) of societies that underwent political transformation are anomic. The consequences can be detected in the decline of civil participation, deviances in health conduct and the deformation of human relationships. It is common, too, that stability provided by ties to a church is interpreted a resources within the intractable political conflicts. As the civil society was forcefully disjointed by the totalitarian dictatorships and common trust sagged during the social transformations and as the commitment for common interests was misused for decades, it was the churches that could remain the most genuine elements of the civil sector. Local interpretations about the role of churches in education have common features: they emphasize the ambition to help social integration and to develop attitudes to mediation, tolerance and acceptance between different cultural groups in multicultural regions or to improve school chances of disadvantaged students.

The authors of this book are researchers who have been associated to the Revacern network for a longer or shorter period and have independent research experience about churches and education. Researchers and the examined questions are from the CEE region but a study from the internationally acknowledged researcher Jon Lauglo can also be read in our book who – apropos of the results of his Norwegian survey – summarizes his experiences gained in the topic during the decades. A part of the studies deals with schools maintained by churches, while the other part deals with religious education depending on which is more actual and important in the context of a given country or region. A common characteristic of the studies is to try to be honest contributions to the fine-tuning of self-interpretation in the region of political transformations and to the launching of well-targeted and harmonized international researches.

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MIKLÓS TOMKA

## **BALANCING BETWEEN RELIGION AND EDUCATION IN MODERNITY**

The all-encompassing character of civilizations includes final values and hopes, the foundation of meaningfulness of life and the outlook beyond empirical experiences, – hence religion. Every culture struggles with the tension between institutionalized certainties rooted in previous insights and the openness vis-à-vis the unexpected, the unexplored, the not yet proved imaginable. Confirmed knowledge is the basis of social action and the starting point for future ventures. Urging those ventures are the protean qualities of values, hopes, dreams – and of religion. Every civilization has its specific religion and every religion implies a civilization. This fact does not hinder individuals to shape their own position, religious or non-religious.

Religion is, of course, not simply teaching. It is not even purely a cognitive phenomenon. A fundamental error of Communism was the equation of religion with ideology and (false) consciousness. Religion is a way of life based on human – and possibly super-human – experiences. This way of life presupposes a vision of the world and human existence. It advocates human freedom beyond the constraints of nature and society. It announces a message on human solidarity and fulfilment. Religion is not restricted to a teaching; it has yet a specific understanding of reality, a distinct kind of culture.

Several religions do not emphasize the spread of their conviction. They too produce their own culture, though without feeling a necessity to communicate and transmit it systematically and institutionally over the boundaries of their community. Christianity has a different feature. It started with a missionary obligation. A central aim of the Christian Church is to carry on the hope for justice and happiness. This prophetic vocation fertilized emerging European culture giving her a specific identity. Christian religion and European culture existed in undifferentiated unity for centuries. Religion was embodied in official and popular culture. The transmission of culture was a religious task. The church organized teaching and education.

The relation of religion and education is, though, dependent on historical circumstances. A special quality of Christianity, as compared to other civilizations, is the differentiation of the sacred and the secular, and thus the opening of the way for the autonomous developments of profane domains, like sciences, politics, economy, and arts. This is what we call secularization. Religion preserved however its vocation and its competence in

worldly affairs notwithstanding that the profane world and as a part of it culture developed their own autonomy. In contrast to pre- and outer-Christian civilizations the European model is built on a two-dimensional understanding of existence. Empirical reality has its immanent rules and autonomy unquestioned from transcendental references of values, the autonomy of whose can not be weakened by insights in the mechanisms of nature and society. A key notion in European culture consists in everlasting strains and occasional conflicts between its two dimensions. This tension is, by no chance, simply a hindrance for culture. It produced competition, contest, and plurality. It changed in any case the social location of religious education and of the churches' role in education, which remained yet, up to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the only overall agents of organized education. It happened several times, that education tended to become propriety of the church and the hierarchy. Every time opposition arose and new forms of education appeared. Education in monasteries was restricted to relatively small groups of people. Reformation created a large-scale system of basic education for broad social strata. Counter-Reformation introduced high-level secondary education.

A relevant episode represents the development in 19<sup>th</sup> century and since. States and polities finally discovered their responsibilities in establishing education. General education and religious teaching became differentiated. The spirit of Enlightenment and scientific positivism provided the ideological background to the creation of an independent, civil, non-confessional educational system, the mere existence of which unavoidably implied the relativisation of Church and religion. This harmonized with political etatism of that time and later with authoritarian and totalitarian concepts. Even since attempts do not stop to instrumentalise education as a mean of a unified culture supporting the central political power of the state.

There exists, however, another chain of progression parallel to the above development. State centralism in 19<sup>th</sup> century education, its nationalistic attitude and anti-clericalism provoked social, ethnic and religious minorities, which felt discriminated against. In reaction they installed their own, group-specific institutions (Driessen-van der Slik 2001). The 19<sup>th</sup> century brought an explosive development of religious educational institutions as well. These establishments got a new character as compared with before. They became institutions of specific groups and expressions of socio-cultural pluralism as against assimilating and unifying efforts of the state. They became refugia of national minorities and often the most important instruments for the preservation and development of their national identity. They became institutional bases of cultural otherness contributing to pluralism in education (Schreiner 2000).

The historic intermezzo of Communism underscored the role of religion and the churches in preserving social identities and interests against an almighty state. Religious communities, parishes and the organization of the church, carrying on tradition and cultural memories and supporting the personal autonomy of individuals, were the only socially visible patterns clearly distinct from party-state. Individual weaknesses and sins of believers and church dignitaries did not diminish this general role. Religion and church were the social realisation of otherness within political and ideological unification. The representation of the possibility and the value of a distinct stance as well as the expression of the culture of a specific part of society had their importance in the midst of the socio-political turmoil of systemic change and since then too. Religion and churches have a high prestige in Eastern and Central European societies. As part of it, believers and non-believers similarly advocate the restitution, the ongoing existence and the public subsidising of denominational institutions.

The freedom of expression and a well functioning democratic pluralism, which offered at least theoretically the fulfilment of individual needs for everybody, diminished the sympathy for private and denominational educational institutions in western public opinion in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In last decades, however public support for church-based education increased in several countries (Magsino-Couvert 1984, Kwaasteniet 1985). The contentedness with democracy decreased since 11.09.2001 and with the growing demand of immigrant groups for the acknowledgement of their national cultures. Minority groups quite often do not feel fully accepted public schools oriented to the culture of the majority. Growing awareness of social, national, ethnic, and religious differentiatedness and the acceptance of multi-cultural society encourage considerations concerning the pluralisation of the educational system. Beyond that, the recent history of Eastern and Central Europe and its consequences for the present heighten the relevance of a further factor. In this region public education is not free from the shadows of Communism. Older teacher received education in anti-religious Marxist ideology. Old schoolbooks and readers got only partly replaced by non-biased ones. The memories of the “double-education”, of the divergence of values as striven for in the family and as taught in the school burdens heavily on the social image of public education. The state and the educational system were up to now unable to regain public trust and the aura of cultural neutrality. The firm rejection of any remnant of the past in several social groups is a bulky argument for private and denominational establishments.

National and comparative studies broadly substantiate the public support for the reestablishment of denominational institutions (Tomka-Zulehner 1999). From the alternative, whether the number of emerging

denominational schools is already to high or not yet enough high the majority opts for the answer “still not enough high”. This majority shrunk a little between 1997 and 2007 but remained impressive enough (*Table 1.*).

*Table 1. The percentage of people who would prefer more denominational schools in their country then the just existing number, in 14 countries, in 1997 and in 2007.*

<b>Country</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	62,2	81,7
<b>Czech Republik</b>	82,6	68,8
<b>Germany - East</b>	71,5	65,5
<b>Hungary</b>	72,5	68,0
<b>Lithuania</b>	86,6	79,1
<b>Poland</b>	81,5	75,1
<b>Romania</b>	96,1	93,3
<b>Slovakia</b>	65,9	54,5
<b>Slovenia</b>	73,3	50,7
<b>Ukraine</b>	94,4	89,1
<b>Belarus</b>	--	85,6
<b>Bulgaria</b>	--	92,6
<b>Moldavia</b>	--	88,3
<b>Serbia</b>	--	90,1
<b>Germany-West</b>	--	70,6

*(Source: Aufbruch-study – 2007 data not yet published)*

The general affirmation of and the support for denominational schools is in most countries slightly stronger among people with only elementary education but independent from the age and the number of children of respondents. In some countries non-religious (in Poland, Slovakia

and Slovenia), or strongly non-religious people (in Hungary) find the number of denominational schools rather too high than too low.

Sometimes it may seem that the study of denominational education is a peculiar topic. As a matter of fact, the amount of scientific work done in this field (Ohlemacher 1991, Mikluščák 2001, Pusztai-Rébay 2005) does not correlate with the broad public interest. Research on democratic development is encouragingly augmenting in post-communist countries as sociology of religion does. It is a high time for educational science to detect the relevance of the meeting-point of both study directions namely the issue of denominational education. Honour is due to the Center for Higher Education Research and Development (CHERD) of the University of Debrecen and its scientific team for recognising this necessity.

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## **DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS**



JON LAUGLO

## **DO PRIVATE SCHOOLS CAUSE SOCIAL SEGREGATION? THE CASE OF BASIC EDUCATION IN NORWAY**

Should government encourage or discourage private education? This is a contentious issue in the politics of education in Norway, as in many other countries. Advocates of private education say that such schools extend the choice families have, that private schools are of better educational quality, and that by providing competition for public schools, they stimulate the latter to improve. Opponents claim that private schools detract from the goal of a common school for all children and youth regardless of family background, and that private education generally exacerbates social segregation in the education system between the “advantaged” and the “disadvantaged”.

This study addresses the question whether private schools disproportionately recruit students from families that are economically better off and in which the parents are highly educated. Are they in fact the preservers of children of the privileged? If private schools give an advantage, do children of immigrants get their fair share of access? Do private schools serve as a conduit of flight from public schools in urban neighbourhoods with high concentration of immigrant families and high rates of socio-economic deprivation?

The analysis is based on a very large database prepared by Statistics Norway, containing data on more than 619 000 children who were in primary and lower secondary education in 2003-2004. These stages enrol 6-16-year olds and comprise the age range of compulsory education in Norway. The file is based on data from national administrative registers.

It will be shown that, on the whole, private schools that are faith-based stand out by a relatively egalitarian recruitment as to students' socio-economic family background, and that there are generally few signs of socio-economic bias in the recruitment of pupils to government-supported private schools in Norway.

### **Variation in characteristics of private schools**

Countries differ greatly in the share which private schools have of total enrolments, and in the extent to which the government encourages such schooling with subsidies. Relevant figures are shown for 24 countries participating in the OECD's 2003 PISA study of 15-year-olds (Haahrs

2007:144). The average across these 24 OECD countries was 13 % in (government funded) private schools. At the “low end” among these countries are Iceland and Norway. At the “high end” is the Netherlands with  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the enrolment in private institutions, a country whose educational history also shows that compromises reached in the politics of religious pluralism can lead to private schooling on a mass scale.

Internationally, there is no clear tendency for private schools to outperform public ones, *once account is taken to the students' family background*. Analysis of the PISA data in Mathematics showed that in most countries the difference was not statistically significant after such controls. In Luxembourg and Japan public schools outperform private ones. In Slovakia, Ireland, Spain and Germany the relationship is reversed. Furthermore, Haahr (2005:145-146) found that these latter “positive” effects of private education within certain countries disappeared entirely if one additionally controls at the school level for the effect of the socio-economic profile of the school's student intake. Fuchs & Wössmann (2004) working with the *combined* samples from countries in the 2000 PISA study, had previously detected an overall tendency for “government funded” private schools to do better than public ones. In my view, however, private education is so strongly characterised by institutional variation that one needs to study how performance in different types of private schools, compares with performance in public schools, in particular countries. This requires very large data sets.

Internationally, there is much variation in how far private schools add to the reproduction of socio-economic inequality from generation to generation. When private schools serve as conduits to adult elite positions, socially biased recruitment to such schools pose equity problems. The historical role of British elite private schools in easing access to top universities is a well known example. However, there is no international iron law which says that “private” always spells privilege and exacerbates social segregation in schooling. There is much variation among and within countries.

When public secondary education has been in short supply, privately established schools have sometimes served as a “second choice”. If no public school is locally available, a private school can be established by initiators who even hope to induce the government to take over after the school has been up and running for some years. Under such circumstances one can find instances where the poor end up paying more for their children's schooling than the well-to-do. Usually private schools cost more for families than public schools do. However, this depends on the extent of government financing of private schools. Even when there is no government finance of private schools, there is no iron law which says that private schools will

*always* be more costly for the poor, since public schools in some countries also charge tuition fees. In the slums of Nairobi in the late 1990s, the fees charged by nonformal private schools were lower than in (the much less accessible) state primary schools (Lauglo 2004).

The history of education in economically advanced countries also shows examples of private schools meeting needs in places which are underserved by the state. In Norway, most public secondary schools existing in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, outside of the bigger towns, had started as private schools, sometimes as private-public partnerships.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the private initiative was associated with particular cultural or religious values, but part of the attraction of private schools was simply that they provided the one secondary school that was locally available.

There are also private schools which have been sought as a “second chance” by families whose children have failed to do well in public schools. And there are private schools established to serve children with special needs. The first schools for disabled people were in many countries initiated by religious and other private charitable foundations. In Norway, a distinctly small sector of private “special schools” still exists.

In many countries, each public school at primary and lower secondary education have fixed local catchment area. If parents think well of their local public school, the alternative of private schooling will have little attraction. But if they perceive the public school to be educationally or socially undesirable, then even a family with quite modest income may sacrifice time and money to enable their children to receive private education if such education is within reach. If government subsidies then drive down the fees that private schools charge, private education need not be disproportionately used by the well-off.

Perceived quality relativities will depend on what is important to families. Some private schools will be attractive to families because of their academic reputation. Other private schools are valued because they transmit beliefs, values and norms which families belonging to certain cultural or religious groups want their children to acquire. Faith-based private schools are often attractive on these grounds, and not necessarily because these schools are superior escalators to high social status.

To a religious or cultural community that constitutes a section of the larger society, running its own school can also have a wider function than merely the socialization of children. Schools can be looked at as a mean of perpetuating their organized community life (e.g., recruiting members,

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<sup>2</sup> John Craig of the University of Chicago is conducting research into the evolution of these schools.

volunteers, and officials/clergy). A well known example is the Roman Catholic Church which has developed a large scale system of education in many countries, with or without government subsidies. Minority languages which have no standing in government schools, have also sometimes been promoted by private schools.

In general, private education is characterized by diversity. In some cases, private schools are fully financed by government funds. In other cases they receive no such funds. Some schools cater very disproportionately to families that are well endowed with economic and cultural capital. Others serve children from quite ordinary socio-economic backgrounds. Some cater to children and youths of high “academic potential”. Others serve students with special needs, or they simply function as a second chance for students who have failed to do well in a public school. Some private schools exist mainly to socialize children and the youth into formally organized cultural communities to which their families belong (based on faith, language, ethnicity). Others exist without any such anchorage in an outside community of adults. In the analysis of the performance of social recruitment of private education, this institutional diversity is an argument for disaggregating such schools into different types.

## **Social segregation**

It is hard to justify government financing of private schools if such schools clearly perpetuate socio-economic advantage from one generation to the next. The extent of bias in recruitment to private schools in terms of socio-economic family background is therefore of special interest to policy makers concerned with social justice.

As just noted, however, private education can also reinforce cultural particularism which does not necessarily correlate strongly with a hierarchy of socio-economic statuses, e.g., certain religious denominations, or groups based on language and other bases of ethnic identity. The views that observers have of private schools serving such sectional cultural communities, depend on ideology.

On the one hand, there is the statist and nation-building argument that the role public schools is to serve as meeting grounds for young people of diverse cultural backgrounds, and that private schools serving particular cultural segments or religious “flocks”, can harm the achievement of a sense of common citizenship. Further, under any regime which has an agenda of far reaching social transformation, public schools will be seen as tools for shaping future generations on the regime’s own transformative terms. Schools are then agents of the state, not extensions of the family. More traditional

nation building concerns can also fuel scepticism of “sectional” private education, not only in an early period of nation building but also if a country has a substantial influx of immigrants who might wish to establish their own schools to preserve their own identity. Should such schools not only tolerated and regulated by government but even actively supported by financial measures?

The broad political current which historically has been most hospitable to private schools, regardless of their particular cultural orientation, is Liberalism. A liberal perspective values diversity, competition, and the right of parents to educate their children in keeping with their own faith and culture. The state is not “society”. In that perspective, society consists of individual citizens and their families, the associations which they voluntarily join, and the local government units that are “near” the citizens. The state has a limited and mainly facilitating role. The school in that view is primarily an extension of the family and of the local and civil society, not of the state. “Choice” is favoured because it derives from the main value of “freedom from restraint”. Schools run by voluntary associations are encouraged, and if “public”, they should be run by bodies as close as possible to the citizens and families directly concerned.

Apart from ideologically derived positions, judgements about such private schools will be conditioned by whether social cohesion is perceived to be at serious risk or not. It may be quite unproblematic to give wide play to diversity in private education, in a relatively homogeneous society with a well established legitimacy. However, in a sharply divided society, with different cultural communities pitted against each other, views on “sectional” private education may depend on how far one is committed to the legitimacy of the state.

Acceptance of segregated private systems serving different communities may also rest upon judgements about politically necessary compromises, rather than on “ideology”.

The concept of “segregation” generally carries negative connotations. “Community”, on the other hand, has positive connotations. Yet the two seem to be linked in Coleman’s (1988) theorizing about private schools and social capital for education. He stressed the value of socially *closed* communities for effective socialization of the young, and he postulated (but never tested it!) that children in religiously based private schools benefit academically from family, church and school acting in concert with each other to keep the young on the right track during their transition to adult roles. It would seem that Coleman’s theory implies that rather than being a problem, associated with private schools, their identification with a socially segregated

“community” is a precondition for their success in terms of academic achievement.

Norway, in the past, has often been perceived as one of the more culturally homogeneous countries in Europe, whose “cohesion” definitely is not at risk. One aspect of cultural particularism that has received some attention in Norway is immigrants. Questions of complex judgement can be asked about private education and immigrant children. Are “integration imperatives” so important that there is any reason to be especially concerned that children of immigrants attend public schools? Should private Muslim schools dealing with immigrant groups as a matter of course be eligible for State support on line with Christian schools?

In the present study we cannot address empirically the many interesting issues connected with private schools and pros and cons of “cultural segregation”. Socio-economic segregation is clearly but a small part of the larger theme of private education and social segregation. We shall however address two much more limited questions: Do immigrant children have their fair share of access to private schools? Do private schools serve as a means of “flight” from their local public school for a significant portion of families living in neighbourhoods with a very high portion of immigrant children?

### **International research on the effects of “choice”**

Arguments about the pros and cons of support for private schooling are part of the larger debate about the consequences of encouraging widened choice of schools for families and students. Some national systems have a longer record of “school choice” policies, either choice among public schools, or by additional measures that establish a “level playing field” in terms of capitation grants from government to both public and private provisions. In either case, schools receive a capitation grant which de-facto is tantamount to a voucher system whereby resources “follow the student”. Other countries have introduced support to private schools on a more limited scale. What are the “social segregation effects” of such policies?

#### *Effects of school choice in New Zealand and Chile*

Since 1989 New Zealand has given extensive self government to schools through a charter extended by the state to each school. Schools are given a capitation grant, with extra resources for schools depending on their proportion of students from low SES backgrounds, and the proportion ethnic minorities. Schools need state approval for their admissions criteria. Research on the New Zealand model has pointed to declining enrolments and

middle class flight from schools in socio-economically deprived inner city areas (Fiske & Ladd 2000, Lauder et al. 1999).

Chile is another example of introducing “choice of school” combined with financing vouchers. Private schools were, in this case, also allowed to compete “in a level playing field” with public schools for students. Change in this direction started in the 1980s and led to declining rolls in public schools and “flight” of middle class families to private schools. Trends in learning outcomes showed no improvement during this period of increased competition among schools (Schiefelbein & Schiefelbein 2001, Carnoy 1988). Thus, the radical “choice” policies tried out in these countries have a cost in terms of increased social segregation with adverse effects for the schools from which “flight” has occurred.

*Exit from districts with schools of low reputation – an example from France*

In countries with “no choice of school”, families can move to districts with local schools that they think are better. As a result, fixed catchment areas for public schools and lack of access to private education, will possibly reinforce residential socio-economic segregation – or so it is argued in advocacy for “choice”: parents who care strongly about their children’s education, migrate from neighbourhoods with public schools of low reputation to areas with better schools, thus possibly depriving socially deprived areas of especially valuable community members. On the other hand, under conditions of “choice of school” or if affordable private schools were within reach, such parents might stay in their original neighbourhood. So goes a well known chain of reasoning that is invoked in support of “choice”.

I know no studies that have sought to measure the extent and consequences of such effects.

But there is qualitative research on how families seek to circumvent fixed catchment boundaries. France has strict rules about catchment areas for public schools. A case study by Broccolichi and van Zanten (2000) on schooling in the *banlieus* (suburbs) in metropolitan Paris with high concentration of North African immigrant families has described how some families seek admission to private schools for their children as an “escape” from public schools, and how others find ways of bending the rules concerning registration of residence, in order to get their children into schools outside the ghetto. One would think that the greater the deprivation and the poorer the public safety is, and the more run down and educationally depressing the local schools are, the stronger will be the urge to “exit if you can” by one means or another, leaving behind those who are “trapped” for lack of resources.

*Effects of school choice in England*

Some studies of urban localities in the English part of the United Kingdom conclude that stronger social segregation has resulted from policy change that enabled families to seek admission to public secondary schools regardless of residence (Ball 2003, Gerwitz *et al.* 1995). However, a long-term national trend of increased social segregation in education during these years has been disputed. Gorard *et al.* (2002) analyzed data from all secondary schools in England regarding the first ten years (1989-1999) after the abolition of catchment areas, and found only one single school with "falling rolls and increased social disadvantage" during this period. They argue that segregation trends are more strongly shaped by change in demography and in the residential distribution of different social classes than by policies on choice of school. (See also Gorard *et al.* 2003). More recently, Gorard and his colleagues (Taylor *et al.* 2005) have shown that local education authorities in which schools themselves are allowed to set their admissions regulations, show somewhat stronger social segregation among schools, than other authorities.

*The United States*

As in the United Kingdom, effects of increased "choice" are a research theme of contested findings and interpretations in the United States. In the United States, the issue of "choice" is strongly connected with the matter of whether public funds should be used for private education. Is support for private religious education compatible with the Constitutional separation between state and church? Opposition to public finance for private schools is also based on the fear that public schools in low income areas with high concentration of racial/ethnic minorities will be further weakened by the siphoning off of students to private education.

On the "positive" side, it is well established that Roman Catholic schools have given families in working class areas a better chance of upward social mobility for their children. Especially ethnic minority students from low-income families achieve gains in learning outcomes from attending Catholic rather than public high schools (Coleman and Hoffer 1987).

On the "negative" side, multivariate analysis of national data sets confirms that private education on the whole is socio-economically exclusive in a matter which reinforces social segregation: Afro-Americans and Hispanics are greatly underrepresented, use of private education is more frequent among higher income groups, and there is a certain flight to private education among whites and Hispanics from public schools with a high proportion of Afro-American students (Fairlie & Resch 2002).

In states which provide some financial support to "charter schools", the socio-economic profile of student intake tends to reflect the neighbourhood where such schools are located. It is also influenced by the conditions of public support to such schools, which in turn affects the level of fees that charter schools are allowed to charge. Each school is run by its own board and has a charter issued by the state, according to which it receives support for a specified and renewable period, usually 5 years. On the average, such schools receive state funds equivalent to about 45% of estimated cost per student in public schools. The financing formulas are (at least in some states) skewed in favour of the lower and less costly stages of schooling, thus covering with subsidies less of the cost incurred at the higher levels. Charter schools must generally cover a considerable portion of their operating costs by means of tuition fees and voluntary contributions from their students' families. Tight finance induces them also to recruit less costly teachers than what public schools employ.

In many cases, charter schools have been established in localities where there is strong dissatisfaction with public schools, often in economically depressed inner city areas with a large proportion of minorities. Hoxby (2003: 57-58) used national data from 2000-01 to compare recruitment to charter schools with recruitment to their nearest public school. She concludes that charter schools "are disproportionately drawing students who have suffered from discrimination, not undue preference, in the public schools" (Afro-Americans, Hispanics, the poor). There is, however, considerable variation in this pattern.

Using data from the state of Michigan (which has a high frequency of charter schools), Miron & Nelson (2002:122) found signs of social segregation by race: "The data suggest a process by which white students are migrating to charter schools, leaving an ever higher concentration of black students in district schools". They also show how commercial Education Management Organizations (EMOs) act as umbrella organizations and initiating agents, for a growing proportion of charter schools, nationally as well as in Michigan. They suggest that involving EMOs can tempt schools to give preference to applicants thought to be good prospects for positive contributions to the school's performance indicators. They say that EMO schools are inclined to steer away applicants who give an impression of weak academic potential and that "problem students" are encouraged to leave. They note that: "students returning to the local school district [from charter schools] are often in need of special education services or have records of disciplinary problems" (Miron & Nelson 2002:122). Asher and Wamba (2005) have reviewed evidence on such "steering away" of applicants who could become "costly" or especially taxing on the school's human resources. They have the impression that such practices are widespread.

On the whole, social segregation tendencies in charter schools do not seem to be primarily connected with the staple indicators of “home background” (social class, parental education, income, and ethnicity). Admission is simply discouraged if admission officers think the applicant’s educability is so weak that unusually great resources would be required – or if the school does not possess the needed expertise.

According to Scott (2005), advocates and opponents of “choice” both tend to gravitate towards unjustifiably categoric generalizations about effects of school choice. She argues that there is a need to recognize that effects of choice depend on the context. One would think that the level of school fees will matter for who will apply; and fees are to a large extent a function of the portion of costs covered by public subsidies to charter schools. Other factors likely to make a difference are constraints which the regulatory mechanism imposes on the school’s admissions regime, the characteristics of the target group of students, and the capacity of the monitoring agency to hold schools “to their charter”.

### *Sweden*

Sweden has, since the early 1990s, gradually widened the “choice” of school partly by subsidizing private schools and also by introducing liberalized choice among public schools. At basic school level (ages 6-16) enrolment in private education has risen to 7% or more. Arnman *et al.* (2005) reviewed relevant studies over the years on the broader issues of education and social integration in Swedish schools and elicited views by some “key informants” regarding consequences of widened choice among schools (public schools as well as private ones). They found that “choice” legitimates social segregation in education and is thus contrary to the egalitarian tradition in Swedish education.

An earlier review by the National Swedish Education Agency (Skolverket 2003:12) refers to studies on samples of parents and school administrators and concludes that it is primarily the well educated parents in the larger urban areas who are interested in widened choice of school (both access to private schools and choice from among public schools). There is also a research base showing that parents with children in private schools disproportionately often have higher education. The report also refers to some case studies of individual schools which fit the thesis that choice of school has led to increased segregation among schools with regard to students’ ethnicity and level of performance. A recent update from the National Education Agency (Skolverket 2005) shows that in upper secondary education, there is more “value added” in terms of grade point average in private schools than in municipal ones, as far as the general education tracks

are concerned, when account is taken of the grade point average which students received in lower secondary education, but that this does not apply to vocational tracks.

### *Comment*

An internationally consistent social bias in recruitment to private schools is the tendency for children with university educated parents to be overrepresented in such schools. One would expect a similar finding in Norway. Otherwise the literature suggests the vulnerability of public schools in inner city socially deprived areas, to “middle class flight” when policies widen families’ choice of school. The experience of New Zealand indicates that once a process of flight has started, it becomes difficult to turn such schools around simply by mobilizing extra funding for them (Fiske and Ladd 2000).

## **The Norwegian context**

Norway has a tradition of public schools run by municipal local government, under strong state regulation. In nearly all municipalities, schools at the basic education stage (ages 6-16) serve geographically defined catchment areas. Since 1971<sup>3</sup> there has been a legislative basis for subsidizing private schools so generously that one could impose upon these schools a distinctly “low” ceiling for the tuition fees they are allowed to charge. The other side of policy has been very tight restrictions on the kind of private schools that would be eligible for subsidy. According to the 1985 Private Schools Act, to be eligible, a school would either need to make its case for subsidy on its special orientation as to “view of life” (in effect religion), or it would need to practice an “alternative pedagogy” as compared to public schools.<sup>4</sup> There were more standard requirements as well, which were also applied to public schools, as to staff, curriculum, facilities, and admission of students.

Religious minorities play a major role within the distinctly small Norwegian sector of private schools (cf. table 1). Various denominations and lay groups which are not part of the Norwegian Lutheran state church run more than 50 faith-based school units at basic education level. Lay organizations affiliated with Lutheran state church have not sought to establish their own schools at basic level, but have rather concentrated at

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<sup>3</sup> Previously support was given to private schools by Parliament on an ad hoc basis.

<sup>4</sup> At the post-compulsory upper secondary level (post age 16), there was the additional proviso that private schools could qualify if they offer vocational courses not covered by public provisions in the area concerned.

upper secondary level (ages 6-19). The few schools which these organizations run in basic education are in effect lower-secondary departments of schools which are mainly post-compulsory.

While support for faith-based private education has been identified with parties on the centre-right of Norwegian politics, support for private schools projecting child-centred forms of “alternative” pedagogy has been identified with middle class “progressives” on the left wing of Norwegian politics. Support for “alternative pedagogy” has then been justified as a means of trying out and institutionalizing within private education, methods which would be of value for workings of the public school system. The main types of education which are recognized by the Ministry of Education as such legitimate “alternatives” are Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner’s pedagogy (in some countries known also as Waldorf schools).

The workings of the 1985 Act on private schools resulted in two variants of the Montessori school, larger schools in urban areas serving mainly families with a clear preference for this pedagogy (often well educated middle class families), and on the other hand distinctly small schools in rural communities. The latter serve families for whom the Montessori-affiliation originally was sought in order to get government funding so that their local school could be kept going as a private school when the municipality wanted to close it.

To ensure that private schools would not become a preserve of well to do families, the schools were given a capitation grant equivalent to 85% of the estimated per pupil expenditure in public schools. Account was taken of higher unit costs in smaller schools and in the higher stages of schooling. Schools were subjected to fee capping: they were allowed to charge fees corresponding to at most the “remaining” 15% of estimated unit cost in the public schools. For a primary school (grades 1 through 7) with 40-200 pupils, the ceiling for “allowed fees” in 2003-2004 would have been about NOK7000 annually (about € 875). This amounts to only 1.5% of the estimated median family income, after tax, for parents with children in basic education in Norway during 2003-2004 – this means a very low cost to the great majority of families with children of school age.

In 2003 and 2004, legislation by a centre-right government widened eligibility for government subsidies dramatically. Any private school would be eligible regardless of any special philosophical or religious orientation, or any particular style of pedagogy, so long as it met the standard requirements which public schools have as to curriculum, facilities, staffing, admission, etc. The government also reinforced the duty of local governments to make the same level of extra resources available for private schools as for public ones, in the case of pupils diagnosed with special educational needs (e.g., immigrant

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children in need of special tutoring in Norwegian). However, a centre-left government took power in 2005 and reversed the changes of its predecessor, and more or less reinstated the regulatory framework which had been in force before 2003. Before this reversal, base-line studies were commenced on two main policy concerns: effects of private schools on learning outcomes, and effects on social segregation. The present report shows the main findings on social segregation with regard to basic education. These findings have been published in greater detail in Norwegian (Helland and Lauglo 2005, 2007). A similar analysis with broadly similar findings has also been carried out of upper secondary education (ages 16-19) (Helland & Lauglo 2006).

## Data and Methods

Through Statistics Norway, a very large data set from national administrative registers was made available, with due safeguards of privacy of information. It included all children in Norway who during the school year 2003-2004, were of basic-school age and provided information about *inter alia*, gender, private school registration by type of school (if applicable), place of residence as to public school catchment area, place of birth, parents' income, education, occupation, place of birth and family status.

The complete file of 619,412 observations embraces the total population of 'basic-school aged' children in Norway during 2003-2004. Basic school in Norway includes the full range of compulsory education, both primary and lower secondary schooling. Information was supplied for well above 95% of this population, on such traits as parental income, education, family status, and immigrant background. The rate of missing information was decidedly higher regarding parental occupation and labour market status.<sup>5</sup> On the whole, the research team at the Institute NIFU STEP carrying out the analysis of social segregation tendencies had the good fortune of working on an unusually large and complete national data.

This paper will use simple cross tabulations. However, the findings to be shown also found consistent support in multivariate logistic regression (Helland & Lauglo 2005, 2006, 2007).

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<sup>5</sup> Information was missing for 41% about their mothers' occupation (32% of their fathers'). For 23% of the students information was missing about the duration of their mother's workweek (same for students' fathers was 16%).

## Types of private schools in basic education

*Table 1* shows number of schools and enrolment for the types of government-supported private schools which were operational in Norway at the level of basic education (ages 6 to 16) during the 2003-04 school year.

*Table 1. Private school enrolments in Norwegian basic education 2003-2004*

School type	Number of schools	Enrolment	% of private school enrolment	% of enrolment in all schools (public and private)
Muslim school	1	112	0.9	0.0
Protestant schools, outside state church	53	4,171	35.2	0.7
Catholic schools	3	976	8.2	0.2
Schools "within" the (Lutheran) state church"	4	892	7.5	0.1
Rudolf Steiner schools	29	4,385	37.0	0.7
Maria Montessori schools	21	1,138	9.6	0.2
International schools	2	162	1.4	0.0
<b>All private schools</b>	113	11,836	100.-	1.9 %

All in all, there were 113 government-supported private schools with a total enrolment of nearly 12,000 children. These constituted only 1.9% of all enrolments nationally in basic education. Thus, we are looking at a national system with a distinctly low rate of enrolment in private basic education.

The two "large" categories of schools are Steiner-schools and schools run by various Protestant denominations outside the Lutheran state church. Together they account for more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the enrolments.

There were also 21 schools run according to Montessori pedagogy (and which typically cover only the primary stage). Thirteen of these were located in small rural communities. When these communities were confronted with the prospect of losing their school due to municipal school-

consolidation, going private and shifting to Montessori pedagogy enabled them to retain a local school, since they became eligible for state funding under the Private Schools Act.<sup>6</sup>

At the basic level of education there are few private schools run by voluntary organizations affiliated with the Lutheran state church, because these organizations, as a matter of policy, have decided not to compete with public schools at the basic education stage. In fact, 3 of the 4 schools included here are lower-secondary departments of larger school units which are mainly upper secondary institutions. For religious schools run by organizations **outside** the Lutheran state church, one would expect to find close relations between the school and a local congregation of the minority denomination concerned.

### **Selection biases in recruitment to private schools?**

Table 2 shows the proportion of children with different characteristics (most pertain to their “home background”) who are enrolled in different types of school.<sup>7</sup>

The table shows throughout greater variation *among* different types of private schools than *between* private schools in the aggregate and public schools—with respect to indicators of home background.

The table starts by showing statistics on the categories that constitute opposite extremes on the rural–urban dimension, as to municipalities in which pupils live (the middle range of municipalities are omitted). Pupils in private schools are considerably overrepresented in the larger urban areas, and underrepresented in the rural peripheries – as compared to pupils in public schools. But there is an exception: one sees a strong representation of Montessori schools in the thinly settled remote municipalities. As mentioned, the Montessori-affiliation serves to keep the local school alive, for parents who have striven to prevent the closure of their local school. Otherwise, the only other schools that have a reach into the rural periphery are run by Protestant groups that are unaffiliated with the state church.

Are private schools the preserve of the rich? The income measure used is deliberately chosen so as to bring out the market strength of the parents, rather than merely their consumption capacity. It picks up income

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<sup>6</sup> In one case, the reason for the transfer to Montessori was community opposition to their school being included under a curriculum variant for schools in the core areas of sami culture and population.

<sup>7</sup> Statistics on gender are reported since there was hardly any difference among the types of school shown here, as gender ratio. Schools are mixed-sex throughout.

from employment or business prior to taxes, and it excludes welfare transfers. Still, there is no overall tendency for students in private schools to come from economically better-off families, the trend is in the opposite direction, especially with regard to mothers' income. The two largest categories of pupils, those at Steiner schools and those at "protestant schools outside the state church", have parental earnings which are lower than those of pupils in public schools. In particular, the income of the mothers of pupils in these faith-based schools is far below the national average, probably because many choose the traditional role of foregoing gainful employment in order to devote more time to their children's upbringing.

Two groups stand out by having distinctly richer fathers: students in the lowers secondary departments of the schools run by voluntary associations which *are* affiliated with the state church, and students at the two international schools. In the latter case, however, the mothers' income is decidedly below the national average, suggesting a higher proportion of housewives among the international families which may be especially attracted to these two international basic education schools that secured government support on the grounds of pedagogic innovativeness.

Parental education is a quite different matter. For all but one type of school, there is a clear tendency for students at private schools to have better educated parents. The one exception is again interesting: the fairly large group of students at schools run by protestant denominations outside the Lutheran state church, deviate very little from students at public schools, probably reflecting the "popular" (low church) character of independent protestant revivalism in Norway, as in some other countries.

The table shows sharp differences among types of school as to the family circumstances in the pupils' home. For this generation of children, 6/10 grow up in what may be described as "traditional" families: their parents are living together and married to each other. There is much variation. Among faith-based protestant schools, 8/10 of the pupils have such families – as contrasted to 5/10 of the students at Rudolf Steiner schools. Interestingly, at the three Catholic schools, the percentage of pupils in "traditional" families is much the same as in the general population of students – in spite of the strict policy of the Roman Catholic Church on cohabitation and divorce. On the other hand, the findings would fit Catholic schools recruiting students far beyond their own religious flock and frequently from secularized backgrounds.

Table 2. Home background of pupils in basic education, by type of school. School year 2003-2004

Indicators of pupils' Background	Type of private school						All private schools	Public schools	All Schools
	Protestant, outside the state church	Roman Catholic	Lay org. within Lutheran state church	Steiner	Montessori	International			
Location % in "remote" municipalities	4.7	0.2	0.8	2.2	21.8	0.0	4.6	17.7	17.0
% in larger urban area	55.0	88.5	86.7	68.5	50.0	4.9	64.3	47.1	47.4
Median income before taxes & transfers 2002 (NOK '000s) <b>Father</b>	322	340	421	324	341	406	331	336	336
<b>Mother</b>	114	217	226	180	195	111	159	191	190
Parents have higher education? % of fathers	33.4	56.9	56.5	54.3	48.9	48.7	46.3	27.9	28.3
<b>% of mothers</b>	34.2	60.4	59.8	60.1	56.5	53.2	50.2	31.8	32.2
Pupil's parents have basic education or less? % of fathers	7.7	5.5	3.9	5.7	7.3	5.2	6.5	10.2	10.1
<b>% of mothers</b>	7.7	5.6	2.9	4.1	4.2	7.2	5.6	8.9	8.8
% with parents married & living together	82.1	62.1	81.5	50.1	64.5	64.6	66.4	60.9	61.0
% with both parents Immigrants	7.1	31.3	2.2	4.5	3.2	11.7	8.2	6.9	6.9
% with both parents from non-western country	5.6	23.3	1.8	1.1	1.1	5.9	5.4	5.0	5.0
<b>Number of cases</b>	4171	976	892	4389	1138	162	11,836	607,576	619,412

All variables shown had less than 5% missing information.

Do private schools receive their “fair share” of children of immigrant families? The two bottom rows of percentage series in the table show that immigrant children in general, and within this larger group also children of immigrants from non-Western countries, are generally overrepresented in private schools in Norway. But there is much variation regarding the type of private school. Immigrant families very rarely choose schools that are supported by the government on account of progressive alternative pedagogy – Rudolf Steiner schools, and Montessori schools. Rather, their overall strong representation is due to extremely strong presence in the three Catholic schools, and to strong showing in the large group of schools run by other religious denominations outside the state church.

Analysis on 2150 children living in school catchment areas in which private education absorb at least 10% of locally resident children, did not alter the overall impression of surprisingly “egalitarian recruitment” conveyed by table 2 (Helland and Lauglo 2005:44-45). Overall, table 2 shows that private schools in Norway are hardly any preserve of socio-economic privilege. There is no income effect, but then the fees are, by government intervention, kept at a very affordable level. The strongest pointer towards socially exclusive selection is the effect of parental education – especially parents having higher education. However, this effect is negligible in the relatively large number of schools run by protestant congregations outside the state church.

### **“Flight” to private schools from neighbourhoods with low income and high immigrant presence?**

Do private schools in Norway too, facilitate “flight” of better-off and better educated families from those urban schools in which very large proportions of children come from immigrant homes?

There are two urban areas in Norway with strikingly strong representation in the school catchment areas of children whose parents are immigrants from non-Western countries – the east end of Oslo and certain neighbourhoods in the closeby town of Drammen. Overall, the percent of school-age children with such a background was 24% in Oslo and 17% in Drammen in 2003-04 (as compared to a national average of 5%. Cfr. table 2). A great many nationality groups are represented among the immigrants, the largest one is from Pakistan.

About 4/9 of children of school age in Oslo live in school catchment areas in which 1/3 or more of the children’s parents have a non-Western immigrant background. Thus, neighbourhoods with a high immigrant presence are now very common, at the same time the city has become ethnically and socio-economically stratified. Both in Oslo and in Drammen,

such neighbourhoods are characterised by sharply lower income levels and lower education levels than what is the case for those residential areas which are strongly dominated by the Norwegian-borns (Helland & Lauglo 2005:52). Does such ethnic and socio-economic stratification lead to flight from local public schools over to private schools – similarly to what Fiske and Ladd (2000) found in certain urban low income areas with a strong minority presence in New Zealand, after the country abolished school catchment areas?

The indicators in table 3 are similar to those in table 2. Because of fewer observations, a smaller number of categories is appropriate for denoting types of private schools. The schools are grouped according to the two rationales recognized by the Private Schools Act of 1985: “faith-based” or “alternative pedagogy”. The former will include all kinds of religious schools, and the latter combines mainly Steiner and Montessori schools. Altogether 744 students in these urban locations attended 22 private schools. Of these, 604 students were in 10 faith-based schools, and 40 students were in 12 “alternative pedagogy” schools. Though the private schools concerned, obviously, were “accessible” to students from these neighbourhoods, they were not necessarily located *in* these neighbourhoods.

### *Education effects*

In these “high immigrant” and low-income locations, we again find effects of parental education. The percent of parents having higher education is greater in private schools than in public schools: a difference of 19 percentage points for fathers, and 24 points for mothers. However, with regard to fathers, the magnitude of *this gap* is the same as it was in table 2 for Norway as a whole (18 percentage points). With regard to the mothers, the gap appears to be slightly greater than in table 2, where it was 19 percentage points.

As one would expect, there is an opposite pattern for parents having only “basic education”. More pupils in public schools than in the private ones have parents with such a background. The chance of such families making use of private education is greater in these areas than it was for Norway as a whole, as was shown in table 2.

Table 3. Who goes to private schools in those neighbourhoods in Oslo and Drammen where more than 1/3 of school children's parents are born in non-western countries?

	Private schools			Public schools	All schools
	Faith-based school ("view of life" rationale)	School based on "alternative pedagogy"	All private schools p		
Number of schools	10	12	22	*	*
Number of students	604	140	744	21,036	<b>21,780</b>
% students by type of school	2.8	0.6	3.4	96.6	<b>100.-</b>
<b>Family background characteristics</b>					
Median income in 2002 before taxes and transfers Father (NOK '000)	295.0	272.8	291.3	267.3	<b>268.6</b>
Mother (NOK '000)	178.1	153.8	175.5	135.3	<b>137.2</b>
% with higher education Father	40.7	42.6	41.1	23.6	<b>24.2</b>
Mother	44.1	55.8	46.5	22.2	<b>22.9</b>
% with basic education or less Father	12.1	10.1	11.7	21.1	<b>20.8</b>
Mother	10.3	5.8	9.4	25.1	<b>24.5</b>
% parents living together	64.9	45.7	61.4	62.6	<b>62.6</b>
% parents living together and married	62.7	30.0	56.6	56.6	<b>56.6</b>
% Both parents are immigrants	51.2	7.1	42.9	51.6	<b>51.3</b>
% Both parents immigrants from a non-western country	45.8	3.6	37.9	46.9	<b>46.6</b>
<b>% Both parents from non-western country and student born abroad</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>10.6</b>

\*Number of schools 'very large' but not tabulated.

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*Family status*

There is no difference overall regarding family status indicators between children in private schools and children in public schools. Like the pattern in Table 2, there is a higher proportion of children growing up in traditional families in the faith-based private schools than in other types of schools.

*Immigrant status of family*

How far do private schools in these locations function as facilitators of “flight” from public schools? If it occurs, such a flight would not necessarily be a sign of racism. Parents can simply look for an escape from classes in which many children have a weak grasp of Norwegian, and it could attract not only ethnic Norwegian families but immigrant families as well. However, if any such flight occurs, it is not strong enough to affect the ethnic composition of the public schools in these neighbourhoods, since the percentage of immigrant children in “all schools” is the same as the proportion in “public schools”. The percentage from these neighbourhoods in private schools is 3.4% which is lower than in the towns in which these neighbourhoods are located. This suggests that the main drive behind children going to private schools from these neighbourhoods is not the unusually high immigrant presence in the public schools in these locations.

Immigrant families from these neighbourhoods are underrepresented in private schools (the two bottom rows in table 3); in spite of the overall strong representation nationally of immigrant families in private schools (table 2). As in the national figures, immigrant families are strikingly underrepresented in “alternative pedagogy” schools, and well represented in faith based schools. Among the immigrant population from non-Western countries in these towns, a substantial proportion comes from predominantly Muslim countries. About 2/3 have an Asian background, by far the largest group consisting of immigrants from Pakistan. There are also substantial numbers in the Oslo and Drammen areas from Turkey and North African countries. Yet, the opportunity to send children to a Muslim school hardly existed. At the time, there was only one Muslim school in Oslo, with 112 pupils, and none in Drammen). The overall strong representation of children from non-Western backgrounds in the faith-based schools is therefore especially striking.

It is known from other data sets that immigrants’ children in Oslo engage constructively with school, have high educational ambitions, and they work harder than others (Lauglo 2000). It appears that the schools which are looked to for such mobility purposes by immigrant parents are those with a reputation of more traditional methods, not private schools identified by

government as being of special interest because of child-centred teaching methods.

*Is there self selection to private schools of families with higher income?*

In these urban locations with relatively low-income, parental income has an effect on children's chance of attending a private school. The median gross earnings of fathers of children attending private schools was NOK 291,000 in these neighbourhoods. This is substantially lower than the median noted in table 2 for the country as a whole for such fathers (NOK 331000), yet it is higher than the earnings of fathers of children attending public school in these same neighbourhoods (NOK 267000). We see a similar pattern for the mothers' earnings. Thus, the *earning capacity* of families sending children to private schools in these urban locations is higher than the capacity of those using local public schools. In that sense there is some self selection to private schools from the economically more successful families, unlike the pattern found for the country as a whole.

However, *earnings* are only a portion of income. The proportion of parents receiving welfare benefits is much higher in these locations than in other areas of the same town: about 20%, as compared to about 8%. The proportion is especially high (about 30%) among parents who are immigrants from non-Western countries (Helland and Lauglo 2005:36). The parents' income *after taxes, inclusive of welfare transfers*, is a better measure of the economic resources which parents have at their disposal – as distinct from their own market power. Table 4 shows results for income after taxes and transfers. Only in the “faith based” private schools is fathers' median income higher than in public schools. The median is actually *lower* for the 140 students who are in the schools with “alternative pedagogy”, than among fathers with children in the local public schools. For mothers' income, the order is reversed between the two broad categories of private school. *The difference in the disposable income between users of private schools, and those using public schools in these locations is quite modest. An annual gap of NOK 10 000 amounts to EURO 1276 at current exchange rates.*

Overall, the effects of income on the probability of sending a child to a private school, from these low income neighbourhoods, seem low and inconsistent. The act of applying to private schools signifies “agency” to pursue a rarely chosen option, not only a preference for such schools. It is then interesting to note that in so far as there are income effects on the choice of private education, these primarily reflect the successful agency in the market (earnings before taxes and transfers), rather than merely a family's spending power (income after taxes and transfers).

Could this finding suggest that private education drains away from the public schools in these neighbourhoods, children from more resourceful families in terms of *other* characteristics than their economic resources or education level? Parents who are an educational asset to their children and to the schools attended by their children, are not confined to those in certain educational or social strata.<sup>8</sup> We had no data to assess this issue; but the scale of use of private schools in these neighbourhoods was so low that any such effect on local public schools must have been minimal.

*Table 4. Median income after tax 2002 of students' parents, by types of school. Catchment areas in Oslo and Drammen in which at least 1/3 of the students' parents are immigrants from non-western countries*

	Students in "faith based" private schools	Students in private schools with "alternative pedagogy"	All students in private schools	Students in public schools	All students
Father's after-tax income (NOK '000s)	230.6	195.3	225.2	219.1	219.2
Mother's after-tax income (NOK '000s)	209.5	216.7	210.7	198.0	198.3

## Does private education yield better learning outcomes?

Within the same evaluation project of private education in Norway, learning outcomes were examined by Hans Bonesrønning and his colleagues at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (Bonesrønning *et al.* 2005, Bonesrønning & Naper 2006). As measures of educational achievement, they used the scores of students in their final year of basic education on National Achievement tests administered in the spring of 2004, in Mathematics, Norwegian and English. They also collected information on grades received in subjects in grade 10, at the end of basic education, and for

<sup>8</sup> Analysis of data from the Youth in Norway 2002 survey (a large scale survey carried out by NOVA – Norwegian Social Research), shows that children do better in school when they have families who are engaged in the public domain (Lauglo & Øia 2006), that is, when parents talk with their children about politics and social issues. This effect is quite strong after statistical controls for parental education and other measures of the family's cultural capital. Another study (on youth in Oslo) based on large scale surveys, shows that children from non-Western immigrant background, benefit educationally from the strong family bonds which characterise their families (Lauglo 2000).

students in programs preparing for higher education in the first year of post-compulsory education. As in the study on social segregation effects, they worked with administrative register data on entire national cohorts of students, again furnished and anonymized by Statistics Norway. They found that students in private schools had higher average scores on national achievement tests both in grade 10 and 4, with more pronounced differences in grade 10 than in 4. The difference in average scores persists (but with reduced magnitude) after controlling for *inter alia* parental income and education.

Private schools have lower student/teacher ratios than in municipal schools but higher proportions of teachers who have not completed their training in pedagogy. After correcting these differences in teaching “inputs”, the differences between private and public schools regarding student achievement increased. The “achievement advantage” of private education applies mainly to grade 10 and to *faith-based* schools, not to schools run under the “alternative pedagogy” rationale. It is still unclear whether these differences are due to genuine school effects, or to self-selection of pupils to private schools from families who, regardless of the parents’ level of education, bring their children up in ways which are especially supportive for educational achievement.

A stronger test of “school effects” is to use earlier school achievement as one of the predictor variables. Bonesrønning *et al.* were able to do this when examining differences in upper secondary education between private schools and public schools. The analysis was confined to students at the end of their first year in the university preparatory tracks in upper secondary education, using grade point average as the dependent variable. Multiple regression analysis then showed no superior “academic gain scores” overall for students in private schools, after controlling for prior achievement (grade point average) in basic education (obtained about one year earlier). However, students in accelerated mathematics programs had higher estimated “learning gains” in private schools than in public ones.

On the whole, it would seem that there are programs within private education that seem to give better educational outcomes than public schools, and the analysis by Bonesrønning and his colleagues suggest that this pertains to faith-based schools. But “private school academic superiority” is not a general finding across programmes and types of private schools in Norway.

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## **A question for further research: More social capital for education in private schools?**

The findings by Bonesrønning and his colleagues of a tendency in “religious” schools towards better learning of academic subjects is interestingly similar to the findings of Coleman and Hoffer (1987) in the United States. Coleman (1988) famously argued that Catholic schools have superior social capital compared to public schools and compared to secular private schools, because the latter types lack an external community to which the families belong. These achievement differences persisted after comprehensive tests for the influence of socio-economic aspects of the student’s family background, and they even persisted after controls for academic achievement at the earlier stage of schooling.

To account for this finding, Coleman (1988) posited superior “social capital for the formation of human capital” in those private schools which were rooted in a community outside the school itself. He postulated close bonds among the parents of pupils who are enrolled in the school, and closer bonds between parents and school in the faith-based schools and assumed that such community-like bonds are beneficial for the education of children and youth.

However, he never put these arguments to any direct empirical tests. Since his theorizing, there has hardly been any research on his assumptions, that (a) close bonds among parents of pupils in a school and close bonds between these parents and their children’s teachers, constitute a “social capital” which serves as an educational asset for the children, and (b) that religiously founded schools which involve the pupil’s families in a community outside the school, have more “social capital” than other schools. One study by Morgan and Sorensen (1999) showed findings on data from large scale US surveys, which contradicted Coleman’s theorizing about pupils benefiting educationally from strong bonds among parents at their children’s school. Otherwise, it seems as if Coleman’s theorizing hardly has attracted any research on his assumptions, though it has inspired much other research on “social capital”. It would seem that his assumptions could be fertile grounds for research on different types of private schools, and on differences between private and public schools, as to how close social ties are among parents, and between parents and the school, and whether such social ties make much difference for learning outcomes of their children.

## Summary and conclusions

As of the school year of 2003-04, there was no consistent overall effect of parental income on the probability of attending private schools in Norway. Government had set very low ceilings for the level of fees which private schools are allowed to charge, as a precondition for government subsidies which are set at a high level. This policy seems to have been successful in preventing income-biased recruitment of pupils to private schools.

Parents with higher education make more use of private education for their children than other parents do. This effect varies among different types of private schools. In the largest category of religion-based schools, schools run by Protestant denominations outside the Lutheran State Church, this effect is extremely weak. Other findings than those presented in this paper, and from the same research material, have showed that the overrepresentation of the offspring of highly educated parents is especially clear cut for students whose parents have higher education within humanities or theology (Helland and Lauglo 2007). This is a section of the “socio-humanistic” middle class which are likely to have a high frequency of public sector jobs and therefore by relatively modest levels of income.

Immigrant parents with a family background from non-Western countries are as well represented in the private schools. This is all the more striking since there hardly exists any religiously based private education catering to Muslim parents though such parents probably constitute a fairly large share of the immigrant population.<sup>9</sup> Those students from a non-Western parental background who are in private schools, are very much concentrated in Christian schools. Immigrant families have on the other hand, a distinctly low representation in schools practising alternative pedagogy of a child-centred type (Montessori, Steiner).

The overall proportion attending private schools (1.9%) is so small that the flow to private schools of children of highly educated parents, does not affect the social composition of the public schools nationally. Also, in urban areas with a high proportion of immigrant families, the “siphoning off” to private schools of students from “better educated homes” had no appreciable effects on the social composition of public schools.

In general, private schools functioned as of 2003-04 in such a way within the larger Norwegian system of basic education that any social segregation effect on the whole education system was minimal or nonexistent. The Norwegian experience suggests that private provisions of education

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<sup>9</sup> There was one school in Oslo in 2003 but it has since that time closed.

which receives generous public finance but with strict eligibility criteria as to “type of school” for such financing need not have socially divisive consequences. There is no iron law which says that private schools perpetuate social class inequality in the education system. Rather, it is likely that socio-economic bias in selection to private schools depends on the societal and local context, on the financial provisions for support to such schools, and on the regulatory framework governing such support.

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## **THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF CHURCH-MAINTAINED EDUCATION IN SLOVAKIA AFTER 1989**

### **Introduction: The Context of Church-maintained Education in Slovakia**

As many of the research results indicate, there is a complexity of factors determining the present shape of church-maintained education and Christian religious education in Slovak state schools. It is important to mention the historical and political background; the legal background, specifically the tightness of alliance between state and church; the religious background and the existing religious landscape; the influence of belief/ideology and the role of churches in the society; the theological development in the area; the educational development and the system of schooling in the country.

For the purpose of presenting a systematic approach to church-maintained schooling in Slovakia, it is necessary to give a brief description of the most important factors.

#### *Historical and political background*

Much could be said which would reveal the impact of history upon the formation of church schooling in the Slovak territory. But as the topic of the book deals only with the history after the democratic revolutions in Central and Eastern-Europe at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, let us just mention the three most influential recent political events that have happened in the region of Slovakia: (1) November 1989 – the *Velvet Revolution* in Czechoslovakia. Well-supported by the broader context of political changes in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in Europe, massive demonstrations of citizens in the Czech and Slovak cities resulted in the end of the 40-years long Communist regime. A non-Communist government took office. The new political leaders began the difficult process of abolishing Marxist ideology and transforming the political system, recreating a market economy, and reorienting foreign policy. The country's first multiparty elections were held in June 1990. (2) September 1992 – *Velvet Divorce*. During the early 1990s, Czech and Slovak political leaders within the government began to disagree on economic and political issues. Later that year, the leaders

of the two republics decided to split the federation into two independent states. A new constitution for Slovakia, adopted on September 1, 1992, went into effect with independence in January 1993. It declares Slovakia to be a parliamentary democracy. The first parliamentary elections of independent Slovakia were held in 1994. (3) May 2004: The Slovak Republic was accepted as one of the new members of EU.

It could take one's breath away, but in reality, as M. LiVecche describes, recently there have been a few Slovaks who remembered living in one village under the dominion of, first, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy to the end of the first great war, then the first Czechoslovak Republic or the inter-war years, the puppet state of the Slovak Republic during WWII, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic from the end of the war to 1989, and the Czecho-Slovak Federal Republic until the velvet divorce of 1993, when the SR finally came into its present existence. So their experiences represent six different states governing their lives without them ever having moved house. And the saddest thing influencing the self-awareness and the whole attitude of Slovaks towards public issues, especially education, is the fact that until 1993 the Slovaks had never in their history been in real political control of their own world.

Interestingly enough, the Slovak Constitution itself – though claiming Slovakia an ideologically neutral state – confirms the continuity of the new state with its historical Christian roots. As the Preamble states, we - the citizens of the Slovak Republic - are a nation “mindful of the political and cultural heritage of our forebears, and of the centuries of experience from the struggle for national existence and our own statehood, **in the sense of the spiritual heritage of Cyril and Methodius** and the historical legacy of the Great Moravian Empire... , seeking the application of the democratic form of government and the guarantees of a free life and **the development of spiritual culture** and economic prosperity.” This is one reason why the churches in Slovakia have been developing their own schools – so that they could utilize this available opportunity to help the spiritual (not just cognitive) development of the young people and to present to them the Christian pillars of their country.

#### *Legal background: the relationship between state and church*

According to the Constitution, the Slovak Republic is a sovereign, democratic, and law-governed state. It is not linked to any ideology or religious belief. Basic rights and liberties on its territory are guaranteed to everyone regardless of sex, race, colour of skin, language, creed and religion, political or other beliefs, national or social origin, affiliation to a nation or

ethnic group, property, descent, or another status. No one must be harmed, preferred, or discriminated against on these grounds.

The freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, and faith are guaranteed. This right also includes the possibility of changing one's religious belief or faith. Everyone has the right to be without religious belief. Everyone has the right to publicly express his opinion. Everyone has the right to freely express his religion or faith on his own or together with others, privately or publicly, by means of divine and religious services, by observing religious rites, or by participating in the teaching of religion.

In contrast with the previous socialist era, the churches and religious communities finally have the right to administer their own affairs. In particular, they constitute their own bodies, inaugurate their clergymen, organize the teaching of religion, and establish religious orders and other church institutions independently of state bodies

In other words, there is no state church in Slovakia. It is an ideologically neutral state though the majority of population are Roman-Catholics. On the other hand, there is no strict separation of churches from the state. They get a stable support from the state. The state cares - to a certain limit - for the salaries of priests, pastors, religious education teachers, missionaries, youth workers, deacons; it pays for the utilities of primary and secondary church schools. Each citizen can give 2% of taxes to churches and their organizations.

### *Religious background/ the present religious landscape*

The territory of Slovakia has always had a multicultural, multiethnic character. The acceptance of Christianity in the 9<sup>th</sup> century helped the territory of Slovakia to enter the European context. But, the confessional tensions between Christian churches often blockaded the development of the territory. So the periods of positive Christian influence took turns with times of heavy religious conflicts. A strong dualistic religious atmosphere has been present since 17<sup>th</sup> century (Catholics and Protestants - mainly Lutherans - citizens of Slovak nationality, or Reformed - citizens of Hungarian nationality).

What is the present religious landscape? Let us compare two recent censuses. According to the census in 1991, 73% inhabitants belong to some kind of denomination; 10% inhabitants without religious denomination and 17% gave no response. It is very interesting to compare these dates with the census ten years later, in 2001 when the number of those claiming to be affiliated with some kind of denomination rose to 84% of population; 13% were without denomination and 3% gave no response.

According to this last census in 2001, 69% of population were Roman Catholics, 7% Lutherans, 4% Greek Catholics, 2% Reformed, 1% Russian Orthodox Believers, 0,4% Jehovah Witnesses, 0,04% Jews, 0,5% Evangelicals and a very small number from other religions.

So with 84% of the population with a church affiliation, Slovakia can be claimed to be one of Europe's most Christianized countries. On the other hand, its closest neighbour and former federation partner – the Czech Republic with 32% Christians (27% Roman Catholics) – on the same basis is considered to be Europe's most secularized country. Yet both of the republics have approximately the same divorce rate, corruption, criminality or addiction problem. It shows that Slovakia has a Christian veneer that the Czech society has simply shrugged off. But essentially there is not that much difference, though gradually, traditional Christianity is being replaced by non-Christian spirituality. In the Slovak society, though almost without any immigrants, Eastern religions and philosophies like Yoga classes, Transcendental Meditation, Hare Krishna and Hinduism are developing. Some people (especially the Humanists) even publicly question the positive contribution of Christian roots forming our civilization.

### *The system of schooling in the country/development of education*

Let us briefly describe the system of schooling in Slovakia: Education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 16. From the age of five it is recommended that children attend kindergarten. The primary school is structured in two stages: primary stage (years 1–4, ages 6–10) and upper stage (years 5–9, ages 10–15). After either 9 or 4 years of primary school it is possible to choose one of the three following types of schools: grammar schools, specialized (vocational) secondary schools or vocational training school (ages 15–19).

Since 1993, there have been quite a few changes introduced into the Slovak education legal system, such as (1) Abolishment of aims and contents influenced by the ideology of previous era. (2) Legalized possibility to found private and denominational schools. (3) The humanizing of schools supported. (4) Better educational chances for pupils 14–18. (5) Decentralization of powers of the decision makers to schools and regions.

However, to put these changes into practice in real everyday school-life is a long process. So there are still a lot of people who criticize it, e.g. in the form of internet blogs. E.g. they describe Slovak education as one with a long tradition of centralized education that has started to be decentralized and pluralistic. But there are still some necessary reforms of the system which are delayed. The pluralism has not grown as fast as in the surrounding countries.

The present vision of how the state sees the role of education is as follows: (1) To educate children for independence, responsibility and creativity with respect to national and civic values. (2) To make school a cultural, sport and social centre of the regional community. (3) To put into practice the right for the free choice of educational career – to find employment in the European labour market. (4) To ensure higher societal recognition of teaching staff. (5) To support the equality of all founders of schools. (6) To help with drug prevention.

These aims should be fulfilled not only by the state, but also by private schools (including church-maintained ones).

### **The Influence of Ideology and the Role of the Church**

Regarding Central and Eastern Europe, Thomas Sowell (1996) stated that few regions of the world had such fragmented peoples and cultures or such intractable conflicts.

This applies to the former Czechoslovakia in a high degree. It is a general opinion in Slovakian social research that in former Czechoslovakia the communist persecution of religion was more severe than in surrounding countries such as Poland, Eastern Germany or even Hungary. In the 1950s the plan was to eliminate religion from the life of people completely, whilst in the 1970s to allow religious institutions to exist publicly, but to divide, corrupt and control them from within.” So in spite of the fact that such a high proportion of the Slovak population claims to be Christians, the position of Christian religion and churches in the Slovak society has been, again, directly influenced by the recent communist history. Many aspects of it seem to be quite obscure. Those hard times in the past have caused many untreated wounds and sad memories of the believers who experienced them. One may ask: Difficult memories of what?

Let us just mention a few of them: (1) The previous attitudes to ideology and government. (2) The ethics of compromise (privately criticized only), e.g. changing worship places often enough to avoid persecution, hiding the act of going to church behind the expression “going to visit friends”; the ethics of informers and spies. (3) Withdrawal from public life as much as possible – no social involvement (“prayer for collectivization”). (4) Schizophrenia from the division between public/private (lack of integrity). (5) The state intervention into the institutional authority of churches. (6) State educated, licensed and paid clergy (conflicts with the choice of parishes, very low salaries) – so substantial control of the state over clericals, R.E., preaching and proselytization. (7) In 1950ies - 6000 people imprisoned, Greek Catholics – very much repressed (in favour of Russian Orthodox), in 80ties –

400 Roman Catholic priests – prohibited. (8) Underground church, disseminations of samizdats.

CityGate Slovakia, a Christian organization based in Bratislava, is one of the very few organizations that exist to strengthen the church by helping people to bridge the gap between the reality of Christ and everyday life, including the memories of the past. In his “Inquiry into What Masters Us”, M. LiVecche investigates the residuals of Marxist ideology and their impact on the present status of religion in Slovak society. He characterizes the following features of the present state as follows: (1) Chronic suspicion of ideology and fear of manipulation, deep resentment to institutional authority (including church). (2) Avoiding being involved in civil society. (3) Low value of the individual felt (but collective), effort to over-emphasise personal uniqueness. (4) Still cold relationship: reason-faith. (5) Still struggling dichotomy: physical/spiritual. (6) Search for a guru. (7) More national pride (High Tatras, sports – Ice Hockey Team). (8) Desires of young people: community, acceptance, tolerance, security, fellowship, intimacy, being known and knowing others, „positive authority“ (that which helps me feel good about being me and who accept me as I am), relationships. (9) Disdain for street evangelism (Livecche 2004).

So what are the prevailing needs of the “older” generation - of those who most probably are the “owners” of one or more of the above-mentioned scars that still influence their attitude towards religion, education and community?

As can be observed from their responses, they are still struggling against the tabuisation of the past. For this reason in Slovakia a new Institute of National Memory has been founded recently, revealing the names of secret agents – unfortunately, many times in a very unfair and painful way, relying on the reports of the previous communist secret police. So many people are still engaged in unspoken memories, suspicions; need of discernment, forgiveness and inner healing. They suffer with a victims sentiment (“A victim once – a victim for ever.”); with a passive attitude towards society (somebody else is responsible for the negative and the community means only an abstract body to them).

As we want to describe the present educational situation in Slovakia, let us move on now towards the views of young people about religious matters. All of those under 18 years old were born in democracy after the fall of communism though they were brought up by parents and teachers that were directly influenced by the regime. D. Jaura, an evangelical pastor and teacher at one church-maintained school, presents the results of his research among this new generation in the following way: (1) They do believe in high moral values (inner voice – not due to the obedience to a higher authority).

(2) They experience a dilemma: philosophy of success based on positive thinking (“God helps those who help themselves.”) against uncertainty and anxiety. (3) They show a growing interest in spiritual matters (gods, spirits, paranormal, mysteries, e.g. in movies). (4) Hot topics are: life and death, value orientation, self-discipline, living in this chaotic world. (5) The opinion is that a solution cannot be given by traditional church thinking/membership.

The shift in attitudes to religion can be, generally, expressed as presented in Jaura’s chart:

<b>Before 1989: Officially „atheistic society“</b>	<b>In the 90-ties: Officially „Christian society“</b>
Religion – commitment	Religion – fulfilment of psychological need, talisman
Faith and religion – publicly implausible private matters	Religious approach in public sphere – ethical values, faith more private (alternatives)
Churches – surviving	Churches more self-confident
Prevailing materialism	Prevailing religious worldview
Church attendance low	Church attendance higher
Only alternative –Christianity	Religious pluralism

*(Source: Jaura 1997)*

Focusing on the needs of young post-modern Christians, according to Jaura’s findings, their strongest desire is for relationships. “The teenager growing up in a church environment, along with his/her peers outside the churches is sensitive to whether adults accept him/her as an individual, or whether they try to mould him/her according to their own views.” They express a very sensitive perception of the tension between Christianity and culture; a desire for authenticity (sincerity, openness) and right distinction (without building cultural barriers between them and the world).

Is there anything that the churches could do to help to deal with the past and to lead the young generation towards a “better” future?

Based on the principles of the Christian Gospel, the churches should realize that they “own the instrument” which can deal with the past and set a new hope into any human’s heart. As I. Noble puts it, “these difficult memories would be included to what the Holy Ghost brings into life – as the

Spirit of Truth, but also as a Healer and a Comforter. However, the churches seem to be caught in chaos, in the space inhabited by the different spirits, and they face the need of discernment, of opening themselves to the life-giving Spirit, and in His light to allow the memories of the past to be named and shared, to be included into who we are and where we move from and to.” (Noble 2006:56).

So we agree with I. Noble in the following statements: The task of the churches is to preach the Gospel and so to help people to deal with hard memories and not to present their lives as victims (though many of them actually had been). This should be applied even in the context of really small churches, e. g. various evangelical protestant churches forming less than 0.2% of the Slovak population. Facing the challenges with such representation it is only logical that evangelical Christians developed a minority syndrome but it is not an appropriate attitude either for evangelical Christians. They should start to view themselves as free and equal participants in society. The churches should try harder to be transparent, open and to deal with the extremely high expectations since 1993 and with their own failures and weaknesses. They should humbly submit to the idea of coming out of ghettos, to redefine their roles, to deal wisely with the effects of restitutions, to show the willingness to forgive and ask forgiveness and to take on responsibility for the public things.

The last requirement includes the necessity of fulfilling **the educational role of churches**. According to the constitution (1992) and the following Legal Acts (The Accord on Catholic Education with the Vatican, signed in 2003 and the Agreement of all registered churches with the state, signed in 2004), the churches can: (1) educate the whole range of generations (both youth and adults) via church education in church parishes; (2) establish their own schools (so called church/church-maintained/denominational schools) – this right includes all levels from kindergarten to primary, secondary, and even tertiary; (3) teach RE (religious education) to all children, that are registered for this subject by their parents, in state schools; (4) influence young generation via leisure/out of school activities.

Recently there have been published several thorough studies on the distinguishing aspects of church education in Slovakia. Though written by authors from various church backgrounds, all of them share similar methodological starting points and present a high standard of compatibility with the general educational and psychological sciences.

In the second part of our contribution we are going to introduce two ways of fulfilling the educational role of churches in Slovakia: the church-maintained schools (a case study with the focus on the evangelical churches) and the present state of RE in state schools.

## Church- maintained Schools in Slovakia

Though the officially named “church schools” are maintained by the specific churches/church denominations, on the other hand – as the previous context analysis has shown – in fact, they are maintained by the churches with the help of the state. According to the above-mentioned Acts, these schools have a similar budget subsidy to the public (state) schools. Sometimes they do charge parents some fee because they usually do not have such good “heritage” of school equipment/buildings/gym etc. as the older public schools may have.

All schools are governed by the School board that consists of the representatives from the school staff, the parents and other experts from the region. The money for the specific schools comes from the state budget via the regional municipal offices in the individual communities.

### *General information about church-maintained schools*

As follows from the religious structure (part 1.3), the majority of Slovak church-maintained schools belong to the Roman Catholic church. In the next chart there are the statistics presenting the numbers of Roman Catholic schools on 31.12.2005:

Catholic Schools	Kindergardens	Primary schools	Grammar schools	Mixed primary and secondary schools	Secondary Vocational Schools	Apprentice Training	Special Need Schools	Music schools	Together
Schools	31	102	44	8	8	4	5	8	210
Pupils	1319	19591	12028	1905	2350	822	259	2601	40875
Teachers	119	6267	985	183	204	97	43	103	8001
Other school employees	48,5	564	231,5	51	75	25	16	18	1029

The second biggest church in Slovakia - the Lutheran church has also founded its own church-maintained schools. In 2006 their number was as follows:

Lutheran schools:	Sum
Kindergartens	3
Primary schools	3
Grammar schools	5
Other schools (mixed, secondary)	3
<b>Together</b>	14

It is also important to mention The Association of C. S. Lewis' schools that includes 3 schools: (1) Church-maintained Primary school Narnia- Bratislava; (2) Church-maintained Primary school Narnia – Banska Bystrica; (3) C. S. Lewis Bilingual High School. All these schools are maintained by the Free Evangelical Church (original name Cirkev bratska), so they are based on Christian principles. Religious education that is part of their curricula is pursued in an ecumenical way, honouring and respecting the worldviews of all their students. The schools are governed by the School Board and the Parents Board, including parents and various educational experts and school managers.

Teaching of religion in the church-maintained schools is different from the RE in public schools. Religion is one of the compulsory subjects there. It is evaluated with marks just like other subjects. In the secondary church schools RE can be a subject of the final exams (at the age of 19). The curriculum requires two lessons of RE per week whereas only one is required in state schools.

Concerning the tertiary level of education, there are two church (not state) universities: the Catholic university in Ruzomberok and the University of Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. Besides these, there are theological faculties and some university departments that are included in the state universities, so they are financially maintained by the state but at the same time the churches have the main impact on the curricula of their study programmes (though they can exist only if they prove capable according to the State accreditation board).

The pupils and students at church-maintained schools should reach the same level of results as the students of the public schools. With the exception of those two above-mentioned universities, the teachers for church-maintained schools are normally trained at the same pedagogical

institutes as their colleagues for public schools (there are exceptions – teachers studying abroad at Christian teacher training institutions etc).

*The Department of Evangelical Theology and Mission – a specific university department maintained by evangelical churches*

One of the special institutions in Slovakia where new Christian teachers of mathematics, Slovak language, music, physical education, ethics and religious education can be trained, is the Department of Evangelical Theology and Mission – a school that is included among the departments of the Faculty of Teacher Training (Pedagogická fakulta). It is accredited and financially sponsored by the public University of Matej Bel but theologically supervised by the Association of Evangelical Churches.

It is the only Slovak evangelical interdenominational theological school offering Bachelor and Master programmes in mission, teacher training and evangelical theology (as well as the Doctor of Ministry).

It was founded in 1993 by four evangelical churches (Baptists, Free Reformed, Methodists, Pentecostals) and the Mission New Eastern Europe for Christ/AD 2000. All of these recognize the Confession of the Evangelical Alliance.

### **Mission statement and core values of DETM**

DETM exists for the purpose of cooperatively meeting the needs of evangelical churches in Slovakia, and other countries, through theological and mission preparation of pastors, teachers and missionaries, provision of means and material for lay leadership training, and development of resources for direction and growth of evangelical churches through research and scholarly production.

The education at DETM covers three main dimensions: cognition (acquiring of new knowledge and development of thinking processes), ministry skills (variety of them) and development of Christian character and professionalism.

DETM values the functional cooperation in the Body of Christ; the recognized state educational structure and the freedom to function in it; the injunction in the Scriptures to prepare men and women for ministry; an understanding of the church and its mission in the context of our own culture; the development of Christian scholars and their contribution to the church; the educational materials and training for lay people.

### **Short history of DETM**

The establishment of an evangelical theological school was a long-standing desire of a large number of Christians from revivalist churches. For many years they were praying for it and they shared this vision with one another. The previous political system inhibited any initiatives in the area of Christian education. In addition, evangelical churches were lacking in educated workers because the Lutheran and the Catholic theological faculties were under state pressure to reduce the numbers of students.

After January 1993, when Czechoslovakia split into two independent republics, the newly formed undergraduate schools maintained by the evangelical churches stayed in the Czech Republic. Therefore Slovak representatives of the four evangelical churches (Brethren Church, Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals) and the mission AD 2000 met in December 1992 in Banska Bystrica. It was a celebration of unity among brethren who were one-minded about their need: professional education of workers for the church, mission and schools. Dr. Crane from the USA, who was present at the meeting and who founded 20 biblical schools all around the world, said: "The Holy Spirit is working here because the brethren are united. This school will rise upon this foundation and will be a blessing. The only way to spoil it is if the spirit of unity and love will cease to rule among you!"

There was a need to create a board that would manage the new school. So at the closing of this meeting, the Association of Evangelical Churches in Slovakia (ZEC) originated. It was registered with the County Court in Bratislava in January, 1993.

The next step was the negotiation with the Ministry of Education. The minister recommended to the church representatives that they become part of Matej Bel University (UMB) in Banska Bystrica. The dean of the Faculty of Education showed willingness to accept the new Department of Evangelical Theology and Mission as part of the school on May 21, 1993. The first year opened on September 1, 1993, at the campus of the Faculty of Education UMB.

All DETM students are registered with the Faculty of Education of Matej Bel University and are bound by the regulations of the University. Today DETM has more than 260 graduates about half of whom are in full-time ministry in primary and secondary schools, churches and para-church organizations.

### **Academic Programs at DETM**

All academic programs offered by DETM are fully accredited. They have been validated (in 1995, 2000, 2004) by the supreme Accreditation Board for universities in the Slovak Republic. DETM, being a member of

EEAA, has also been in the process of acquiring the EEAA international accreditation since 2004.

DETM programs have been designed to cater for those who want to become professional missionaries, pastors and Christian teachers for churches, evangelism projects in homelands and abroad, in prison ministries, in mass-media activities, in Christian publishing, etc. The graduates can serve in schools and in all spheres of theological work and the practical activities of these organisations, in their pastoral ministry, preaching and teaching in churches and schools, leading worship, church organization and management, ecumenical endeavours, international networks of teachers and missionaries, in remedial and preventive centres for addicted people, etc.

DETM offers the following study programs:

(1.) Full-time study programmes for daily students: (a) Bachelor in Evangelical Theology and Mission (180 credits, 3-4 years); (b) Master in Evangelical Theology (120 credits, 2 years); (c) Bachelor and Master in Educational Studies: Teacher of Religious Education in combination with Maths/Slovak/Physical Education (300 credits: pre-graduate + graduate study, 4-6 years)

(2.) Part-time study programmes for extension students: (a) Bachelor in Evangelical Theology and Mission (180 credits, 3-4 years); (b) Master in Evangelical Theology (120 credits, 2 years, only distance form in English); (c) Master in Educational studies (120 credits, 2 years)

According to the Bologna process and the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System), credits awarded at DETM are transferable, equivalent to credits in other European universities.

## **Teaching religion in Slovak public schools**

Religious education (RE) in Slovakia has always been confessional. It has been focused primarily on teaching a specific religious confession. Until recently, teaching about other religions had a very small place in the RE syllabus. Major religions are taught to a limited extent inside other secular subjects in the curricula, such as citizenship or history.

In the time of socialism RE ceased to exist as a compulsory subject, but it was never officially banned in Slovak schools. RE became a voluntary subject. Parents who wanted their children to attend RE lesson in schools had to register their children for these classes. There was a certain kind of persecution for doing so. After the political changes in 1989 the question arose on how to teach religion at schools and what conditions had to be met.

The Slovak Ministry of Education decided that there should be two parallel alternatives for all children in state schools: RE and Ethics. At the upper stage of primary schools (age 10 - 15) and the first two years of the secondary school (age 15 - 17) families should have chosen one of these two alternative subjects for their children. Both RE and Ethics were electives in the early primary years (age 6-10) and the last years at the secondary school (age 17 - 19). According to the Act from 2004 the compulsory choice between RE and Ethics applies already to the primary level (age 6-10). In the last two years at the secondary level, RE lessons are still voluntary.

In the school year 2004/2005 in state schools three times more first year pupils chose RE than chose Ethics. In church schools almost 100% of pupils chose RE, whereas in private schools just the opposite occurred – only 4% of families chose RE.

Across all primary school years, there were about twice as many pupils opting for RE rather than Ethics in state schools. In private schools these figures are reversed. Almost all pupils from the church schools chose RE.

### **Characteristics of Religious education in state schools**

RE and ethics are called ‘compulsory optional’ subjects, which means that all parents have to make a choice between RE and ethics in state schools. Though RE and ethics should both be part of the school timetable, RE is often placed either very early in the morning or late in the afternoon, which is not a good time. This is because of the variety of RE and the fact that most of the RE teachers are not on the regular staff and come into schools as external teachers.

The aims of the RE, the contents of the RE syllabus and the books for teaching RE are, basically, the responsibility of the specific denominations. According to the Concord and the Agreement, the state promised to help to subsidize the production of new textbooks. There are several churches that have already published whole sets of textbooks (Catholics, Lutherans, Orthodox, and recently even the Adventists).

Analysis and comparison of the goals and contents of the present RE syllabuses in Slovak state schools reveal significant common ground:

#### *Aims*

All churches aim to lead the child: (1) into a relationship with Jesus Christ and the explicit expression of this confession; (2) to know the Trinitarian God (the Father, Son and Holy Ghost); (3) to spiritual development in Christ, towards the spiritual maturity; (4) towards a positive attitude towards his/her own confession; (5) so that he/she develops into an integrated personality, able to be active in the church and secular society.

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*Content*

The following topics appear in most syllabuses: God, creation, fall, sin, Biblical stories, Jesus Christ – life and teaching, Church, Creed, ten commandments, love, prayer, fellowship.

*Methodology*

There has been an evident shift developing away from the traditional way of teaching towards the use of more productive teaching methods, based on experiential learning. There have been several experiments with the project method, heuristic methods and the application of critical thinking (according to Bloom's taxonomy).

It is necessary to say that at present almost all of the existing RE curricula are in the process of transformation. Also the evangelical churches are preparing their own curricula, based on the needs analysis, theological starting points and pedagogical-psychological principles.

**RE teachers**

The state is legally obliged to provide a subsidy for RE teachers' salaries. So all the churches that have a syllabus authorized by the church authorities and the Ministry of Education also have the right to ask a head teacher of any school to provide an RE class focused on their own church/denomination and to ordain their own teachers. On the other hand, the choice might be limited in a certain way if the groups are too small (a desirable size of the group would be a minimum of 12 children). Naturally there would be a financial restriction if all denominations decided to teach their own RE in one school. That is why some minority churches are trying to agree on a mixed common group of children if they want to have a paid teacher. Other smaller denominations would still prefer to teach their own RE even as unpaid volunteers. A research report of the present status of evangelical RE teachers carried out by Bradnanska, Masarik and Hanesova analyses the factors that motivate/de-motivate these teachers to go on teaching. They show deep needs for more effective support from the parents and the churches.

The RE teachers should achieve the same level of professional training as the other teachers. The requirement is both the Bachelor and Master Degrees. For pragmatic reasons, the teachers are prepared for a combination of at least two school subjects (RE and maths; RE and Slovak; RE and music; etc.). This means that one third of their study is devoted to RE, one third to the other subject and the last block of their studies consists of psychological and pedagogical subjects. They can be either graduates of theological schools with the pedagogical and psychological supplemental studies or they may be graduates of theological departments at teacher

training faculties (like DETM). After 1989 six new faculties and departments came into existence where among others also RE teachers can be trained and educated (two Catholic universities have already been mentioned).

## Conclusion

In the end there are two comments needed. First, similar to Kusnierik, in our study we focused on Slovakia not only because this is the country where we live, but because Slovakia, with its specific geographical location in the centre of Central Europe, with its history and culture might serve in as a representative model, a case study for further research of the Central and Eastern-Europe region (comparing it with its neighbours and other countries in Europe and in the world).

Second, one might wonder why we presented such a detailed description of the school maintained by the minority (evangelical) churches in Slovakia. There are several simple reasons for this: a) the author of the study comes from this institution and knows its situation better than that of other schools; b) the Department of Evangelical Theology and Mission is objectively a quite unique phenomenon as it is the only ecumenical church-maintained school in Slovakia. Not only are there four churches involved in its governance and management, but there is also a wide scope of churches from where the students come. (In some years there were students coming from 8–10 various churches, denominations and Christian fellowships from up to 3–4 countries).

We started our overview of the present educational role of the churches with the description of its broader systematic (historical, legal, educational) context. Special attention was paid to the influence of history because “an understanding of history is important to understanding the present situation”. In our opinion, it is primarily the role of churches to help the people to get rid of the sad memories of the past and of the residuals of Marxism; and to lead them towards real freedom of spirit and mind. This can be done by ways that are so immanent in Christ’s church, e. g. by prayer, confession of mistakes, proclaiming the Gospel and charity. Here we have focused on the educational role of the churches which via teaching not only in parishes, and in their own schools but also by teaching religion in the state schools, can help to heal the difficult past of Slovak inhabitants and to give new hope, influence the priorities and values and help them to focus on the ultimate issues.

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## **THE SOCIAL, LEGAL AND FUNCTIONARY ASPECTS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN POLAND (1991-2004)<sup>10</sup>**

In Poland, since the caesura of 1989, efforts have been made for the nearly complete liquidation of the state and economic governance, the socialist-doctrinaire control of the state-owned, public education, and the non-public, mainly the Catholic education as well (Mezglewski 2004, Małachowski 2005). By this, usually the alternatives aiming at the intellectual and moral education, and the equation of the admittance of the students in the non-public educational sector is understood (Maj 2002). The alternatives of choosing school are realized in the practical possibility of establishing non-public schools and also in the non-governmental organizations' achievement of legal quality. This essay summarizes the legal-educational background, the quantitative and qualitative status and the essential aims of the functioning of Catholic education between 1991-2004.

### **The legal background of Polish Catholic schools**

Since February 1989, in the course of the so-called "round-table discussion", which could be seen as a preparation for the change of regime, the issue of Catholic education has been a significant subject. „... *the return of the non-public education to the Polish traditions came into existence in the Act of 07. 09. 1991. on the Educational System. It made possible for the legal and physical persons to establish the shattered schools (due to the socialist state's monopolist practice) and to put the insufficiently utilized educational chances of the school and state system onto democratic basis*” (Siemieniak 1997, Majewski 2000, Siemieńska 1994). In the official and practical sense, recent Catholic schools are subordinated to the secular (Urbańska 1997) and canon (Misztal 1999) laws. These codifications, within their own competences, specify the rules and regulations of teaching and educating and that of the filling in the tutelage-compensational, pedagogical and evangelistic functions in the non-public Catholic education.

The competent regulations confirm the political act of the state in the spheres of education, allowing for the Catholic institutions, which function as part of the state-owned (public) educational system, – under certain

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<sup>10</sup> Translated by: Nóra Hegedűs

conditions – to obtain social<sup>11</sup> or private status. This authority can also be received by other religious schools, whose churches become “legal persons”, i.e. subjects of legal transaction. Such status is acknowledged by the secular-educational authorities, on the evidence of the mentioned Act of 07. September 1991 on the Educational System and on the 03. June 1992 Decree of the Ministry of Education. After filling in the definite legal criteria and acquiring the authority, actually, not identical but an equivalent public school comes into existence, which is controlled by either self-governing or governmental administrative institutions, depending on the degree of teaching. For this demand it is indispensable to realize the “programme minimum” in the educational process, about whose conditions of the realization of the “programme minimum”, the Concordat of 1993 also speaks.

Similarly, the issues concerning the development of the Catholic education and the integrated “services” in pedagogy are recorded in various documents of the Roman-Catholic Church, in ecclesiastical publications and in other materials. To the most important documents regulating the demands, missions and services, belong the council texts, i.e. the official documents of the Church, of which there are 16: constitutions, decrees, and declarations – the so-called “Acta Vaticanum II”, published by the adequate Vatican offices. The series of papal texts constitute the second group related to Catholic pedagogy: „Papal teachings” (Weron-Jaroch 1989), homilies, proclamations, orations, papal catecheses, exhortations, encyclicals (e.g. *Catechesi tradendae*). In a direct or indirect way they are in connection with teaching, education, subjectivity, axiological unchangingness applying to the shaping of the personal behaviour, ethics and morality in education as well as in catechism and evangelism (Godewski 1991, Pawlina 1994a, 1994b, 1995, Szorc 1991a, 1991b, Wołoszyn 1994), being - among the remaining assignments - the first condition of the redeeming Church’s mission.

Besides the decisions of the Roman Curia<sup>12</sup>, local churches (of given countries), episcopates or other institutions (the Polish Council of Catholic Schools) also issue educational indications. Materials of similar types can be worked out by international Catholic organizations as well. Such organizations are the European Committee for the Catholic Education in Brussels and the World Union of Catholic Teachers (UMEC). Both the international UMEC and the (Polish) Council of Catholic Schools put an emphasis on the realization of ideal-systematic documents.

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<sup>11</sup> Social schools are educational institutions established by parents of potential pupils. It has a public or non-public legal educational character. This school is also ranked among the private sector in Poland.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., official documents for the case of Catholic Education.

## The social surroundings of the reestablishment of Polish Catholic schools

However, today's Catholic schools have been brought into existence not by the aforementioned documents, but by the concrete social need for the foundation of alternative non-public institutions that realize a wide systematic spectrum in education (Nasalska 1994). Thus, private primary schools, secondary grammar schools, lyceums - the latter with the profiles of humanities, philosophy, mathematics-physics, biology-chemistry, law, informatics, economics - and vocational schools have come into being (Majewski 2000). These schools apply innovative didactic methods, make the lessons dynamic by activizing the students and the teachers, although the educational transformations also take aim at the expectations of those social groups that treat education as a market value, agree with the economic rule of "demand and supply" and consider the educational function second-rate (Dolata- Putkiewicz- Zielińska 1996, Folkierska 1994). Non-public schools are becoming institutions that compensate the qualitative deficiency of the state educational system; on the other hand, they are to become attractive alternatives for the students (Skoczkowa 1994, Rusakowska 1994, Jung – Miklaszewska 1994, Łukaszewicz 1996, Maćkowiak 1991, Szymanowska 1988, Umięcka 1992).

Besides the Council of Catholic Schools, the Polish Episcopate's Commission of Catholic Education and the national priesthoods of teachers, trainers and educational curators also deal with the initiatives relating to the establishment of Catholic schools and the better quality of education. The non-clerical institutions of Catholic character also take part in this process, for example the associational organizations (among others the Catholic Association of Teachers, Catholic Association of Parents).

## Debates around the Catholic Schools

Due to the fact that among the duties of Catholic education parents<sup>13</sup> (Sujka 1994) are required to participate together with religious organizations and the Church's own scholarly, educational and didactic institutions (Krukowski-Lempa 1992), and because modern "reality" is becoming more and more complex, professional debates are developing around the various orientations, tendencies, views and conceptions about teaching and training. A matter in dispute is whether a Catholic school restricts the independence and creativity of the students (Urbańska 1997:21), while there is no doubt that

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<sup>13</sup> Deklaracja o wychowaniu chrześcijańskim *Gravissimum educationis*, Sobór Watykański II, Konstytucje, 313-324.

in the process of the development of personality there is always something to change (Lubowicka 1997, Olubiński 2001). Since students choose Catholic schools voluntarily, they commit themselves to keep the statutes. These regulations encourage them to conscientiously undertake comprehensive efforts for the sake of integrated mental, physical and moral development with the help of the Gospel. Those students who choose this and not other schools usually act this way, with regard to the “Catholic” world-view found in their families.

A more important problem is found in that the chance of non-public education is not given for many financially poor, but otherwise talented and persistent students because they cannot meet the costs of studying. In state-owned schools education is free of charge, while in non-public schools tuition fees are required by law. In Catholic schools the sums of payable tuition fees have been differentiated (cf. appendix). Following the appeal of John Paul Pope II and the initiatives of Polish<sup>14</sup>, French<sup>15</sup> and other local churches<sup>16</sup>, the sum of tuition fees are being reduced for the students living in deeply religious families with moderate means in two Catholic schools of Zielona Góra<sup>17</sup>. The undertaking of socio-political burdens and the support of pedagogical innovations (Żurek 1995) demand the assuring of systematic and

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<sup>14</sup> Rev. prof. dr. hab. Andrzej Dzięga, diocesan priest of the diocese of Sandomierz, initiated an international research cooperation in the sphere of Catholic education and in that of the selected social, cultural and religious problematics. As a result, the completed and signed document is: „the Act of Will of joining the Catholic Teachers International Scholarly Council in Ružomberk”, whose purpose is to engage in the researches of the Slovakian Catholic University in this town. The Faculty of Pedagogy in Ružomberk offers the candidates M.A. studies from Catholic education, and also possesses the right to grant degrees and scholarly titles in this sphere (Trześniowska 2006).

<sup>15</sup> It is exemplary in France that the parents of those students who participate in public education work together with „private education” supporting societies: Federation of Parents’ Council (FCPE), National Society of Parents’ Independent Association (UNAAPÉ) and Association of Parents in State-Owned Education (PEEP). The National Parental Society of Independent Education (UNAPEL), founded in 1930, excels from the various societies and associations. This organization takes care of the progress and identity of Catholic education, plans and coordinates the extension of schools, supervise the carrying out of decisions regarding national education. UNAPEL incorporates about 830 thousand parents and publishes 830 thousand copies of the periodical „Famille et Education”. The National Parental Society of Independent Education (UNAPEL) affiliates 800 000 families (Georgel-Thorel 1995, Ćwik 2007).

<sup>16</sup> In 2008, in the Swedish city of Uppsala, the rise of the first Catholic university, in collaboration with other foreign universities.

<sup>17</sup> Both in the Non-Public Catholic Grammar School and in the St. Stanislaw Kostki Catholic Lyceum in Zielona Góra, managed by principal mgr. Marek Budniak, in the school year of 2007/2008, the sum of tuition fee is going to be reduced from 270 zloties to 220, and from 380 zloties to 250. In 2004 in the aforementioned lyceum the sum of the tuition fee was 420 zloties, but because of the endeavour of the principal of both schools, the above-mentioned reductions have successfully been persisting for several years.

adequate financial supplements from the government's part. In addition, it can also happen that the local self-governing authorities sponsor Catholic schools. The cooperation with the self-government of Zabrze is an ideal model, since in the extremely poor districts, where unemployment is exceedingly high, they finance the functioning of these schools in 100% for the growing amount of children and youth who are neglected in terms of financial and educational matters. The conscientious collaboration of the government and church exists in the hope that in this way the social, educational benefits can be maximalized, and the awkward consequences of the crises could be minimalized.

### **The expansion of the Catholic educational system**

In 1993, 78 Catholic schools existed in Poland (Maj 2002), thus in a quantitative sense it is not significant as opposed to the number of the schools of the secular sector (both public and non-public), though in a pedagogic sense Catholic schools began to fulfil an active, irreplaceable, specific cultural and educational role (Nowak & Ożóg 2000). In December 1997, 181 social and private Catholic schools were functioning. They were of non-public character, but some of the institutions among them possessed the authority of public schools. There were 45 primary schools, 111 lyceums, 25 vocational schools: professional, technical and postsecondary, 29 dormitories, 34 schools managed by Salesians. Among the founding organs there were 65 men's and women's orders, 61 secular associations and 29 parishes and dioceses (Dziubiński 1998). In 1997 Salesians founded the greatest number of schools<sup>18</sup>, the Friendly Association of Catholic Schools owned 11, the Association of Catholic Families 9, while the Catholic Association of Teachers had 5 schools.

By 1999 the number of Catholic schools increased to 252<sup>19</sup>: 57 primary schools, 46 grammar schools, 7 vocational schools, 123 lyceums: general, humanistic, classic, vocational, 14 technical schools (3 years), 5 postsecondary vocational schools. Depending on the founding subject, they possessed the status of educational institutions: social, private, public, non-public, girls' and boys' college (Trzeciakowska 1997). In secondary and postsecondary schools, among which Salesian dormitories were also functioning, young girls, boys, as well as adults were studying in full time, evening and correspondent systems. The mentioned secondary schools, including vocational, technical, grammar and postsecondary schools taught in

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<sup>18</sup> The data published by Dziubiński differ a little bit from my calculations (Dziubiński 1998:109).

<sup>19</sup> According to Maj's statement, in 1999 there are 276 Catholic schools (Maj 2002: 176).

several educational profiles: general, humanistic, nursing, economic, touristic, sightseeing, musical (organist), business and administration, manager, administrative-official, catering, catering and hotel management, chef, hairdresser, clothing, tailoring. They trained in directions of: operator of machine-tools, special technical-mechanic of: machine-tools, cars, agricultural machines, electric, locksmith mechanic, and in professions: foundry worker, joiner, commissariat, technic-electronic (specialization: computer systems), hotel worker, woodworker – with the specialization of cabinet-maker.

In June 2001, already 336 schools were functioning: primary, secondary: vocational schools, lyceums, technical and postsecondary schools. They taught in the following profiles: general, humanistic, musical (organist), medical-nursing, electric, informatic, economic, economic-manager, catering, car mechanic, printing worker, clothing technician, upholsterer, leather goods maker, joiner, woodworker (Maj 2002). In 2004 there were approximately 450 schools educating 60 thousand children and youth (Dymer 2004). In the territory of the 16 regions, in 89 cities and towns 95 primary schools, 143 secondary schools, 7 vocational schools and 2 special educational centres were functioning. Educational work is realized in 5 technical schools (e.g. electronic, evening schools), 137 lyceums, 9 lower spiritual seminaries and 6 vocational schools (4 economic, 1 musical, 1 banking). The postsecondary training of the youth's was carried out in 7 technical schools (medical-nursing, correspondent for adults, teacher training)<sup>20</sup>.

## Curricular and extracurricular activities

The educational effort of Catholic schools gets external scholarly assistance as well. In certain schools students are learning under the auspices of research workers of the University of Warsaw and the Polish Academy of Sciences<sup>21</sup>, while in other cases professors of the Catholic University of Lublin act as patrons of the school<sup>22</sup>. The syllabus is often beyond the programme minimum and touches upon contemporary problems, among others Catholic social studies, marketing, securities, stock exchange. Apart from the realized professional profiles, the Catholic secondary schools also offer other educational directions: general, geographical-economical, mathematical-physical, humanistic, while for the talented students they provide individual

<sup>20</sup> There are different data about the number of Catholic schools in 2004. According to „Nasz Dziennik”, there are 450 Catholic schools. However, according to my calculations there are only 411 of them.

<sup>21</sup> The Cecylia Plater-Zyberkówna Private Lyceum is the only secular girls' boarding school in Warsaw, which aims to train a kind of Catholic elite, which has open mind and bears patriotic and civic conduct. Thus, in a broader sense it can be treated as a Catholic school.

<sup>22</sup> Catholic Lyceum in Józefów (Paciorek 1996)

process of education. These classes are held by teachers of higher pedagogical education, occasionally by researchers with academic practice, with scientific degrees of a doctor or habilitated doctor<sup>23</sup>.

In the Catholic schools, for the sake of comprehensive cultural education, a huge number of extracurricular classes are organized: choral (singing of Gregorian chants and secular works), vocal-instrumental (schola), theatrical, artistic, journalistic. They regularly perform in theatres, operas, concerts, museums, movies, exhibitions, moreover, they organize computer and driver's licence courses. Besides classrooms, they make other rooms accessible for the students: rooms suitable for quiet work, dormitory rooms, gymnasiums, school sports fields, canteens and buffets. The schools also have chapels, which places serve as stages of individual, ecclesiastical and social spiritual development (Paszek 1996), where the students, together with the parents, directors, teachers and administrative workers participate in various spiritual events, religious, national, patriotic ceremonies that have serious educational significance (Pawlak 1994).

In the years under discussion, for the purpose of free time education, Catholic schools organize domestic and foreign educational-religious journeys, pilgrimages to „the Holy Land”, Lourdes, Fatima, Rome, retreats (also free), school excursions, winter and summer camps in France, Italy, Germany, Great-Britain. The All-Poland Forum of Catholic Schools annually takes place in Czestochowa<sup>24</sup>. The non-obligatory extracurricular activities are held in class, interclass and interschool groups during excursions, foreign trips or interschool exchanges.

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<sup>23</sup> Two schools in Warsaw: John Paul II Family Union Lyceum and Catholic Economic Lyceum.

<sup>24</sup> In 2000 in Poland, Catholic schools are functioning in 145 cities, towns and villages (Cegielska 2000).

## APPENDIX

*Sums of payable tuition fees in certain Catholic schools in Poland, 1997-2004*

Types of schools	Sums of tuition fees in Polish zloty
Elementary schools	<b>0<sup>25</sup>, 180, 250, 300, 330, 400, 420</b>
Secondary grammar schools	<b>150, 180, 200, 250, 270, 320, 330, 380, 700</b>
Other lyceums and secondary schools	<b>0<sup>26</sup>, 150, 180, 200, 230, 250, 275, 280, 290, 300, 320<sup>27</sup>, 340, 350, 380, 420, 700<sup>28</sup></b>

<sup>25</sup> The No. 89 Onufry Kopczynski Piarist Primary School in Warsaw, founded in 1993, does not collect any tuition fees. The parents pay only for extra/additional classes, furthermore, they can put away donations for the benefit of the education and training of pupils.

<sup>26</sup> The Salesian Society's Public Lyceum in Zabrze does not collect any tuition fees.

<sup>27</sup> The sum of monthly-payable tuition fee in the St. Dominik Savio Salesian Private Lyceum in Wroclaw during the school year 2000/2001. In the Ursulan Sisters' Private Girls' Lyceum in Wroclaw during the school year 2002/2003 the tuition fee costs 200 zloties per month. Those students who use the dormitory pay plus 250 zloties per month.

<sup>28</sup> The sum of tuition fee in the school year 2003/2004 in a lyceum found in the centre of Warsaw. In comparison I publish that between 2005-2007 in a lyceum found in the centre of Warsaw, students pay 750 zloties tuition fee and 550 zloties for the dormitory per month throughout 12 months. However, during the school year of 2006-2007 in the Ursulan Sisters' Lyceum students pay 330 zloties tuition fee and 220 zloties for the dormitory.

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ELEONÓRA MOLNÁR

## THE CONDITIONS OF FUNCTIONING OF DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN UKRAINE

The present research deals with denominational schools and their place in the Ukrainian educational system, as well as in the life of Subcarpathian Hungarians, for such school type is only found in Subcarpathia within Ukraine. Subcarpathia nowadays is the south-western part of Ukraine. This region belonged to Hungary till 1920, between the two world wars, for a short period of time, it was a part of Czechoslovakia, and then from 1944 to the transformation of the 1990s it was a province of the Soviet Union. Since this region is located at the feet of the Carpathian Mountains, its multiethnic population calls their homeland Subcarpathia. However, due to the fact that there was a time when it was attached to the Soviet empire, the official name became Transcarpathia, which refers to the point of view of the new centre of power. In the eyes of the Soviet and later the Ukrainian administrative centre, Subcarpathia is on the other side of the Carpathian Mountains. Because of the official interpretation, all organisations in Subcarpathia have to wear the name “Transcarpathia”. In this paper, when we would like to refer to the institution, we accommodate to the official Ukrainian use of the region’s appellation, which is “Transcarpathia”, but when we talk about the area itself, we use “Subcarpathia”. We analyze the following typical characteristics of the institutions: religious diversity, the legal background of their functioning, financing, and the conditions of founding of the six institutions in accordance with definite criteria. This part of the study acquaints the reader with the religious diversity of Ukraine’s population, paying special attention to Subcarpathia’s Hungarian population, their religious diversity in comparison with other nations. The Subcarpathian Hungarians, at the beginning of the 1990s, at the last stage of transformations in the Carpathian basin were the first to establish not only a Hungarian-language higher educational institution, but also denominational schools that were alien to the Ukrainian educational system; the author also describes the legal means available at that time to the aforementioned national minority and the legal background necessary for the foundation of the institution.

The Ukrainian nation emerged as a result of unusual ethnic and historical process. It was formed on the break-even point of various ethno-cultural, social, economic, political, and religious systems. After the division of Christianity, the Ukrainian nation was separated into two historical-cultural zones: Orthodox and Catholic. The historical-cultural separation was also

caused by the fact that apart from religious division, there were strong administrative, political, ethnic and language differences within the nation. Thus, one of the characteristic features of the Ukrainian culture was the existence of regional differences that was present even in the self-identification (Arel 1995). There were no state-building traditions that would eliminate these regional differences.

## Denominational Proportions

### *The religious diversity of Ukraine's population*

The last census in Ukraine took place in December, 2001. Before that year, the Soviet census was held in 1989. In compliance with the international practice, censuses are to be carried out every decade, thus it should have been done in 1999. Due to the lack of financial means for this kind of procedure, the following census could only be discharged on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December, 2001. There are no exact data concerning the religious division of Ukraine as far as it was not asked during the census.

Ukraine's population in conformity with the 2001 census comprises 48 241 000 people. The majority of the population is Orthodox in their faith, though mainly in the western regions populated by Poles and Hungarians, a large number are Roman Catholics. The national religion of the western Ukrainian territories is the Byzantine-rite Catholic belief. The division of the country's population concerning the main confessions forms the following picture. Sparsely, but mainly in diasporas, there are many Jews, the majority of whom do not practise their religion, however, as far as their religion and national identity are closely interrelated, this fact is significant in itself.

The Orthodox Church has the largest religious community in Ukraine. However, they do not belong to one autocephal church: the majority of the church community function as part of the Moscow patriarchate, while the other part belongs to the Kyiv patriarchate. The Orthodox Church is considered to be the religion of not only the Ukrainians, but also numerous national minorities including the Russians, Byelorussians, and Moldovans. The presence of two patriarchates divides the population. It can be observed that in homogeneous, as to their mother tongue Ukrainian settlements, there are two Orthodox Churches. It is characteristic that the previously built churches belong to the Kyiv patriarchate, while the majority of the newly built ones are under Moscow's control. The situation is still more complex in Western Ukraine, where the Byzantine-rite Catholic Church, after Ukraine's declaration of independence, became legal – once again it became recognized by the state. Under the Soviet rule, the Byzantine-rite Catholic Church was banned, and the priests that did not return to the old orthodox religion were

sent to the Gulag. The part of the believers who kept their Byzantine-rite Catholic belief were forced to hold illegal rituals and religious life, and in such a way they saved their faith. Some priests maintained underground secret schools to train young priest-apprentices (Botlik 1997).

After Ukraine's independence, the first decade was characterized by the revival of the church that almost turned into a religious confrontation. The community opposition after the rehabilitation of the Byzantine-rite Catholic Church concentrated mainly on church property. The Byzantine-rite Catholic Churches were used by the predominant orthodox believers who were reluctant to give up their acquired rights, while the Byzantine-rite Catholics claimed their former property. In many places and settlements there were hunger strikes, sit-ins on Christmas before the churches, in their gardens, on cemeteries the believers held masses out in the open air till the state intervened in and offered consolidating help. In many cases, to solve the conflict, one confession, usually the Orthodox was offered building sites free of charge, or a church was built at the expense of the state. In those settlements where there were two churches, they were shared or distributed between the confessions, sometimes masses of different confessions followed one another, which did not eliminate the conflicts altogether.

#### *The religious distribution of the Subcarpathian Hungarians*

Ukraine does not have a central database concerning the population's religious belief. In Subcarpathia the churches themselves keep books concerning their believers, but these are not published. The available publications deal mainly with the history of the churches, or show the role of dioceses in the struggle for independence. In some places the statistics either misrepresents the reality or is outdated.

The non-Hungarian population of Subcarpathia differs in its religion. The majority of local Ukrainians / Rusyns are orthodox in their faith, totalling about 700 000 (Szanyi 2004). After the collapse of the Soviet regime, many people returned to the Byzantine-rite Catholic faith that had been banned for decades, but still they are less numerous in number in comparison with the Orthodox Church believers. The local Byzantine-rite Catholic believers have an episcopate which they would like to discontinue, due to central national and political reasons, and to place it under the jurisdiction of an off-Carpathian episcopate. The local Slovak and German population is Roman Catholic in its faith, but more and more widespread are small churches and sects among the multiethnic population. The greatest number of those who are separated from the historical church became members of the Jehovah's Witnesses Church.

The Hungarian population of Transcarpathia is Christian, and mainly attends the Reformed Church; their number is 77734 people according to 2003

data, and that amounts to 62 per cent of Subcarpathia's population (Szanyi 2004) (1<sup>st</sup> Annex), and 70 per cent of the Subcarpathian Hungarian population (2<sup>nd</sup> Annex). Therefore, it can be assumed that the Reformed Church practically performs the role of a national church.

The Transcarpathian Reformed Church consists of three dioceses: the Ung Diocese includes 24 congregations, the Ugocsa Diocese unites 29 congregations, the Bereg Diocese comprises 37 congregations (Szanyi 2004). The current bishop of the Transcarpathian Reformed Church is Zán Fábíán Sándor.

In the life of Subcarpathian Hungarians, not only the Reformed Church but also the Roman Catholic Apostolic Governing body (headquarters in Munkács) and the Munkács Byzantine-rite Catholic Episcopate play an important role.

The Subcarpathian Roman Catholic believers are supposed to be approximately 65 thousand in number. Their majority, about 85 per cent, is Hungarian, eight per cent Slovak, and seven per cent claim German to be their mother tongue (Botlik – Dupka 1991, 119; Csáti – Dióssi 1992, 179). Since 1996, Antal Majnek has been the bishop of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Governing body, who came to Subcarpathia from Hungary as a franciscan priest and worked mainly for the benefit of sparsely populated Hungarians on the Upper Tisza territory. At present, among all the historical churches in Subcarpathia, the Roman Catholic Church is the one who best serves the Hungarian population and organizes Sunday schools.

In 1996 in Subcarpathia, the Byzantine-rite Catholic Church numbered about 30 thousand Hungarian believers (Lajos 1996, 15), but according to 2005 data (Szabó 2006), their number is less than 20 thousand. The Munkács Byzantine-rite Catholic Diocese consists of 16 deaconates (3<sup>rd</sup> Annex), among which the Beregszász deaconate is the largest, consisting of three districts with as much as 50 communities. Moreover, there are places where prayers are partly in Hungarian (Fancsika, Gödényháza – Nagyszőlős deaconate). Where the priest knows Hungarian, the prayer is in Hungarian. The present bishop of the Byzantine-rite Catholic Diocese in Munkács is Milan Sasik<sup>29</sup>.

## Legal Background

In this subsection of this study we would like to analyse those two laws of the legal process that deal with freedom of worship and religious education.

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<sup>29</sup> Milan Sasik is a Roman Catholic of Slovak origin.

Ukraine's law on freedom of worship and religious communities was adopted in 1991, the law on education was amended in 1996. Clauses 6, 8 and 9 of the law on education determine the relation between the church and education. According to the *sixth clause*, education is independent from political parties, civil and religious communities. In compliance with the *eighth clause*, the educational and behavioural process in the educational institutions is to be organized in such a way that no political, civil or religious community could exercise influence on them. These clauses clearly state that the students and pupils cannot be made in any way to join any political or church event during the educational process. The *ninth clause* of the law on education dwells on the interrelation between the church and the educational institutions. In conformity with the law in Ukraine, the educational institutions (irrespective of the fact whether they are state or private) are separated from the church (religious communities), except for those establishments that were founded by the church. In accordance with the *sixth clause* of Ukraine's law on freedom of worship and religious communities, the latter shall have the right to establish educational establishments (on grounds of their inner statutes), as well as study groups to train the younger and the older generation. For this purpose they shall have the right to use their own real property as well as rented premises.

Thus, having analysed the laws, we have come to the conclusion that Ukraine in full compliance with Orthodox traditions supports mainly that form of religious training that is necessary for religious professions in churches. In conformity with Orthodox customs, the church never performed secular education, never maintained institutions recognized as a part of the school system providing general and compulsory training for the school-age students, unlike the Roman Catholic or the Reformed Church in other countries, and as in this region before the Soviet authority. It means that the churches have only the right to establish institutions exclusively for training their own priests or to establish religious courses for grown-ups and children in their own premises or in rented ones but only after the regular classes. In those settlements, especially in villages where the population was religious after Ukraine proclaimed independence, the parents asked the directors of the educational establishments to let Bible classes be held at school, and it is still so in many settlements, in some village schools Bible classes were even introduced into the timetable. Nowadays it is becoming more and more characteristic for churches to run independent Bible classes, educational establishments where they arrange their own church life and that is conditioned by the fact that the churches were given back their buildings.

The law on education lets legally registered social organizations establish educational institutions. This enactment meant in the mid 1990s the possibility for the historical Hungarian churches to establish church

educational establishments (kindergartens, schools). The churches pursuant to their inner regulations properly established and officially registered according to the model of the Fund for the Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute a charitable fund whose main aim was the establishment and maintenance of an educational institution. In such a form, not the church but a social civil charitable organization was the founder of the educational institution. The church was only the indirect founder of the institution, and that is the reason why in the Ukrainian language there is no reference to any church or any religious denomination.

In 2005, the government bill „Meeting with people” was adopted; it postulated that the state should cooperate with church organizations, and at the same time it should be separated from the church. The state is to guarantee equal conditions for the functioning of churches. The churches must not be discriminated against. The task of the state is to make the historical churches interested in undertaking tasks in the social sector (Barta 2005). The church discharges these activities to the extent of its possibilities.

## **The Conditions of Establishment of Subcarpathian Denominational Schools**

The church and education had been traditionally inseparable for centuries, but the spread of the Soviet ideology considered it an obstacle. It not only separated church and education, but also tried to terminate the activity of churches by promoting atheism. After the reorganization of Subcarpathia and the collapse of the USSR, and due to the change of the state system transformation was due to happen in the newly formed country, while this change was also taking place in Hungary. The interests of the Transcarpathian Hungarians in the newly formed Ukrainian state were advocated by the resurgent intellectual layer of the society, the civil sphere, and the church. It gave rise to the establishment of those social organizations (Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Society – THCS, Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogic Society – THPS), that made it possible to attain political, cultural, and professional representation, and contributed together with the historical churches, among them the Reformed Church, to the establishment of the first Hungarian language higher educational institution (Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogic Institute, now the II. Rákóczi Ferenc Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute – II. RK THI), and later contributed to the establishment of religious public schools.

The conditions for the appearance of Reformed Church gymnasiums in Subcarpathia were formed in the late 1980s, when the political oppression was mitigated, and the number of priests in Subcarpathia lessened due to the

Soviet regime that had been in power for several decades. To train new church intelligentsia, the Hungarians asked for help, and the parent country heartily accepted the delegated young people. In the first years, the choice was based on personal relations, and that caused that the accepting institutions were not satisfied with the scientific level – the reason for the poor educational level was seen in the poor educational level of the Hungarian secondary schools (Orosz 1997). It caused such a condition at the turn of the twentieth century that put at risk the establishment of a gymnasium for the Transcarpathian Hungarian Reformed Church community, though in Transcarpathia there never was a denominational secondary school<sup>30</sup>, due to the low proportion of pupils who went on to learn in secondary school. The secondary school, as far as Sárospatak, was near enough and it was thought unnecessary.

In 1991, the Reformed Church had the legal possibility to establish an independent church gymnasium, but the church did not use this possibility: „Although the possibility was given, there were no premises, or the premises were acceptable though not available”<sup>31</sup>. It also means that the church proved not able to claim its rights, this ability of the church appeared to be powerless, or the church was not aware enough of the possibilities, or had not enough specialists with professional knowledge and vocation. The relations between the pedagogues and the church were characterized by tension and lack of trust. The Reformed Church viewed the pedagogues as the servants of the Communist regime, which was characteristic of the majority of post-Soviet countries (Szemerszki 1992). And the pedagogues felt that their professional knowledge and pedagogic training were being questioned, the activity of the church was branded as if they were establishing convents, training centres for priests (Orosz 1997).

At last, in 1991, The Transcarpathian Reformed Church together with the Ady Endre Secondary School in Csenger established in the latter institution a Reformed Church gymnasium class for the Transcarpathians starting from the following academic year. Supposedly, together with the sincere wish to help the administration of the secondary school in Csenger was motivated by the fact that Hungary that year changed for the normative financial support that was closely connected with the number of pupils and that motivated the educational institutions to accept the greatest possible number of pupils. As a result of this law, the management of the borderline, Hungarian gymnasiums did their utmost to accept as many Hungarian mother tongue pupils from across the border as possible partly to increase the

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<sup>30</sup> Before the Soviet rule, churches maintained the whole of primary school system in this region.

<sup>31</sup> Horkai, László, an honorary bishop of the Transcarpathian Reformed Church, interview

normative financial support. Moreover, the pupils' study in Hungary endangered the pedagogue's work in Subcarpathia as far as due to lack of students there was no need in teachers. The intervention of Ukraine, the confrontation of the pedagogues and the church resulted in the intervention of the society and of the trade unions.

The management of the THPS had some reservations concerning the starting class in Csenger, for example, the pupils accepted to school were still children and pursuant to the laws of that time they had no passport, which meant that their stay abroad had no proper legal background. Thus, as foreign citizens in Hungary, they could not count on state health care, they had no right for subsidy for books to study from, the pupils of gymnasiums were not supposed to get grants, therefore the financing of current expenses remained unsettled. To solve this problem, the management wrote a letter to Hungary's Minister of Education asking to settle these issues (Orosz 1997).

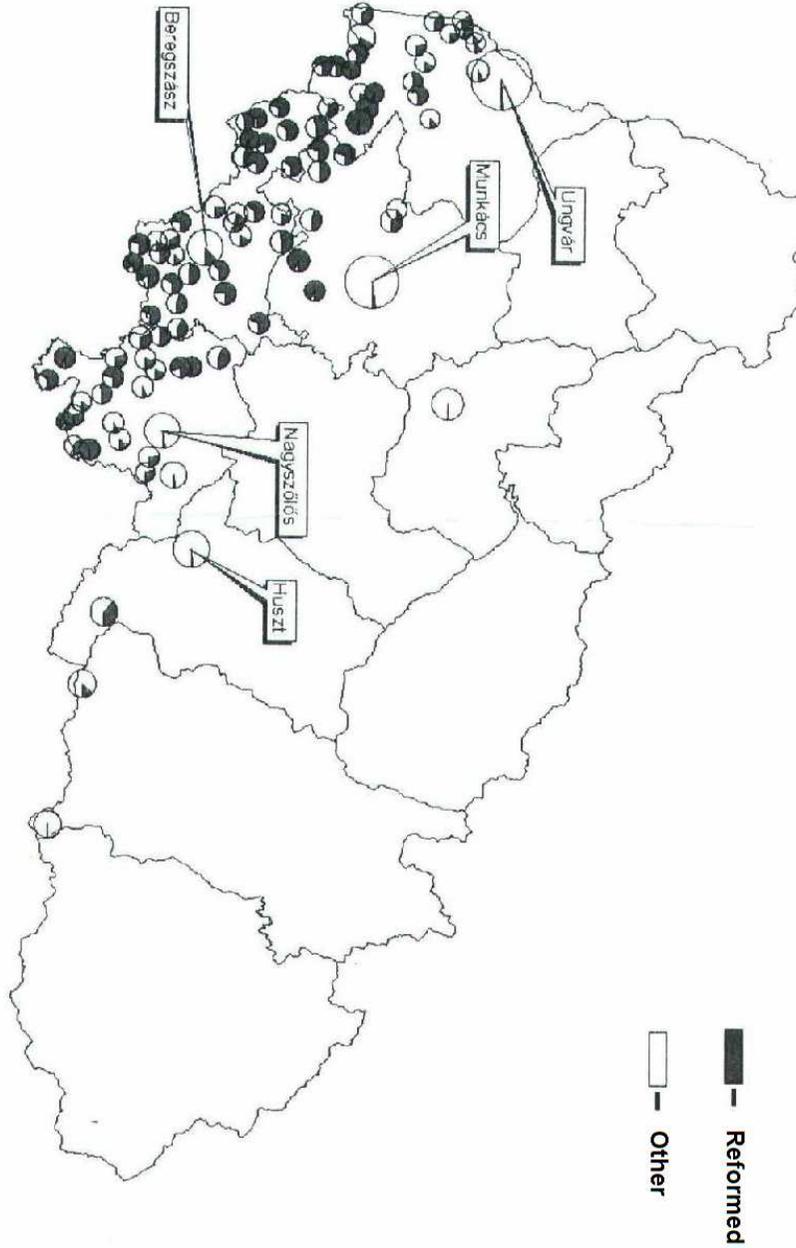
A significant step forward was done on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September, 1992 when the parties concerned (THCS, THPS, The Transcarpathian Reformed Church, The Ministry of Education and Culture of Hungary, the Trans-Tisza Diocese of Hungarian Reformed Church, Ady Endre Secondary School in Csenger signed an agreement, according to which to solve the arising problems starting from the following academic year, the Ady Endre Secondary School in Csenger will not form classes for Subcarpathian children. Besides, they will help to establish a Reformed Church secondary educational institution in Subcarpathia starting from the 1993/94 academic year. Then began the process of agreements with the Ukrainian state bodies, the Transcarpathian Reformed Church, agreements concerning the location, and the preparation of all the necessary documents. Thus, due to the mediation of social institutions such a discourse was made possible in which the parent state, the national minority and the Ukrainian government bodies took an active part. The parent state's role was such that if it did not hinder, then it did not approve of the great number of the Subcarpathian Hungarian youth study in Hungary, though this role will change its quality as far as Ukraine will have to finance these new educational establishments. After Ukraine's becoming a state in 1991, it could not stabilize the condition for a long time, thus, the Subcarpathian Hungarians were represented by THCS and THPS as social and professional institutions that used their legal right referring to that clause of the law on education in accordance with which social institutions and funds could maintain legally registered establishments. They established the Fund for the Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute and according to that pattern the reformed Church established a civil organization, a charity fund whose main aim was to establish and maintain an educational institution. Thus, it seemed that the issue of establishing religious public schools that had no historical counterpart and were an alien element in the Ukrainian

educational system, that were usually based on the ninth form of a secondary school and presented a three year high level education, was being solved. The following problem was the choice of a location and a building.

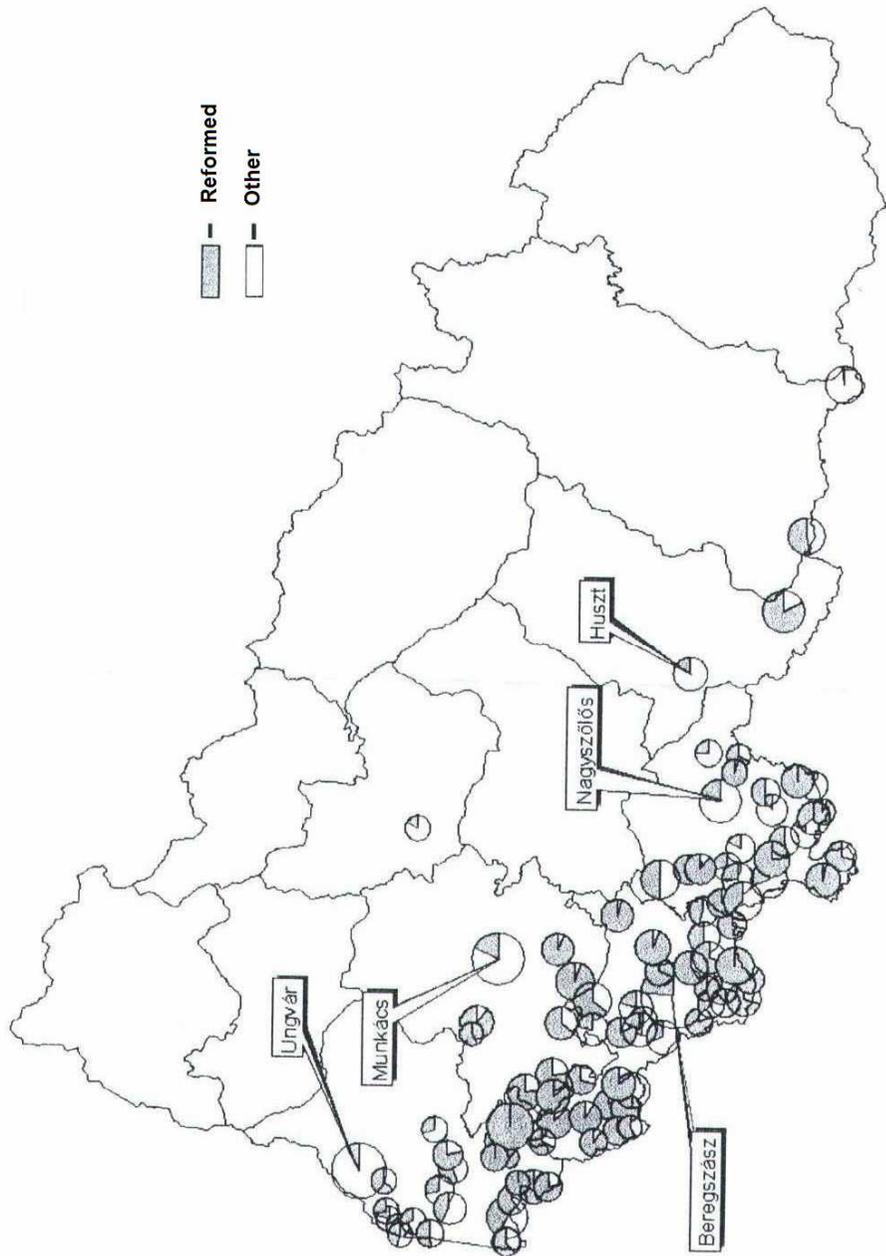
In the choice of the location, there appeared the names of many parishes in villages with a populous religious community (Annex 4): Tivadar, Nagydobrony, Bányú, Beregszász and lastly Nagyberég were chosen by the management of churches, the decisive point was the big proportion of Hungarian language population. Having this in mind, despite the initial difficulties in 1995 in Nagydobrony and Tivadar, one Reformed Church gymnasium was established in each. In 1997, the Técső Lyceum started functioning. The youth could freely choose between these lyceums the main advantage of which was that they were public schools that enabled the teachers to control the pupils' educational and behavioural development. Before that, an aspiration for centralization was formed which wanted to establish a central skills-development institution that would have enormous basis and a parallel class. Now we can see that this aspiration was not realized. Moreover, in 1998, the Roman Catholic Church established its first lyceum class in one of the biggest cities in Subcarpathia (Munkács), then in 2003 the Byzantine-rite Catholic Church started its first class in one of the villages with a populous Byzantine-rite Catholic population (Karácsfalva).

The possibility to establish public schools was made possible by the intelligentsia's quick understanding of the circumstances, as well as their actions during the change of the state system. The first to agree was the management of the national churches, especially the Reformed Church, and it was due to the fact that one of the founding members of the II. Rákóczi Ferenc Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute was the Transcarpathian Reformed Church. Thus, due to the active representation and support of the social and professional organizations the reformed Church organizations were the first to establish an educational establishment in Subcarpathia which soon redeemed the hopes connected with it. The initial confrontation has changed by now and that can be proved by empirical investigations: the parents, students, and pedagogues consider such institutions as elite and skills-developing. That was mainly conditioned by the fact that they are public schools: organized free time, optional courses together with obligatory classes, afternoon activities, students selected in accordance with their entrance exam results, tender-chosen pedagogues, well equipped infrastructure, and necessarily the Christian spirit of public schools.

Annex 1: The proportion of the Reformed Church believers among the whole population



Annex 2: The proportion of the Reformed Church believers in the Hungarian population

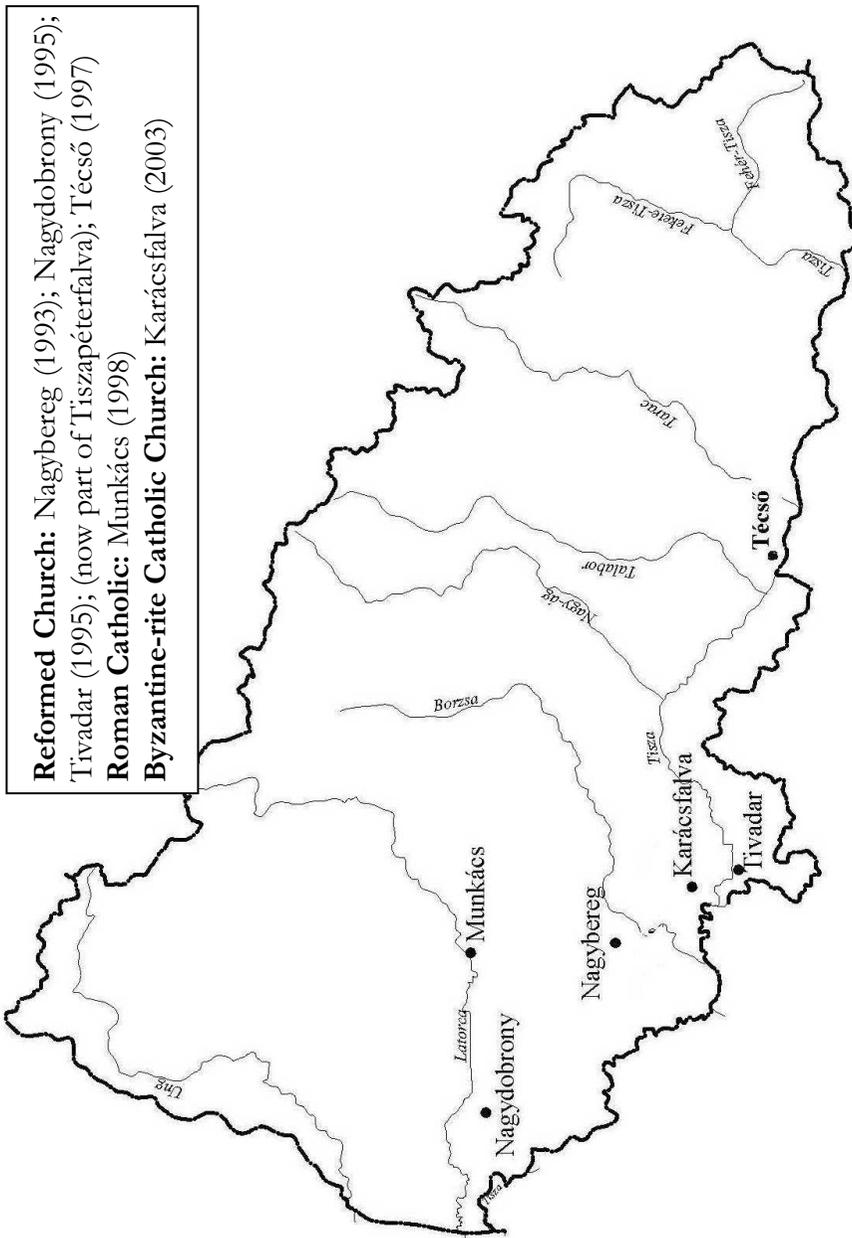


**Annex 3: The Munkács Byzantine-rite Catholic Diocese according to the 2005 data (Source: Szabó 2006)**

Number	Deaconate	Number of communities	Population
1.	Nagyberezna	6	3000
2.	<i>Nagyszőlős</i> <sup>32</sup>	23	17000
3.	Volóc	11	5000
4.	Ilosva	25	20000
5.	Mizshirja	23	14000
6.	<i>Munkács district</i>	48	19000
7.	<i>The town of Munkács</i>	6	21000
8.	Szolyva	11	8000
9.	Perecseny	18	3000
10.	<i>Rahó</i>	20	5000
11.	<i>Técső</i>	25	11000
12.	<i>Huszt</i>	14	19000
13.	Nagyberezna	6	2500
14.	<i>Ungvár district</i>	33	16000
15.	<i>The town of Ungvár</i>	12	40000
16.	<i>Beregszász</i>	50	15000

<sup>32</sup> In the deaconates typed in italics there are Hungarians, but there is no exact data as to their number

## Annex 4: The Subcarpathian public schools are in the following towns



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LÁSZLÓ MURVAI

## THE PLACE OF DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS IN THE HUNGARIAN EDUCATION OF ROMANIA

### Background

From the point of view of jurisdiction, the year 2003 was decisive for denominational education. In October, 2003, the modified text of the Constitution was published. This brought fundamental changes to the Constitution of 1991, in terms of denominational education.

The jurisdiction of 1991 described education as a two-legged segment, whose one leg is state education and the other one is private education. According to the version of 2003, education has changed into a three-legged structure. The modified fundamental law disposes of the organisation of *state, private and denominational* education. As a result the two-third laws (religious, educational), departmental orders, etc. were published.

The educational news of the academic year of 2003-2004 was the following: (a) the generalization of ten-class education; (b) the change of rate between theoretical and vocational education; (c) the maintenance on level of the number of registration at denominational schools; (d) all of these are worthy to be separate studies. I will discuss just a few theoretical questions below.

Considering point a) a lot of questions has still not been cleared up. At the moment, there is a legal framework, which is empty in its contents: the law ordains the generalization of ten-class education, but there is no approved syllabus, there are not programmed, and there is a lack of text-books. What is more there was not enough money in the current budget for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade text-books, which are free of charge (because the budget was not coordinated with the changes in education). In fact, it was solved with a stroke of the pen – thus, the twelve-class education could have been generalized as well. There are no preliminary studies; questions of content are not cleared up, however the new academic year started in September according to the new criteria. How and what will they teach in the 9<sup>th</sup> class? - the ad hoc regulations will decide. In 2006, there were some changes: the propositions needed for the 'real' generalization of ten-class education were included in the budgetary plan.

Points b) and c) will be discussed together according to the view-points of the title. The generalization of ten-class education means in numbers that registration in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade will be of 100%. But the inner rate

of registration will be modified according to point b): the rate of vocational profiles will increase and the rate of theoretical profiles will decrease. This rate was 65%: 35% in the academic year of 2002-2003, the next year it was 55%. There were 315 000 places allocated for the same number of 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

This shift in proportions brought about the debate of denominational education in Hungarian language. If the number of theoretical education decreases nation-wide, the number of registrations in denominational schools would have decreased automatically, as well. The debate took place only after we had given content to definitions: we had to clear up that the Romanian notion '*invățământul teologic*' is not identical with the Hungarian '*magyar egyházi oktatás*'. The Romanian notion means unambiguously religious education and the training of ecclesiastical person, however the Hungarian notion means, according to its historical traditions – as in many parts of Europe, educational section led by one of the denominations which may have theological profiles (with religious classes), and so-called secular profiles (Mathematics-Physics, Foreign Languages, Informatics, etc.). It is a fact that denominational education is 15% of the Hungarian secondary school education – this would have decreased according to point b) mentioned above. Since this debate on notions has lasted for ages, Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR) considered arriving at a political agreement in a careful measure the governing party. According to this, the number of registration at Hungarian denominational schools cannot decrease as compared to the previous academic year, 2002-2003. Since the change in the most important points occurred in the Romanian educational system after the political protocol, DAHR had to go on long, political debates, so the Hungarian denominational education not lose from its registration numbers (Murvai 2005, Murvai et al. 2006).

## **How did the parameters of Hungarian denominational education develop?**

### *Questions of network*

In the academic year of 2002-2003, there were 134 secondary schools with hungarian educational language nation-wide. 120 of these were of denominational profiles. According to statistics 14,92% of the national secondary schools with Hungarian language were of denominational character, that is Reformed, Catholic, Unitarian and Adventist. If we compare these data with the national indices, we will get the following parameters: in the academic year mentioned above, there were 1388 secondary schools in Romania, out of which 72 were denominational high-schools, that is a proportion of 5,18%. Hungarian denominational secondary schools play a

greater part, 9,74% greater, in education than what is characteristic nation-wide. This fact is one of the positive certainties of Hungarian education. Let us do another calculation of proportions: let us compare the national data with the data of Hungarian denominational education. There are 72 denominational secondary schools nation-wide, out of which 20 are of Hungarian language: that is 27,77% of the Romanian denominational education, which is made up by the Hungarian denominational education. Comparing this to the number of Hungarians nation-wide, it is a real high proportion.

The data of Hungarian denominational education in the year 2003-2004 are summarized in the following chart:

County	Name of secondary school and location	Year of foundation	Number of pupils in the year of foundation	Number of pupils in the year 2003-2004
<b>Bihar</b>	Lorántffy Zsuzsanna Református Líceum Nagyvárad	1991	60	209
	Szent László Római Katolikus Líceum Nagyvárad	1991	60	192
<b>Fehér</b>	Római Katolikus Líceum Gyulafehérvár	1990	21	108
	Református felekezeti osztályok a Bethlen Gábor Líceum keretein belül Nagyenyed	1991	25	91
<b>Hargita</b>	„Segítő Mária” Római Katolikus Líceum Csíkszereda	1991	122	251
	Szent Erzsébet Római Katolikus Líceum Felsőlok	1994	30	173
	Tamási Áron Líceum (római katolikus osztály)	1994	26	24
	Református Líceum Székelyudvarhely	1994	25	188

	Unitárius Líceum Székelykeresztúr	1993	31	113
<b>Kolozs</b>	Református Líceum Kolozsvár	1990	223	334
	Római Katolikus Líceum Kolozsvár	1993	25	111
	Unitárius Líceum Kolozsvár	1993	30	181
	„Maranatha” Adventista Líceum Kolozsvár	1992	20	-
<b>Kovászna</b>	Református Líceum Sepsiszentgyörgy	1993	32	267
	Római Katolikus felekezeti osztályok a Nagy Mózes Líceum keretein belül Kézdivásárhely	2000	15	15
	Református Líceum Kézdivásárhely	1994	21	210
<b>Maros</b>	Református Líceum Marosvásárhely	2000	106	283
<b>Szatmár- németi</b>	Hám János Római Katolikus Líceum Szatmár	1991	29	214
	Református Líceum Szatmár	1991	50	344
	I. Calasantius Római Katolikus Líceum Nagykároly	1992	30	251
<b>Szilágy</b>	Református Líceum Zilah	1991	45	328
<b>Temes</b>	„Gerhardinum” Római Katolikus Líceum Temesvár	1992	10	55
Altogether	22	-	1036	3942

\* Secondary and post-secondary education

*Chart no.1*

As a comparison, let us look at the national data of another academic year, summed up in the following chart.

The Romanian denominational education in the academic year of 1998-1999:

Denomination	According to educational language						Comments
	Number of Romanian schools	Number of Romanian pupils	Number of Hungarian schools	Number of Hungarian pupils	Number of Turkish schools	Number of Turkish pupils	
<b>1. Orthodox</b>							
A. Seminary	39	5916	-	-	-	-	-
B. Post-secondary*	9	993	-	-	-	-	-
C. Parish **	19	1187	-	-	-	-	-
<b>2. Roman Catholic</b>							
A. Denominational secondary schools	4	824	11	1346	-	-	Sciences and Human Sciences
B. Post-secondary	3	374	2	147	-	-	-
<b>3. Uniat</b>							
A. Denominational secondary schools	5	711	-	-	-	-	-
B. Post-secondary	1	48	-	-	-	-	-
<b>4. Reformed</b>							
A. . Denominational secondary schools	-	-	9	1410	-	-	Sciences and Human

							Sciences
B. Postsecondary	-	-	9	169	-	-	-
5. Unitarian							
A. Denominational secondary schools	-	-	2	202	-	-	-
6. Evangelical							
A. Denominational secondary schools	-	-	-	27			In the frame of secondary school of Sacele
7. Baptist							
A. Denominational secondary schools	7	1174	-	-	-	-	Sciences and Human Sciences
B. Postsecondary	3	430	-	-	-	-	-
8. Whitsun							
A. Denominational secondary schools	4	1406	-	-	-	-	-
B. Postsecondary	3	310	-	-	-	-	Sciences and Human Sciences
9. Adventist							
A. Denominational secondary schools	3	522	-	34	-	-	-
B. Postsecondary	1	144	-	-	-	-	-
10. Moslem	-	-	-	-			
A. Seminar	-	-	-	-	1	145	-

\* The denominational post-secondary schools have medical profiles in the case of all denomination. \*\* Vocational schools after eight-class training.

*Chart no.2*

Let us interpret the data of chart no.2: In the academic year of 1998-1999, ten denominations organized secondary education. All three types of schools were run by the Orthodox Church. Structurally, the seminar is in fact the 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> grade, training of priests at secondary level; the post-secondary medical and theological are based on secondary qualification. Vocational school, as it has already been mentioned, is based on eight-class qualification. Besides the Orthodox, there are six other denominations that organized only secondary and post-secondary training, and three only secondary training.

The educational institutions mentioned above teach in three languages; Romanian, Hungarian and Turkish. There are theoretical profiles as well in secondary schools of four denominations.

In the academic year of 2006-2007, there were 1421 secondary schools nation-wide. 74 of these were denominational, that is 5,2% of the secondary schools. In 145 secondary schools, the educational language was Hungarian. 22 of these, that is 15,1%, had denominational profiles.

*Registration questions*

At the study of the proportions of registration at denominational schools, we will follow the logic of analysis of network questions. In the academic year of 2002-2003, there were 29 415 pupils registered at Hungarian secondary schools. 3 295 pupils attended denominational school, this means 11,2 % of the Hungarian secondary pupils. Let us see the national indices: in the academic year under discussion, there were 740 404 secondary school students, out of which 13460 attended theological profiles – that is only 1,81%. The national proportion of registration at denominational school is thus 9,39% smaller than the Hungarian. But we have one more task: out of the above-mentioned 13 460 pupils, 3 295 graduated in Hungarian language (24,47%).

In the academic year of 2006-2007, a total of 780 925 were registered at secondary schools. 12188 of these attended theological profiles, that is 1,5% of the pupils. Altogether 30 968 pupils attended Hungarian secondary schools. 3 280 of these were registered at denominational schools, that is 10,5%.

*Why is Hungarian denominational education stronger than the presented national indices?*

The question cannot be explained just by statistics. In the background of numerical data, there is the historical reality of 50-60 years (what is more of 500-600). We know that denominational schools disappeared with the

nationalization of the educational system in 1948. There remained only the priest training of university level. Today it is obvious for all of us that worship was considered a seditious act. This had two projections in Transylvania: both school and church were affected. They are both institutions of forming and maintaining identity; this idea was composed by Sándor Reményik in his famous poem. The re-establishment of Hungarian denominational education after 1990 is beyond free worship, the manifestation of the demand of Hungarian identity. This is a more direct explanation. But the question has a wider background. Throughout the history of the one thousand-year-old Hungarian education, denominational education of secondary level had a decisive role. Benedictine schools for example, which, besides the teaching of theology and Christian values, had an important role in teaching sciences as well. We should not forget that this type of education was of deeply ecumenical character: these schools were attended not only by Catholic children, but of Reformed as well as Armenians, Jews, and at the same time Reformed and Unitarian schools were attended by students of all denomination. An important fact for the profession is that the priest did not have any other activities, only teaching, he did not have a second job, difficulties in the family, thus he could dedicate his whole life to teaching, which obviously had its effect on the quality of education.

But let us have a look at the present situation. Denominational schools have an invaluable role where state education is limited: in regions where there are few Hungarians, (for example counties of Sibiu, Timis, Aiud, Bistrita-Nasaud). Children from these regions obtain psychical and material help at denominational schools, without which they would lose their identity.

The attractiveness of denominational schools is increased by their so-called secular classes: there are classes of Informatics, Mathematics-Physics, Foreign Languages, etc. 1269 pupils from a number of 3295 pupils at denominational schools (Roman Catholic, Reformed, Unitarian Adventist, etc.) chose secular profiles.

### *How can it be continued?*

At the presentation of the actual background of the topic I mentioned that denominational education is the issue of continuous debates, mostly due to the lack of accordance between Christian and Orthodox notions. The Orthodox mentality hardly accepts that different denominations have different traditions. The question of introducing a training form is not even arisen by the Orthodox, since it runs effectively by the minority churches. The cause of the problem derives from the incomprehension that why should there be denominational schools which have traditions totally strange and irreconcilable to Orthodox traditions, and what are their social function.

Nowadays there is one more danger: the Orthodox deem that the Romanians who are not of Orthodox denomination, may claim secular training, thus the spread of the virus cherished by minority education may carry in itself the danger of proselytism.

At last let us go back to politics. I once more would like to underline that the new Constitution of Romania guarantees the right to culture and education, too. At the proposition of DAHR, a modification was included in the law, according to which besides the two already accepted forms of education – state and private – denominational education is also accepted and guaranteed by law, from nursery school to university level. It is also up to us to profit from our constitutional rights.

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KATINKA BACSKAI

## **HUNGARIAN DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS IN SLOVAKIA**

The Doctoral Program of Educational Sciences in the University of Debrecen pays special attention to denominational educational institutions in Hungary and in Europe. There have already been a great number of studies in this field, and there are new findings at present as well. Among the Central European countries there are currently surveys about students studying in Hungary, Ukraine and Romania (Pusztai 2006, 2007), as well as teachers in Ukrainian schools where the language of education is Hungarian (Molnár 2007). In the spring of 2004, an interview-based survey was done within this University program with the aim of examining the religious and national identity of students studying in Hungarian denominational grammar schools in Slovakia. We did research in all the institutions existing at that time, and we only interviewed students before their finals. The quantitative survey was preceded by the procession of statistical data and a qualitative fieldwork. The present study wishes to elaborate on the experience of this fieldwork.

### **The Environment: National and Religious Rates in Slovakia**

According to the 2001 census in Slovakia, the population of the country is 5,379,455, including a Hungarian population of approximately 10%. The reason we state this as an approximation is because 520,528 people claimed their nationality to be Hungarian, which is 9.68 % of the basic number. With regard to language, different rates were found. 572,929 people claimed their mother tongue to be Hungarian, which is 10.56% of the people with a permanent address in Slovakia.

As compared with the data of the 1991 census, we can state that both rates have declined. Ten years ago 10.8% of people stated their nationality as Hungarian, and 11.5% said their mother tongue was Hungarian. In addition, there is a decline in the rate of Slovaks, while the categories of "other," both in nationality and language, are on the increase.

As for administrative division, Slovakia is subdivided into 8 kraje (singular - kraj, usually translated as regions, but actually meaning rather county). The "kraje" are subdivided into many okresy (sg. okres, usually translated as districts). Slovakia currently has 79 districts. It is typical to form regions and to orientate in north-south direction. The schools inspected by me belonged to the regions of Nitra and Banská Bystrica and to the districts

of Komárno, Levice and Rimavská Sobota at the time of the survey. (The number and borders of the districts are altered in about every two months.) The rates of Hungarians in the regions are 28% and 12%, respectively. In the district of Komárno it is 69% of the population, in the district of Levice 28% and in the district of Rimavská Sobota, 41,29%.

As a consequence, the situations are quite different in the schools of Komárno and Kolárovo, where the population is dominantly Hungarian, from the situation in Levice, where the Hungarians are scattered. (However, the situation of Šahy is unique. Although it belongs to Levice, it is located right on the border which makes a difference.)

*Table 1: Distribution of the permanent resident population according to nationality in the districts*

S. R., districts	Total Population	Nationality (%)		
		Hungarian	Slovakian	Other
Slovak Republic	<b>5 379 455</b>	<b>520528</b> <i>(9,68%)</i>	<b>4614854</b> <i>(85,79%)</i>	<b>244 073</b> <i>(4,54%)</i>
District of Nitra	<b>713 422</b>	<b>196609</b> <i>(27,56%)</i>	<b>499761</b> <i>(70,05%)</i>	<b>17 052</b> <i>(2,39%)</i>
District of Komárno	<b>108 556</b>	<b>74976</b> <i>(69,07%)</i>	<b>30079</b> <i>(27,71%)</i>	<b>3 501</b> <i>(3,23%)</i>
District of Levice	<b>120 021</b>	<b>33524</b> <i>(27,93%)</i>	<b>82993</b> <i>(69,15%)</i>	<b>3 504</b> <i>(2,92%)</i>
District of Banská Bystrica	<b>662 121</b>	<b>77795</b> <i>11,75%)</i>	<b>553865</b> <i>(83,65%)</i>	<b>30 461</b> <i>(4,60%)</i>
District of Rimavská Sobota	<b>83 124</b>	<b>34323</b> <i>(41,29%)</i>	<b>43492</b> <i>(52,32%)</i>	<b>5 309</b> <i>(6,39%)</i>

*Resource: Sčítanie obyvateľ'ov, domov a bytov 2001.*

With respect to religion in Slovakia, we found that 69% of the population was Roman Catholic and 2% was Reformed. A breakdown of the rates for the districts mentioned above is as follows:

Komárno had a 61% Roman Catholic population and a 17% Reformed population, Levice, 69 and 6% and Rimavská Sobota, 54 and 10%, respectively.

The rate of Catholics and Protestants was similar in both Slovakian and Hungarian populations. However, the Slovakian Protestants are mainly Evangelic, while the Hungarian Protestants are mainly Reformed. 11,6 % of the Roman Catholics and 78,2% of the Reformed are Hungarians by nationality<sup>33</sup>.

*Table 2: Distribution of the population with permanent residents according to denomination in the districts*

	Total Population	Religion			%	
		Roman Catholic	Evangelic	Greek Catholic	Reformed	Other
Slovak Republic	5 379 455	68,93%	6,93%	4,09%	2,04%	17,97%
District of Nitra	713 422	77,16%	3,35%	0,21%	4,69%	14,54%
District of Komárno	108 556	61,09%	3,47%	0,32%	16,72%	18,33%
District of Levice	120 021	69,05%	7,48%	0,24%	5,98%	17,23%
District of Banská Bystrica	662 121	62,42%	12,97%	0,84%	1,78%	21,99%
District of Rimavská Sobota	83 124	54,23%	12,82%	0,32%	9,86%	22,73%

*Resource: Sčítanie obyvateľov, domov a bytov 2001.*

<sup>33</sup> The figures of the 1991 census are from Gyurgyik's article: National and religious identity in the life of Slovakian Hungarians.

## The Hungarian Church and Educational Institutions in Slovakia

The scope of the church was greatly narrowed during the 40-year-long communist reign. After the change of regime it took the church more time to get revived, as compared to the other organizations of civil society. It was not easy to relieve cramps and inner restraints that accumulated over the course of those years (Gyurgyik 1996). The “Hungarian” denominations had an especially difficult situation to cope with. Within the Catholic Church the non-Hungarian denominational management hindered the establishment of the system of institutions. The Reformed church was in a difficult situation, too, because most of their properties were confiscated before the 1948 communist takeover. At that time they belonged to Hungary, so that compensation meant even more complications (Gyurgyik 1996).

After the change in regime the most obvious proof of religious freedom was the fact that the government made it possible to restart denominational schools. The establisher of these institutions was the church, as stated in law.

It was another difficulty that not even the leaders of denominations had any experience in institutional organizations, not to mention parents or teachers. The institutions themselves played an important role not only in religious education, but also in maintaining the spirit of what it means to be Hungarian, as instruction was only given in Hungarian in these schools. To keep one’s identity as an ethnic minority is possible only if the socialization in the family is strengthened by other specific socializing agents like schools (See Csepeli 1992).

Communities or dioceses established the first institutions in 1992. In September of 2003 the following institutions were also established:

(1) There are Catholic nursery schools in Štúrovo (Párkány), Tvrdošovce (Tardoskedd) és Komárno (Komárom). There are lower primary basic schools in Veľká Čalomija (Nagycsalomja), Ipeľské Predmostie (Ipolyhídvég), Olováry (Óvár) and Kleňany (Kelenye). There are Catholic nine-grade basic schools in Dunajská Streda (Dunaszerdahely), Šahy (Ipolyság), Plášťovce (Palást) and Komárno (Komárom). There are eight-grade grammar schools in Kolárovo (Gúta) and Šahy (Ipolyság) and a four-grade grammar school in Komárno.

(2) There are reformed nursery schools in Keť (Érsekkéty), a basic school in Dolný Štál (Alistál), Martovce (Martos), Keť (Érsekkéty), Rožňava

(Rozsnyó) and Vojany (Vaján), and grammar schools in Rimavská Sobota (Rimaszombat) és Levice (Léva)<sup>34</sup>.

## The grammar schools

*Figure 1: Denominational grammar schools in Slovakia where the language of instruction is Hungarian*



Starting from the west to east, the first one is in Komárno (Komárom) and is called **Marianum Magyar Tannyelvű Egyházi Gimnázium**. It was founded by the diocese of Bratislava (Pozsony) – Trnava (Nagyszombat), similar to the other 14 Catholic institutions with Hungarian instruction.

The grammar school was opened in September 2000, and the first class was started with 32 students. The school, which is situated in the city centre, has a friendly atmosphere. Marianum is not only a grammar school; it also has other parts such as a denominational nursery and basic school, also with Hungarian being the language of instruction.

When I asked the headmaster, István Stubenedek, about the school, the most important thing he wanted to tell me was that the school belongs to the Catholic Church, so their goal is to show that this institution is really Catholic. They wish to educate the whole human personality (this is what the etymology of the word catholic suggests: kat Holon). Both the education and the religious life are based on this principle. They follow the events of the liturgical year with spiritual exercises and commemorations. They try to

<sup>34</sup> The Hungarian names of the towns see in the brackets!

involve the parents into these religious practices, too. Mathematics and foreign languages emphasized more in education. Their students take part in national (Slovakian) and Hungarian competitions successfully.

Kolárovo (Gúta) is a medium sized town with a population of 11,000 people. An eight-grade, denominational grammar school was established by the Bratislava (Pozsony) – Trnava (Nagyszombat) diocese in 1992, after the change of regime, initiated by the mayor of that time. The school was named after the Virgin Mary. Both the former and the present headmasters make an effort to run a school that is Catholic not only in its name but also in its spirituality, meeting the requirements of the Catholic community that makes up 70% of the population. There was a six-grade Catholic school for boys and an eight-grade Catholic school for girls before the Second World War, but these were dissolved.

It sounds like a cliché, but it is really true in the case of **Nagyboldogasszony Nyolcéves Egyházi Gimnázium** that the school has a familiar atmosphere. Although the building itself is not ideal for an institution that has a lot of classes, the atmosphere inside the walls is excellent. I learned from the headmaster, Dr. Zoltán Priskin, that originally there was a nursery school operating in this building. There is not an entrance exam for the school. If the student or his parents think at any time that the institution is not living up to their expectations, they simply switch schools, although this is very rare. The headmaster and the teachers of the staff deal with the pupils a lot, not only during the periods, but outside the classroom as well. This requires time and energy from students and teachers alike. However, this is what makes it possible to educate the students morally, too.

We can find the school called **Magyar Tanításnyelvű Egyházi Gimnázium** near the castle in the city centre of Levice (Léva). It was the local Reformed congregation that proposed to establish a Hungarian grammar school with denominational maintenance in the settlement. As a result of this, in 1994 the education began in this institution. It was an estimable venture if we consider the fact that the language border is near and the rate of the Hungarian speaking population is low and declining.

This school is more liberal than the other institutions. The teachers do not put such a great emphasis on order and discipline. The institution is not in an easy situation, as the congregation is the founder and partly maintains the school. Consequently, all changes in the congregation affect the school as well. We must trust, however, that the school will go on functioning in spite of the outer attacks (appearing on the façade), and the inner difficulties.

Šahy (Ipolyság) is situated right on the border of Slovakia and Hungary. You can see from the town and the school itself that it has

experienced better times, too. The settlement was an official residence of the district, a real centre until the new borders cut off its scope of authority. Those who travel here these days cannot help wondering why there are such great and impressive buildings in the middle of nowhere, without any surroundings. In fact, the town lost its central role almost entirely after 1945. It got into a difficult situation. However, it did keep a part of its population whose children were able to study in two secondary schools. One of these is a state school, which has a grammar school and a vocational school section in both Slovakian and Hungarian, and the other school is **Fegyverneki Ferenc Gimnázium**, which was founded in 1992.

The latter school can be found almost on the outskirts. It is a nice, traditional building, which was built in the last years of the monarchy and was intended to serve as a school right from the start. The eight-grade school has a lively school life; both the junior and the senior students feel good here. The staff was extremely helpful; they were ready to answer all of my questions. It is good news that there is no difficulty in recruiting pupils. Each class starts with more than thirty pupils. It is most likely due to the good management who try to make the school popular among the parents.

The students keep in touch with the Catholic community, although I felt this institution had less attachment to the church, as compared to other schools.

As the denominational composition of the pupils also shows, this region is almost unanimously traditionally Catholic. The school, which was named after a Premonstratensian prior, has a great tradition of science subjects primarily; students achieve good results especially in math competitions.

Rimavská Sobota (Rimaszombat) lies in the southwestern part of East-Slovakia, only 10 kilometers away from the border of Slovakia and Hungary. In the district of Rimavská Sobota (Rimaszombat) the rate of unemployment is very high, around 30% at present, but there were times when it exceeded 40% as well. It takes a few minutes to get to the grammar school from the city centre. It is situated in a side street, although its impressive building is also suited for the main square. All in all, you can find well-equipped, nicely-arranged classrooms here.

More than half of the students are from Rimavská Sobota (Rimaszombat), but a lot of students come from the 20 kilometers` scope of the town, too. Students can study in two types of schools: a four-grade and an eight-grade one. One-third of the building is not used, as this is the first year that final exams will be taken, and in the eight-grade school there are only four classes.

In Rimavská Sobota (Rimaszombat) there existed a reformed grammar school in the present building until 1853. Because of Entwurf this former school was united with the evangelic grammar school, and thus was created a school called Egyesült Protestáns Gimnázium (United Protestant Grammar School), which gained a great fame and excellent reputation in Upper Northern Hungary.

It was dissolved and abolished several times during the stormy times, in the end even the building came under state control. In 1995 it was possible to restitute church properties, so they got the building back. The school opened its gates again for students in 1999. Many people hoped to see the revival of the famous old school. However, the Evangelic congregation did not want to take up opening a grammar school whose language of education would be entirely Hungarian. Opening a faculty could have been a solution, but it was not necessary for them, as they had their own grammar school nearby. Thus, the name became **Tompa Mihály Református Gimnázium**, and the local community together with the bishopric maintains it.

There are two choices in the school at present: a six-grade and a four-grade faculty. The student hostel is opposite the school building.

## Summary

It is typical to find an exemplary ecumenical spirit in all five of the institutions. The Catholic institutions accept Reformed pupils, and they provide religious education for them. It is true the other way around too. The best example is that more than half of the students in Rimavská Sobota (Rimaszombat) are Catholic.

Unfortunately, there are very common problems for all of the schools. It is the opaque way of financing denominational schools, which brings about an unfortunate situation. The institutions are treated as private schools, which get state support on the basis of the number of the pupils. It results in an actual “fight” for the pupils during the recruiting period, so that the school can survive, work efficiently and can be improved. It is also problematic that, except for Tompa Mihály Gimnázium, the schools cannot maintain youth hostels, which hinders students coming from farther away from studying in the given institution.

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GABRIELLA PUSZTAI

## **WHAT IS THE RESOURCE OF TRUST IN SCHOOL COMMUNITIES?<sup>35</sup>**

### **Introduction**

Authors of international special literature dealing with denominational schools generally concentrate on deviations among pupils attending institutions of different school maintainers. A sector specific deviation of pupils' achievement was first recognized in the 1960s. analyzed school reports of American high-school pupils coming from families with similar backgrounds but attending schools of different maintainers, Coleman found divergences of results, and he and his workmates stated that the denominational institutions helped pupils achieve more (Coleman & Hoffer & Kilgore 1982, Coleman & Hoffer 1987). Findings of European researchers also showed sector specific differences of school achievement (Laarhoven et al. 1990, Dronkers 1995, Dronkers et al. 1999). In a recent international comparison analyzing PISA data, Dronkers and Róbert concluded that a special effect mechanism of denominational schools exists, which manifests its role in social mobility (Dronkers & Róbert 2004). A lot of researchers claim that some kind of characteristics of children or their families can cause deviations, others started to pay attention to the character of communities in or around the schools. In former studies we revealed that Hungarian denominational schools influence favourably the school career of pupils with disadvantaged backgrounds. We pointed out, that these schools reduce inequality of cultural capital with the help of organic relationships and cohesion between parents and children in the school community (Pusztai 2005).

### **Hungarian denominational schools in Hungary and in minority status**

The present study is based on data gathered in the border regions of three Central Eastern European countries, namely Hungary, Romania and Ukraine. We surveyed pupils of secondary schools in Hungarian speaking

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institutions. Since 1920 in Romania and Ukraine there have been compact Hungarian national minorities along the Hungarian borders<sup>36</sup>. This border region can be characterised by traditional multiconfessionalism, significant protestant (Reformed church) presence and confessional tolerance: in the sample areas in Romania and Hungary almost half of the pupils, in Ukraine two thirds of them belong to the Reformed church, so the proportion of Catholics is 30-50%. At the time of the political transformation, the peripheral border areas in Hungary as well as in Romania and Ukraine had an insufficient network of secondary education. The gap was filled by opening denominational schools. Denominational schools in the Central-Eastern European region used to play the main role in education for centuries. The cooperation between church and state was characterised by complementarity and the sharing of tasks. After the communists came into power church schools were nationalised: first in the Sub-Carpathian area in today's Ukraine in the former Soviet Union in 1945, and then simultaneously in Hungary and in Romania in 1948. In Hungary 10 denominational schools were allowed to exist within strict limits. After the political transformation several denominational schools were opened or re-established. However, in Romania and in Ukraine there was no legal way for the churches to run schools and receive subsidisation, because the dominant Orthodox Church preferred not to run schools of general education, and other denominations were not allowed to engage in activities that were incompatible with Orthodox tradition. As a consequence, church-oriented schools are run by local governments and foundations there. It is only in Hungary that the previously very extensive denominational school system has been reorganised at primary level, with about 5% of pupils attending a denominational institution. At secondary level over 10% of Hungarian-speaking pupils go to denominational schools in all the three countries. The restructuring of denominational school-network became a focus of general interest, and political debates. Hungarian denominational schools follow the National Curriculum of the given country. A major defect of the curricula imposed by Romanian and Ukrainian educational authorities is that ethnic Hungarians have to follow the same syllabus in their studies of the official language as native pupils. As a result, it becomes impossible for them to acquire a good knowledge, which excludes most secondary schools and higher education. Moreover, the Hungarian language is not appropriately respected in official transaction, either.

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<sup>36</sup> In Ukraine the Hungarian population of 150 thousand lives in a compact community along the border and also in diaspora. In Romania the number of Hungarians is 1.5 million living in two compact areas and in diaspora. Apart from the border area, the other compact Hungarian area is in the middle of Romania in the very Eastern corner of the Carpathian basin.

## Former researches

It is widely believed that the majority of denominational schools are elite establishments mostly attended by pupils with favourable social backgrounds, because of the high university acceptance rate among pupils in denominational schools. However, most religious people (in the church-adhering sense of the word) have been less qualified and have worked in jobs of lower esteem and have lived in the villages until most recently. In our studies in the millenium, we revealed that denominational schools accept various pupils in social and religious respects. Regarding to religiosity of pupils in denominational schools families there are 39% homogeneously religious families, 46% of families who do not practise their religion and 15% heterogeneously religious families. Apart from the capital, where the neglected children of non-religious well-educated parents are also accepted, denominational schools pupils have an average social status, similar to public secondary schools pupils. But there are some differences: there are fewer intellectuals in leading posts and fewer unskilled workers among pupils parents in denominational schools'. In spite of their higher qualification, these parents do not work in jobs of the highest prestige but rather as subordinate intellectuals, which indicates that the effects of religious people's negative discrimination, typical in former times, are still detectable. There are a larger number of entrepreneurs among the parents, but the reason why these people were constrained to set up their own businesses was to avoid unemployment. A lot of denominational schools are located in disadvantaged peripheral areas, and almost 70% of pupils in denominational schools come from villages or small towns. The number of children in the families (2,34) is well above Hungarian average, and thus the per capita income is lower (Pusztai 2005).

The former study showed that, pupils in denominational schools have more definite plans for higher education, than pupils in non-denominational schools of similar social status. Above all, there is a striking difference among children of less educated parents. In denominational schools the high occurrence of intentions to go on to higher education among children of less educated parents is significant. We interpreted this phenomenon, that the effects of social reproduction are reduced by some factor in the denominational sector. According to our explanation this effect is based on the organic relations within the school community, the connectedness of parents and children forming a community and following similar lasting and reliable norms become a resource for pupils' development, which has an important influence on their school career. The density of children with a homogeneously religious circle of friends in a school has the most important influence on the pupil's achievement. This form of social capital can be beneficial to those pupils as well who lack this kind of resource.

Other Hungarian researches showed that the long range effect of denominational schools. A larger number of pupils in denominational schools got admission to higher education than it could be expected on the basis of their rate in the region. What is more, they do not drop out; quite on the contrary they slightly increase their rate until the end of their higher education. Besides, there is a much bigger rate of university students than college students in the first year of higher education among former pupils in denominational schools compared to other school sectors. Moreover, it is the children of parents who have no degrees that decided the most often to go on to universities instead of colleges.

The ways of how the former pupils in denominational schools enter and get along in the world of work show special attitudes. Most become ready to start working by the end of their university years, considering knowledge, endurance, zeal or expectations of tasks and challenge. About three-third of former pupils in denominational schools would like to work in socially useful, responsible jobs where they can deal with people and work in a team. The sense of efficiency is also important for them. Pupils from other school sectors, however, consider advancement in career, prospects for promotion and high salary important.

## Research data

We conducted a survey<sup>37</sup> in denominational and non-denominational secondary schools in the border region in 2006. As we intended to examine the school careers of Hungarian pupils within and outside Hungary in denominational and non-denominational<sup>38</sup> secondary schools, we picked the schools sampled by pairing each denominational school with a non-denominational one of similar status regarding their location and the pupils' social position. Thus, the list of sample schools consisted of pairs of schools chosen in the way described above. The pupils included in the survey picked from the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The sample consisted of 1466 pupils. Above all, we wanted to find out by applying precise research methods whether there were any differences between the pupil populations, seemingly similar in status, of the two sectors.

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<sup>37</sup> The project is sponsored by OTKA (T048820) and it titled "Secondary pupils" plans for higher education in a border region.

<sup>38</sup> By the term "denominational schools" we mean educational institutions guided spiritually by a church or denomination.

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## Hypotheses

In former study we have attempted to reveal sector-specific differences in school achievement among secondary school seniors in the border regions of three countries. We have revealed that there are three essential sources of the effect of denominational schools. The first one is the powerful presence of special attention on behalf of the teacher. It is not based on the curriculum and not part of the hidden curriculum, either. It is extra time and work devoted purposefully and voluntarily to the pupils by the teachers, realised in face-to-face conversations and various programmes organised by the school. The second source is pupils' personal religious practice enabling them to work persistently and ambitiously, act purposefully under strong self-control and respect the work of others (teachers and classmates). The third source is pupils' relationship networks developing predominantly along religious communities and appearing as an indirect consequence of religiosity in that cooperating pupils in the relationship network support one another's purposeful and disciplined academic work.

In the present study we examine which characteristic of the school context is able to compensate the differences in school career caused by social status. In other words we are interested in how the social capital and the presence of confidential relationships in school community alter the reproductive impact of parental status on school performance. The most commonly examined index of school status is the frequency of high-status parents (education, profession, SES) in school community. It is often demonstrable that the composition of school environment based on social status, is also able to modify performance expected based on individual background. However, this is not the only characteristic of school context that is worth observation. Since Coleman's study, another frequently investigated feature is the influence of dominant relation networks in the school community, and the impact of dominant norms within. Coleman linked this type of social capital to the form of relative structure, and emphasized that positive norms can function in a community, if the structure is closed enough to let control operate appropriately (Coleman 1988). The school community operating with collectively accepted norms can help pupils' performance by applying information, control and sanctions more effectively. Taking this as a starting point, we observed the impacts of the frequency of religious networks in schools. These networks proved especially strong and drew our attention. Besides this, considering Bryk and Schneider's study, we examined the personal care of teachers since these authors showed that the increase in trust within the school organization contributes to the improvement of academic performance in school community (Bryk & Schneider 2002). In their point of view, for the development of confidential

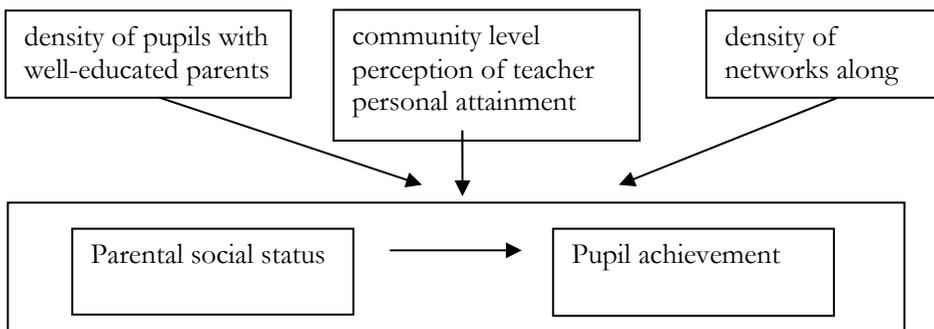
atmosphere, it is essential that the actors have an mutual conviction that the consideration of each other's interests is important to everybody, and that the role partners pay personal attention to each other; also that they are competent for the role, and do their jobs conscientiously. The effect of this principle is manifested in the everyday in a way that the parents, teachers and pupils constantly analyze each others' behavior within these aspects. Consequently, the deficit of any of these factors is able to undermine the confidential security of the whole relation system. We compared the context variables to each other to obtain information concerning which one of them is the most able to modify reproductive determinism.

We modeled our hypotheses in the figure below. We believe that school context has a great influence on commitment pertaining to studying and academic performance. On the one part, we assumed that the social status of parents is a strong influence on academic performance, and that the context rates of the parents' previous education are of even greater significance.

Nevertheless, we assume that people practicing religion, or members of religious networks bring such norms into the school context that help the pursuit of good performance, and make cooperation with the school more popular. These norms will bring about the appreciation of diligent and well-balanced work, and eventually cause better results even at pupils coming from disadvantaged social backgrounds.

However, it is also presumable that the personal care of teachers presents a sort of lacking social capital which is a missing feature in today's problematic families, and that a strong conviction of teachers' care in the school context will encourage pupils to perform better. Finally, we presume that there are various off-sector compensating effects that modify the impact of family social status on pupil performance.

### The impact of various indexes of school context on school performance



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## The rate of the well-educated in the school context

According to both Hungarian and international researches the social composition of the individual schools have a marked influence on their pupils' academic careers (Coleman & Hoffer 1987). There is a debate in special literature about the extent to which the existence of denominational schools bring about selectivity in the school system. Some experts claim that denominational schools, gathering high-status children, cause selectivity and differences among schools, while others say that a school belonging to a religious or a national/ethnic community is inclusive by its nature (Dijkstra 2006). The social context of a school can be best characterized with an index showing the proportion of its pupils whose parents have a degree in higher education.

According to our findings, non-denominational schools turned out to be socially closed and segmented, compared to their denominational counterparts. Pupils in non-denominational schools go to schools, which can be classified, socially into five different groups according to the social composition of the schools. On one end of the scale, we find the schools where the rate of parents with degrees is only 10%, whereas on the other end this rate is over 60%. There are no such cases in denominational schools. According to our experience, if a school is organized on a cultural (e.g. ethnic or religious) basis, identification with the given culture overwrites the vertical structure of social status in recruiting pupils. In this way, social segregation negatively influencing the capacity of the educational system is less characteristic.

*Table 1: The distribution of pupils according to the per centage of parents with degrees in denominational and non-denominational schools in 2006, in per cent*

<i>Percentage of parents with degrees</i>	Hungary		Romania		Ukraine		Altogether
	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	
Under 10%	8,9	0,0	19,6	<u>56,1</u>	44,2	0,0	15,7
Under 20%	30,4	28,4	23,8	<u>43,9</u>	31,2	<u>51,6</u>	32,3
Under 30%	42,6	<u>47,1</u>	<u>56,6</u>	0,0	24,7	48,4	39,2
Under 50%	9,1	<u>24,5</u>	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	9,7
Above 60%	<u>9,1</u>	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	3,1
N=	484	384	189	196	77	95	1425

The significance level of the correlation is \*\*\*, 000. An underlined number indicates a significantly higher value than expected in a random arrangement.

### *The rate of religious pupils in the school context*

It is our conviction that, while researching school processes, it is not sufficient to examine only the characteristics of individuals and families, since pupils connected via an organizational framework will obtain new and common characteristics. In this respect, we treated the religious practice of pupils as a characteristic of school communities. Despite the relatively high rate of pupils practicing religion, one fourth of the pupils attend schools where practicers of religion are in minority, and almost one third of the sample attend schools where three fourth of the pupils are believers by personal conviction.

Therefore, we can see that while pupils in non-denominational schools can study in various environments in this respect, the pupils of the other groups are present in predominantly religious environment, even in the case when the density of religious pupils is not the same in the schools.

In the aspect of personal religious practice, the most homogeneous context is the Ukrainian ethnic Hungarian society. Two third of the

Hungarian pupils attend denominational schools where the religious pupils in bare majority, and one third go to schools where the religious pupils are in great majority.

These context figures can be made parallel to what we saw at the social backgrounds of schools. Thus the assumption gains support: the schools organized on religious foundations are similarly as little segregated in terms of religious practice as they are socially.

*Table 2: The division of pupils with personal religious practice, characterized by different school rates in denominational and non-denominational secondary schools, percentage*

<i>Proportion of pupils with personal religious practice in school-communities</i>	Hungary		Romania		Ukraine		Altogether
	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	
Under 25%	<u>17,4</u>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>5,8</b>
25,1-50%	<u>58,7</u>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>19,6</b>
50,1-75%	<b>24,0</b>	<u>65,1</u>	<u>76,2</u>	<b>36,2</b>	<u>56,1</u>	-	<b>44,0</b>
75,1-100%	-	<u>34,9</u>	<b>23,8</b>	<u>63,8</u>	<u>43,9</u>	<u>100,0</u>	<b>30,6</b>
N=	<b>484</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>1446</b>

The significance level of correlation: \*\*\* =,000. Underlined values refer to the fact that the numbers in those cells are of greater value than what could have been expected based on random array.

The school-related density of pupils having communal religious practice shows a different picture. The table clearly demonstrates the two extremes. Whereas the Hungarian pupils in non-denominational schools attend schools, where less than one fourth of the pupils are churchgoers, the Ukrainian pupils in denominational schools attend schools where more than three fourth of the pupils go to church regularly. In three of the other four groups, it is evident what the most typical rate – characterizing this feature of the school context – is. In the Romanian denominational schools, more than 40% of the pupils show moderate but firm communal religious practice dominance, yet one third of them attend schools whose context resembles that of the non-denominational schools; there, churchgoer pupils are in

minority, despite that in terms of personal religious practice, the Romanian denominational sector did not seem that divided.

*Table 3: The division of pupils with communal religious practice, characterized by different school rates in denominational and non-denominational secondary schools, percentage*

<i>Proportion of pupils with communal religious practice in school-communities</i>	Hungary		Romania		Ukraine		Altogether
	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	
Under 25%	<u>100,0</u>	-	<u>23,3</u>	-	<u>24,5</u>	-	<u>31,7</u>
25,1-50%	-	<u>7,8</u>	<u>31,7</u>	<u>36,2</u>	<u>51,0</u>	-	<u>16,1</u>
50,1-75%	-	<u>66,7</u>	<u>45,0</u>	<u>19,9</u>	<u>24,5</u>	-	<u>30,9</u>
75,1-100%	-	<u>25,5</u>	-	<u>43,9</u>	-	<u>100,0</u>	<u>21,3</u>
N=	<b>347</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>1309</b>

The significance level of correlation: \*\*\* =,000. Underlined values refer to the fact that the numbers in those cells are of greater value than what could have been expected based on random array.

The symmetry of pupils doing communal religious practice is greater everywhere in the denominational sector than in the non-denominational one. On the other hand, the frequency of pupils from strongly religious families is of greater rate among the Romanian and Ukrainian pupils in denominational schools, than among Hungarians. This can be explained, as during long years of oppression in minority, and having been hard-pressed by the state, the only chance for preserving one's identity was religious and denominational affiliation. However, we noticed that while denominational secondary school goes predominantly attend schools where personal and communal religious practice is in majority, one third of the Romanian pupils in denominational schools, and less than one tenth of the Northwestern Hungarians attend schools where religious pupils are in minority. In other words, there are schools in the denominational sector where these resources are not chiefly available on context level.

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## Networks in the school context

School context is also determined by what relation networks the pupils belong to, and by being their members, what sort of outward or inward network norms and information they introduce in the school community. These networks can evolve from friendships and acquaintances. The literature names the former networks strong-, the latter weak bonds.

As for friendships, based on the analysis on the range of personal relation networks, it seemed that the intimate, friendly relationships of Ukrainian and Hungarian pupils in denominational schools are particularly multiplex relation networks, i.e. these friendships serve various functions. In connection with building friendships, the school itself (especially the institution we visited during our research) means the greatest source. Four-fifth of the secondary school pupils and more than two-third of the elementary school pupils made friends. Places of amusement and local environment provided opportunities for building relationships for less than half of the pupils. Whilst in non-denominational schools pupils make friends at places of amusement and during extra-curricular activities, hobby activities, in denominational schools pupils, it is the dormitory and the religious communities that prove to be the most determining source for making friends.

The role of acquaintances in social mobility is much more appreciated by certain authors than that of strong bonds (Granovetter 1983), because they have greater chance to bridge social class borders, and thus information inaccessible in a direct circle of friends can become a channel. Weak bonds can be examined in diverse aspects as well. One can trace the range of relation networks, the number of networks, the central-, fringe- or intermediary situation in the networks, the building-up of the networks, and the homophile or heterophile characteristic found in the social classes. With the help of a questionnaire developed by own conception and used at numerous occasions, we examined their relation to others having special social circumstances and subcultures, and tracked if the pupils have any social actors in their circles of family, friends or acquaintances, whose relation would (according to the former researches) orient the pupil socially. The questionnaire enlisted twelve social actors. Among them there were people who progressed in the school system, people who made their way outside their studies, and others who abandoned the generally accepted legal way of life. Our starting point was that the people available in the social environment cannot only be treated as a confidential, supporting circle of friends, but also as a reference group. In this case we were not in for a statistic recording; it was particularly opportune to see the distorting effect of individual perceptions, since we considered it more important who they treat significant than those really existing.

Observing the frequency of the actors in family, friend and acquaintance circles examined in pupil groups, we detected that the potential reference people (who had been previously mentioned by the pupils) are related to those standing above them on the career ladder, and can be linked to religious relationships and professional positions.

Hungarian pupils in denominational schools refer to more such actors within their families, and there was a major emphasis on people having proceeded on higher academic level, or people important in the religious sense. For Romanians, the reference people of high significance seem to be family members who went to work or live abroad. This also refers to the fact that for an individual belonging to a minority, homeland has a weaker retentive power. Among the sector-specific features it is obvious that in Romania the educated family members are important for pupils in non-denominational schools, and that apart from clergymen there is no outstanding reference person in the families of pupils in denominational schools. In the most financially underdeveloped parts of Ukraine, the common feature of the pupils' relation network is the unemployed family member, and in the pupils' families in denominational schools there is a figure above the average: the number of people making a living on illegal trade.

Table 4: Social actors found in the families of denominational and non-denominational schoolgroups, percentage

<i>Social actors</i>	Hungary		Romania		Ukraine		Altogether
	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	
University student ***	<b>40,5</b>	<u>45,6</u>	<u>49,2</u>	<b>38,8</b>	<b>19,4</b>	<b>25,3</b>	<b>40,3</b>
College student***	<u>35,1</u>	<u>40,6</u>	<b>18,5</b>	<b>26,0</b>	<b>18,4</b>	<b>16,8</b>	<b>30,8</b>
Graduate ***	<b>61,0</b>	<u>68,0</u>	<u>68,3</u>	<b>55,1</b>	<b>37,8</b>	<b>64,2</b>	<b>61,6</b>
Working abroad***	<b>27,5</b>	<b>35,7</b>	<u>42,9</u>	<u>45,9</u>	<b>43,9</b>	<b>36,8</b>	<b>35,9</b>
Foreign citizen***	<b>19,4</b>	<b>27,3</b>	<u>51,6</u>	<u>46,4</u>	<b>38,8</b>	<b>45,3</b>	<b>32,4</b>
Religious ***	<b>41,9</b>	<u>71,1</u>	<b>58,7</b>	<b>64,8</b>	<b>36,7</b>	<b>68,4</b>	<b>56,4</b>
Clergyman ***	<b>5,6</b>	<u>15,6</u>	<b>15,3</b>	<u>17,3</u>	<b>9,2</b>	<u>18,9</u>	<b>12,2</b>
Successful businessman***	<u>39,9</u>	<b>37,0</b>	<b>34,4</b>	<b>28,1</b>	<b>19,4</b>	<b>23,2</b>	<b>34,3</b>
Leader position***	<u>46,1</u>	<u>45,6</u>	<b>33,9</b>	<b>29,1</b>	<b>20,4</b>	<b>29,5</b>	<b>39,2</b>
Unemployed***	<b>21,1</b>	<b>26,6</b>	<b>12,7</b>	<b>20,9</b>	<u>32,7</u>	<u>45,3</u>	<b>23,8</b>
Illegal trader***	<b>7,9</b>	<b>8,1</b>	<b>3,7</b>	<b>7,1</b>	<b>9,2</b>	<u>13,7</u>	<b>7,7</b>
Member of Parliament ***	<u>9,7</u>	<b>9,1</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>6,1</b>	<b>9,5</b>	<b>7,4</b>
N=	<b>484</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>1446</b>

The significance level of correlation: \*\*\* =,000, \*\*< 0,03, \*< 0,05 . Underlined values refer to the fact that the numbers in those cells are of greater value than what could have been expected based on random array.

Considering the acquaintances, there are no significant inter-sector differences, except for the fact that, among Hungarian denominational school pupils, the academically advanced people gain emphasis. Educated acquaintances are of great importance to the Ukrainian denominational school pupils, as well, although among Romanians this is more characteristic of the non-denominational group. However, the inter-sector difference is not straightforward in this respect. The acquaintances of Ukrainian pupils in denominational schools include people of both high and low professional statuses, although not always as positive reference people. Among friends, it is more apparent that the pupils in the denominational sector are attracted to educated people, but the frequencies do not show outstanding divergence.

The social actors are not interesting to us by themselves. Rather, they are to be noticed because their frequencies in the pupils' relation network show relation orientations. We observed the social actors in the aspect of what orientations may emerge based on their frequencies. Considering the relationships with the specific actors, and detecting the closeness of these relationships, there are typical network types that can be traced around<sup>39</sup> the pupils. These network types are most certainly to influence their decisions in connection with their studies, as well. The five relation network types are the following: career orienting, study stimulating, religiously stimulating, showing unsuccessful / illegal example, and the one attracting abroad.

In the following part we were to investigate the dominant network influence on individual students and groups.

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<sup>39</sup> Depending on how close relation the actors had with the respondent, we denoted to them scores between one and three, and the scores of the representatives with the same orientations were added to each other. The value of the new variables became equal to the rate their scores presented compared to the total maximum. The group average of these rates were compared at the end.

*Table 5: The attraction of relation network orientations for groups of denominational and non-denominational school students in Hungary, Romania and Ukraine, averages*

<i>Network orientations</i>	Hungary		Romania		Ukraine		Altogether
	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	
Career orienting***	31,55	31,33	24,93	23,44	19,69	27,86	28,48
Study stimulating***	40,38	43,43	39,39	38,63	25,62	37,02	39,60
Religiously stimulating***	26,38	38,76	33,29	35,80	22,62	39,65	32,46
Showing unsuccessful, illegal example***	20,54	21,42	16,98	20,75	21,77	31,75	21,16
Moving abroad***	26,98	31,99	36,68	38,82	30,19	36,93	32,05

The significance level of correlation: \*\*\* =,000

The career orienting network is the most prevailing for Hungarians, but the biggest inter-sector divergence can be detected in Ukraine on behalf of the pupils in denominational schools. The study orienting network supports the activities of Hungarian denominational school pupils, but the non-denominational school pupils do not lag behind either. The most decisive divergence occurred among the pupils of the Subcarpathia sectors regarding the study orienting network expansion. The power of the religious oriented network evidently influences denominational school pupils better, but the inter-sector divergence is traceable in Ukraine and the Northeastern counties of Hungary. The relationships providing an unsuccessful, illegal example influence Ukrainian denominational school pupils mostly, but the same orientation can be seen in Romania's case as well. We notice that the Ukrainian ethnic Hungarian denominational school pupils spend their days in dormitories, as these schools are almost predominantly boarding schools. Thus, these relationships mean a lot less risk than for the Romanian ethnic Hungarian pupils in denominational schools who come from a disadvantaged background, and many of them are not in residence. We found it interesting that the denominational school pupils are in majority almost everywhere with

regards to the “moving abroad” orienting relationships. It is likely that the network arranged along religious organizations does not only counteract social class borders, but networks closed within country borders.

### **Sensing special teacher attention and care in the school context**

The interviews proved that teachers’ behavior has a decisive influence on pupils with disadvantaged backgrounds. We had come to the same conclusion in our survey of Romanian pupils’ school careers (Kozma et al. 2006). We are convinced that, based on Coleman’s theory, it would be possible to extend the law of symmetrical influence from the influence of schoolmates to that of all partners involved in school life. We wanted to know how much denominational schools are more efficient in their contribution to the inclusion of pupils with disadvantaged backgrounds. The fact that in this region these schools have a relatively low number of pupils, increases efficiency in itself, as a higher teacher-pupil ratio increases the chances of giving personal attention. The present database provides us with more than meaningless statistical data and we can fill the structural framework of this relationship with meaning. Pupils have told us whether they are able to discuss private matters and plans with their teachers, and even whether teachers pay personal attention to the course of their lives. There are pupils in denominational schools from North Eastern Hungary and the Ukraine who turned out to be exceptionally successful in discussing private problems and plans. Pupils in denominational schools are more likely to share private problems with a teacher everywhere, but ethnic Hungarian pupils in denominational schools in Romania are less likely to discuss their plans for the future than their non-denominational peers do. Attention to pupils’ personal lives is above average in every denominational school, but pupils in North Eastern Hungary experience it more intensely than the others do.

Owing to the influence this issue has on the atmosphere of schools, we created an index of teacher attention, involving the number of teachers (one or more) and the various forms of attention (with values from 1 to 6). The average result of the sample was 1.94 with pupils in denominational schools from North Eastern Hungary (2.24) and the Ukraine (2.37) having results above the average and pupils in non-denominational schools from North-Eastern Hungary (1.92), Romania (1.66) and the Ukraine (1.62) and pupils in denominational schools from Romania (1.62) having results below the average. Overall, according to pupils’ general impressions, teacher attention is the most intensive in denominational schools of North Eastern Hungary and the Ukraine.

We examined how much the atmosphere of individual schools can be characterized by a general feeling of much teacher attention. One third of pupils in denominational schools in North Eastern Hungary and a quarter of pupils in denominational schools in the Ukraine attend such schools where pupils generally experience more attention than average from their teachers. Altogether, pupils who experience a lot of teacher attention are in minority in non-denominational schools, whereas they are in majority in the denominational sector.

We examined how the general sensing of special teacher's care pervades the atmosphere of different schools.

*Table 6: The distribution of pupils according to the rate of pupils sensing special care from teachers in denominational and non-denominational secondary schools in 2006, percentage*

<i>Proportion of pupils sensing special care from teachers in school-communities</i>	Inland		Partium		Kárpátalja		Altogether
	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	non-denominational	denominational	
25,1-50%	50,6	37,8	<u>76,7</u>	43,9	<u>65,3</u>	-	47,4
50,1-75%	<u>49,4</u>	28,9	23,3	<u>56,1</u>	34,7	<u>75,8</u>	42,2
75,1-100%	-	<u>33,3</u>	-	-	-	<u>24,2</u>	10,4
N=	484	384	189	196	98	95	1446

The significance level of correlation: \*\*\* =,000. Underlined values refer to the fact that the numbers in those cells are of greater value than what could have been expected based on random array.

There were no schools in the region where less than one-fourth of the children experienced special teacher's care and attention, however, the arrangement of the schools is typical in this respect as well. One-third of Hungarian denominational school pupils and one-fourth of Ukrainian denominational school pupils attend schools, where the general experience proves special teacher attention above the average. One-third of Hungarian denominational school pupils, and two-fifth of Romanian denominational school pupils study in an atmospher, where pupils who sense great teacher attention are in minority. In the non-denominational sector, pupils attend schools of such atmosphere: half of the Hungarian non-denominational

school pupils, two-third of the Ukrainians and three-fourth of the Romanians pupils.

## **A comparison of context effects**

After having examined the school composition of different parental status, the religious practice with its link to the religious relation network, and the sensing of special teacher attention – in the aspect of searching for a pattern in the observed regions and sectors, we attempt to do something else. We intend to compare these context influences with each other to find out what impact they may have on the pupils' academic career.

Examining the different context variables, it was the the school composition of parental social status, the school context of teachers' care, and the school rate of pupils having religious network, to represent strong influence on school performance within our research. During the comparison of the different context variables, we strove to get to know if these phenomena operate exactly the same way in the different school sectors, or there is any divergence to be detected.

As we intended to describe secondary pupils' school careers, we needed indices of achievement that helped us assess pupils' progress at school. We introduced several variables to measure dimensions of success. We did not measure academic achievement with test scores; instead, we tried to find indices that matched our questionnaire. Using the various dimensions of achievement we created a summarising index of achievement that included aspects like taking on extra academic work (taking language exams, participating in competitions), planning one's future academic career (higher education) and a subjective element, namely the importance attached to academic activities by the particular pupil. The numerical value of the index ranged from 1 to 5. The index is capable of giving a comprehensive picture as it unites past achievements, hard work, ambitions for the future, conscious preparations and favourable attitudes.

Among the explanatory variables the only index on individual level is the education of parents representing the social status of the pupils' parents. The other explanatory variables are on context level: the school composition of the parental social status (the rate of graduate parents), the school context of teacher' care (the school rate of pupils sensing greater level care than the sample average), and the school rate of those having mostly religious networks.

We introduced the variables into the analysis step by step – sector by sector, and also in the whole sample to be able to sense the impact the variables had on each other.

*Table 7: The modifying effect of context variables on the correlation between the parental social status and school performance by school sectors, regressive factors*

<i>School-maintainer</i>	Non-denominational				Denominational				Altogether
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
Parental social status	0,216 **	0,110 **	0,111 **	0,110 ***	0,139 **	0,068 ns	0,070 ns	0,067 ns	0,091 **
Composition of Parental social status		0,286 ***	0,223 ***	<u>0,218</u> ***		0,183 ***	0,139 **	0,092 **	0,185 ***
School context of teachers' care			0,161 ***	0,164 ***			0,223 ***	0,150 ***	0,166 ***
School rate of pupils with reiligious networks				0,143 ***				<u>0,273</u> ***	0,110 ***
R <sup>2</sup>				0,16				0,16	0,13

According to the analysis, it can be stated that there is significant divergence shown among the sectors in the mechanism of the context effects, as different variables proved to be the strongest in the different sectors regarding the modification of the effect of parental social status.

The stepwise analysis showed that the higher education of parents influences school performance effectively, although this effect was modified by the school rate of graduate parents. This modifying effect is not the same in the two sectors; in the more selective denominational system it is not enough overwriting the effect of the parents' education, since the children study in a gravely homogenic atmosphere. In the denominational schools with more inclusive school composition, the context of parental education is able to reduce the effect of parental education. The third point to include in the analysis was the school level perception of teachers' care. It did not modify the effect of parental educational status on individual level in any of the two sectors, but reduced the influence of parental educational composition in the school. In the case of the two sectors, different orders developed by including teachers' care on school level. While with the denominational schools the effect of the latter turned out to be the strongest, i.e. the general sensing of teachers' care was able to weaken the (individual and communal level) selective strength of social status, in the non-denominational sector, the major

composition divergences evolved along the parental social status of schools were impossible to relieve in greater rate even with special teachers' care.

The last step was testing the strength of the density of religious networks in schools among pupils. Its strength is weaker in the non-denominational sector, and it cannot but slightly moderate the strength of the previous variables. In the denominational sector there is a significant rearrangement of the model, as it weakens the effects of the individual and communal level status differences further. We also find that it moderates the formerly major influence of teacher care. It is likely therefore that, the school density of the pupils' religious relation networks is a resort that, in itself, has dominant influence on academic progress, by the pupil's inner and outer communal control and norms prevailing in the community. Nevertheless, it is presumable that religious networks of pupils and teacher care are in peculiar coaction with each other, as it cleared up that, part of the context level strength of teacher care was coming from the impact of religious networks. This may happen to be the very coaction discussed by Bryk and Schneider, and named "trust in schools."

## Summary

This study intended to discuss our former results in connection with the effect of social capital on school performance. The aspect of this further study was finding what elements of the school context are able to moderate the reproductive effects of the school. According to our findings, school context strongly influences school performance. The individual level influence of the parental social status can be reduced by school context rates of parental education mostly in the sector where the school system was less divided into castes. The personal care and attention of teachers and the conviction thereof, moderates the individual and communal effects of social status in both sectors, but not to the same degree. The school density of those linked to religious networks modifies the individual and context level determinisms of social status, but in a very discrepant manner: whilst in the non-denominational sector it has barely any effect, in the denominational sector it becomes the dominant compensating factor. It is likely that the members of religious based networks need to be frequent in the school context in considerable density to be able to influence their peers coming from disadvantaged backgrounds for cooperation with the school and teachers, decent performance, and balanced work. Therefore, the context level explanatory variables did not behave as sector-free compensating factors.

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# **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**



MARTIN JÄGGLE

## THE TASK OF SCHOOL IN MULTIRELIGIOUS EUROPE

### Preliminary remarks

Plurality is a distinguishing feature of social reality of Europe. I shall only discuss one aspect, namely “multi-religious Europe” and especially the question of recognition. Is the spiritual climate of pluralistic Europe aptly described in the document “Ecclesia in Europa” (2003)? “In many public spheres it is simpler to call yourself an agnostic rather than a believer. Not to believe appears to be self-explanatory, while believing needs a social legitimation that is neither obvious nor taken for granted.”<sup>40</sup>

### Multi-religious Europe

#### *Religious plurality*

Religious plurality, which is – though not exclusively – a consequence of migration, and is a fact that need not be proved with statistics. However, some Christian denominations, especially those belonging to the orthodox and oriental families of churches, Islam, and some other religions, are still perceived as denominations and religions of migrants in many parts of Europe. That makes it possible to transfer the social position of migrants, their marginalisation, even social degradation onto their religious traditions and institutions.

Perhaps mono-denominational or mono-religious regions do exist, but even there people would be confronted with religious plurality via the omnipresent media.

Far too often, however, people think of their own environment as mono-religious because the others are filtered out, not taken into account.

Plurality also marks the interior situation of the individual denominations and religions.

The phenomenon of multi-religious Europe is neither ideal nor a bogey, it is simply reality. The way a society copes with religious plurality is a

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<sup>40</sup> Johannes Paul II., Nachsynodales Apostolisches Schreiben «Ecclesia in Europa», Rom 2003 (Sekretariat der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz (Hg.), Verlautbarungen des Apostolischen Stuhls 161), 7.

touchstone of its humane qualities. The legal and political handling of plurality in general is a criterion of the quality of European democracy.

*Problems in dealing with religious plurality*

Thomas Halik pointed out a trend towards fundamentalism, where the longing for security not only demonises all who think differently, but also the “heretics” and “liberals” within their own organisations.<sup>41</sup> If, after the loss of certitude (*certitudo*), people put their trust in security (*securitas*), this dangerous development tends to occur. In the ethnocentric option, the cultural group concentrates practically all positive characteristics on itself, and almost all negative ones on the group of strangers. This option cements scenarios of being threatened, and is at the same time a threat for all, especially for the coherence of a society. For all that the idea that culture is a kind of national island, is a fatal creation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this context cultural exclusiveness judges plurality as negative and contrasts it with an ideal of unity, itself based on projection. Cultural purity is demanded for one’s own culture, thus preparing the ground for psychical and physical violence – within and without.

Evidently, every religion will always have an exclusive nucleus, which cannot be given up for the sake of the claim of truth of each individual religion, and also must not be given up because the dignity and authenticity of each person has to be respected. But a denominational or religious exclusiveness that demonises others and denies them any access to truth and salvation, is a completely different affair. The second Vatican council has clearly distanced itself from such concepts.

*Consequences of the dealing with religious plurality*

Religious plurality is not idyllic, if it was no source of conflict that would mean religions have become unimportant and socially negligible. The reality of conflict can also be seen as positive, for conflicts contain chances. From the point of view of society, the aim is not to avoid conflicts but to find a suitable way of coping with them. The separation of church and state in Europe is a step in that direction, because it guarantees that no religion can use public forces to assert its idea of truth. The relationship between churches, religious communities and the state are arranged differently in Europe, likewise the tasks of schools in view of religious plurality. However, in all of Europe religion is an established scholastic topic, apart from Albania, France, and to a certain extent, Slovenia.

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<sup>41</sup> T. Halik, Europas Leib und Seele, in: Die Furche Nr. 43/23. Oktober 2003, S. 7 (red. Auszug aus dem Vortrag „Europa und Abrahams Erbe“, aus dem Engl. v. O. Friedrich).

Religious diversity increases: (1) the need for social communication about religion and religions; (2) the danger of fundamentalism; (3) the requirement for places of reassurance; (4) the diversity of often rival values and thus; (5) the demand for orientation; (6) in view of the necessity to choose the search for aids for decision-making

### *The European Union*

I wish to consider two aspects. On one hand, religions represent an integrating power, and on the other hand, there is a special need for integration because of religious plurality. The EU sees and accepts this more and more. One field of responsibility of the president of the European Commission is exclusively concerned with the dialogue with religions, churches and ideologies, which have been given a clearly defined legal status by the EU. There is a demand for the institutionalisation of the interreligious dialogue on EU-level, and the drawing up of a “European charter of interreligious dialogue,” as well as the founding of a “European forum” for the dialogue between the religious confessions and the European governments.<sup>42</sup> The dialogue among religions is a fundamental prerequisite for a dialogue of religions and ideologies with the EU.<sup>43</sup>

The white book of the EU on the questions of education “On the way to a cognitive society” is a complete contrast to these ideas. It is exclusively based on vocational education, advocates a reduced concept of education and negates questions of general and especially religious education. In 1973, the UNESCO report on education had “Learning to be” as its motto.

## **Basic (religion-)educational issues**

### *Religion-educational reflection*

Pluralistic society constitutes not the problem but the context of these reflections. The emphasis on differences is of fundamental nature. Hans-Georg Ziebertz sees diversity as the starting point of religion-educational efforts, taking two aspects into consideration.

(1) The question of unity and truth must not be given up, neither concepts of cultural and religious superiority (exclusion or absorption) nor

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<sup>42</sup> Kathpress, 31.10.2003.

<sup>43</sup> Burton / M. Weninger (Hg.), *Rechtliche Aspekte der Beziehung zwischen der künftigen Europäischen Union und den Glaubens- und Überzeugungsgemeinschaften. Die Rolle dieser Gemeinschaften und die Zusammenarbeit für eine gemeinsame europäische Zukunft. Bericht über das Symposium, Brüssel 2002* (Politischer Beraterstab - Europäische Kommission. Working Paper – 2002), S. 53f.

relativism are acceptable. "Communication has to be unfolded theologically and pedagogically, as the way of constituting unity and finding the truth."<sup>44</sup>

(2) Diversity may threaten hegemony, but not the development of a (Christian) identity. Is identity made possible not only by realizing differences?

School must not make religious differences a private affair, suppress them or let them fade away. For the sake of identity-quest and mutual understanding, they have to be given attention. However, diversity is usually reduced to the question "Pariah or Parvenu?", as Hannah Ahrendt<sup>45</sup> expresses the traditional dilemma whether to be different or the same. Outsider or assimilated?

For fear young people might be discriminated, some teachers avoid speaking about (religious) differences, others see the peace of the school threatened by the integration of (religious) differences in school.

In other cases, an atmosphere of assimilation is strengthened in the name of a secularism that sees itself as impartial but in reality denigrates religious traditions. The questions of Annedore Prengel hold true: (1) How can educational action do justice to sexual, cultural, religious and individual differences? (2) How, in doing so, can education realize the democratic principle of equality?

### *The problem of "recognition"*

Concepts of intercultural learning know the demand for the recognition of the "others." However, "can the forms of dealing with the stranger let the stranger keep his strangeness?" asks Volker Drehsen.<sup>46</sup>

Johann Baptist Metz demands a new hermeneutic culture, "the culture of accepting the others in their otherness"<sup>47</sup>. Paulo Suess asks critically for the consequences of the paradigm of recognition: The question "is not only the recognition of the 'others' by the 'ones', but the mutual respect of all."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> H.-G. Ziebertz, Religiöse Identitätsfindung durch interreligiöse Lernprozesse, in: Religionspädagogische Beiträge 36/1995, S. 91.

<sup>45</sup> n. A. Prengel, Pädagogik der Vielfalt, Opladen 21995, S. 14.

<sup>46</sup> V. Drehsen, Die Anverwandlung des Fremden, in: J. A. van der Ven/H.-G. Ziebertz (Hg.), Religiöser Pluralismus und Interreligiöses Lernen, Kampen/Weinheim 1994, S. 63.

<sup>47</sup> J. B. Metz / H.-E. Bahr, Augen für die Anderen. Lateinamerika – eine theologische Erfahrung, München 1991, S. 59.

<sup>48</sup> P. Suess, Über die Unfähigkeit der Einen, sich der Anderen zu erinnern, in: E. Arens (Hg.), Anerkennung der Anderen. Eine theologische Grunddimension interkultureller Kommunikation, Freiburg i. B. 1995, S. 80.

Similarly, Charles Taylor, for whom “mutual recognition”<sup>49</sup> is more important than “respect” or “tolerance”, a word that too often elegantly glosses over indifference. Austrian Protestants reject “tolerance”, for they have experienced it long enough what it means to be “tolerated.”

### *School and religious plurality*

Adolescents do not ask questions in a “disciplined” way, in a twofold literal sense, and you cannot turn them back as having been asked in the “wrong place” or at the “wrong time”.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, Hartmut von Hentig advocates “school as a space of experience,” which is open for questions about the meaning of things, which occur at the wrong place and time. All the same, there have to be organized arrangements “that are open for the dimension of the religious.”<sup>51</sup> If religious questions are only discussed in religious instruction lessons, it will turn them into reservations for religion. Basically, all subjects are religiously relevant, without being made use of them denominationally. Schools prepare students for living together in a pluralistic and democratic society, therefore young people have a right to “find out in schools how religion, religions and ideologies can contribute to living together successfully”. Democracy needs the different religions and humanistic ideologies as props and sources in the search for meaning, and common values for living together.<sup>52</sup>

### *Example Austria*

In Austria, denominational religious instruction is a compulsory subject with the option to sign out. All thirteen churches and religious communities recognized by the state have the right to teach this denominational RI, the state pays for everything. For smaller groups this diversity is managed by teaching in the afternoon, combining several age groups, or collecting pupils from different schools in one course. Since the scholastic year 2002/03, there exists a project of denominationally cooperative RI, shared by the Roman Catholic Church, The Protestant Church, the Orthodox Church and the Old Catholic Church.

<sup>49</sup> Ch. Taylor, *Multiculturalism and „The Politics of Recognition“*, Princeton 1992.

<sup>50</sup> D. Knab, *Religion im Blickfeld der Schule*, in: *Jahrbuch der Religionspädagogik*. Bd. 12 (1995), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1996, S. 70.

<sup>51</sup> W. Schöning, *Über eine „terminologische Nebelbombe“ und das „Religiöse“ im Schulkonzept*, in: A. Battke u.a. (Hg.), *Schulentwicklung – Religion – Religionsunterricht. Profil und Chancen von Religion in der Schule der Zukunft*, Freiburg 2002, S. 271.

<sup>52</sup> [www.cogree.com/download/Pressedeutsch4.doc](http://www.cogree.com/download/Pressedeutsch4.doc).

## Task of the School

### *Culture of mutual recognition*

Each school promotes its specific “culture of mutual recognition”. There esteem can be experienced and learned, religious plurality observed. An Austrian example: members of all legally recognized religious communities introduce themselves together to young people.

### *Religious education as a prerequisite of the general ability to communicate*

Fischer and others believe that “[y]ou can only develop a feeling for the possibility of a religious foundation in another person, if you have learned to take it into account on principle, even if you “reject it for yourself as a person.” “The enlightened person must have confronted him/herself with religion even if only to be able to communicate with others.”<sup>53</sup> Fischer and others argue with Jürgen Habermas from a cultural-historical point of view that “we as Europeans cannot seriously understand terms such as morality, ethics, person, individuality, freedom, and emancipation without acquiring the (...) substance of thought of Jewish-Christian origins”<sup>54</sup>

Moreover, only religious language makes it possible to express certain situations of life.<sup>55</sup> Where religious dimensions are taken up explicitly, a contribution towards a basic (self)communication and religious literacy is made. Here, the knowledge and understanding of religion, namely foreign religion, becomes a necessary prerequisite of the general ability to communicate.<sup>56</sup>

### *Religious instruction*

The justification of RI has consequences for public recognition, concepts, aims and contents. If legitimized as a service for society, school and the individual, it will be planned accordingly, without neglecting the central importance of the great religious traditions and their meaning. It rather brings them “into the game” in a new form.

The synod of the Viennese archdiocese (1969-71) decreed this guiding principle: “Religious instruction has to be taught in such a way that society is prepared to make room for it undiminished.”

<sup>53</sup> Fischer u.a., *Auf dem Weg zur interkulturellen Schule. Fallstudien zur Situation interkulturellen und interreligiösen Lernens*, Münster / New York 1996. S. 21f.

<sup>54</sup> J. Habermas, *Metaphysik nach Kant*, in: Ders., *Nachmetaphysisches Denken. Philosophische Aufsätze*, Frankfurt/M 1992, S.23.

<sup>55</sup> Habermas, S. 60.

<sup>56</sup> Fischer u.a., S. 22f.

Thus religious instruction is a place for communication, not indoctrination, respecting the special framework of school. Notwithstanding, regional differences in Europe an RI are justified more and more as pedagogical, as a contribution to general education, increasingly oriented upon the situation and environment of children and adolescents. According to Urs Baumann, RI should be a place for young people: (1) “where they can learn to discover and articulate their own religiosity”. (2) for religious information, who “helps them through religious traditions to a religious language with which they can make themselves understood in changing communities”. (3) which helps them to develop their independent identity, whereby the pedagogical aim of RI is not “orthodoxy” but “personal belief.”<sup>57</sup>

The latter could correspond with the papal document quoted at the beginning of the study: “The spreading of the gospel of hope makes it necessary to promote the change from a – certainly also estimable – belief upheld by social habits to a more personal and mature, reflected and convinced belief.”<sup>58</sup>

## Result

All religions have possibilities to estimate the others. Let us make a balance in the light of the CHARTA OECUMENICA<sup>59</sup>, the guideline for the growing cooperation between the churches in Europe: (1) proclame the gospel together; (2) work together in Christian Education; (3) support a humane and social Europe; (4) safeguard the service of reconciliation. It is not possible any longer to think about concepts of RI self-sufficiently. School development is dependent on the original contribution of the churches towards justice, forgiveness and mercy. The service of reconciliation demands that we contribute to the development of a “culture of mutual recognition” in society and in school.

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<sup>57</sup> U. Baumann, „Postchristliche“ Religiosität als Herausforderung an den Religionsunterricht, in: *Schöneberger Hefte* 27 (1997), H. 3, S. 5f. (zit. n. N. Mette a.a.O., S. 152).

<sup>58</sup> Johannes Paul II., 50.

<sup>59</sup> CHARTA OECUMENICA, Leitlinien für die wachsende Zusammenarbeit unter den Kirchen in Europa, Strassburg 2001. <http://www.cec-kek.org/Deutsch/ChartaFinG.htm>.

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GAVRIL FLÓRA & GEORGINA SZILÁGYI

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND CULTURAL PLURALISM IN ROMANIA

The revolution of 1989 brought about dramatic changes within the Romanian society, which deeply influenced the situation of religious communities. During the time of the communist rule, in spite of all kind of restrictions imposed by the regime, ecclesiastical institutions succeeded to maintain a certain level of autonomous existence, credibility and continuity with the non-communist past, due to the persistence of traditional religious values in large segments of the population and to the high prestige religion and religious institutions enjoyed in society at large. As a consequence, after the collapse of the communist dictatorship religion and Church – in close link with the appeal to national identity – appeared as the only legitimate institutional and spiritual means available to fill the ideological vacuum, the political legitimisation gap so suddenly created after 1989.

One of the privileged fields of ecclesiastical social involvement after 1989 has been *religious education*. Two distinct but mutually interrelated problems can be identified as far as relation between religion and education in post-communist Romania is concerned: on the one hand, *religious education* which was completely forbidden during Communism has been reinstated in the state educational system. On the other hand, the post 1989 developments led to the setting up of *denominational institutions of education* - high schools and universities - in view of the necessity to restore the plurality of values and pedagogical practices within the educational system, which has been forcefully interrupted by the communist regime.

Developments related to the reintroduction of religion in the curricula of state schools and the reestablishment of confessional educational establishments received continuous attention from key stakeholders in public life, and constantly high media coverage throughout the post-revolutionary transition period. Due to the particularly strong link between religious and national identity, religious education has been perceived – beyond its theological and ecclesiastical significance – as also having very important connotations for the socialisation of individuals into their own ethnic/national communities, strongly connected to the reassertion of the traditional – and politically charged - roles assumed by the churches as “the moral conscience” of their nations.

This paper is focusing on the evolution of the relationship between national identity and religious education in post-1989 Romanian society. Based on empirical research and an analysis of recent legal and political developments, the paper is discussing Romania as a case study of post-communist interactions between State, churches, educational system and national communities.

## Church and National Identity: the Romanian Context

Identity is a particularly sensitive issue in Romania, where ethnicity and religion have been linked. In fact, ethnic and religious identity form parts of the same value-structure, being perceived by significant social segments as a unique and organic reality.

There are several important factors that contributed to the link between ethnic and religious belonging. The first is the *historically multicultural character of the country and of many of its regions*. This is especially true of Transylvania (the North-western region of Romania), regarded equally as homeland by its Romanian, Hungarian and German (Saxon) inhabitants. This area has had a distinct path of development, which produced its own specific cultural environment and identity. During the Middle Ages, “Transylvania was an integral part of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, but owing to its remote situation, enjoyed a certain autonomy.”<sup>60</sup> After the collapse of independent Hungary in 1541, it became a separate principality under Turkish Ottoman rule, and maintained this status for more than 150 years, until the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century, when it was integrated into the Habsburg Empire as a self-governing unit. From 1867, the province belonged to Hungary within the framework of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and became part of Romania after the dissolution of the Dual State at the end of the First World War.

The second factor reinforcing the close link between ethnic and religious identity is the *ethno-national discourse of legitimacy promoted by the Orthodox Church*. This discourse is based on the interplay among *Church, State, ethnicity, and nationhood*. The tradition of linking Orthodoxy and State is in fact pervasive throughout the history of Eastern Christianity in the Romanian lands. The historical processes leading to Romanian *nation-formation* over the last three centuries further reinforced the strong connection between Eastern Orthodoxy and Romanian national ideology. In this fashion, Eastern Orthodox identity became linked to Romanian ethnic identity, thereby transforming Orthodoxy into a major source of Romanian national ideology.

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<sup>60</sup> Seton-Watson, R.W. 1943, *Transylvania: a Key-Problem*, Oxford.

Since the inter-war period, the Romanian Orthodox Church has assumed the position of a *dominant church in the state*.

The third factor that contributed to the link between ethnicity and religion involved the reaction of the minority churches. Linking ethnicity and religion for the Romanian majority population created a legitimate cultural space that was exploited by the minority churches, as well. Through their links with particular ethnic communities, these churches could assert their basic function as protectors of the ethnic communities' respective national identities. The membership of *Roman Catholic* (currently 1 026 429 members), *Reformed* (701 077), *Unitarian* (66 944) *Evangelical* (8716), *Lutheran* (27 112) churches; the *Jewish community* (6057)<sup>61</sup>; etc., coincided in large extent with the membership of one or another *ethnic* community. Minority communities have regarded denominational religious belonging as an important means for the affirmation and protection of their own national identities. Consequently, minority status acted as a factor strengthening the use of religion as an identity marker.

The events of December 1989 raised the hope that the barriers of nationalism could be overcome. In the wake of the revolution, the basic values of all ethnic and religious communities appeared to be the same: democracy, freedom, and the respect for human rights, including minority rights. However, first impressions were short lived, as it soon became clear that the reality was far more complicated. Soon after the sudden collapse of Communism, nationalism – alongside the promotion of ethno-confessional identity – very quickly and effectively filled the vacuum of legitimacy. Consequently, in the public sphere, the general social expectation was that both the majority of the Orthodox Church and the minority churches should maintain their traditional *legitimising* function, in close connection with the protection and affirmation of the national identities to which they were primarily linked.

In fulfilling this role, the Romanian Orthodox Church comprising the great majority (more than 86%) of the population<sup>62</sup> aspired not only to the preservation and enhancement of its de facto privileged position within the Romanian society, but also to the legal codification of such a position. Over the post-1989 period, demands for legislation offering a special status to the Orthodox Church have persisted. Until recently, all attempts by successive governments to enact a new Law of Religious Cults failed mainly due to the lack of agreement between the Orthodox Church and the minority churches.

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<sup>61</sup> Romanian National Statistical Institute,  
<http://www.insse.ro/RPL2002INS/vol4/tabele/t7.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> Romanian National Statistical Institute,  
<http://www.insse.ro/RPL2002INS/vol4/tabele/t7.pdf>

In December 2006, the Parliament finally succeeded to adopt a version of the Law, but even this version aroused contestations from minority churches, who felt disadvantaged by the new regulations, and the political and legal debates around these issues seem far from being settled even today.

## **Religious Education and the Rights of Confessional Minorities**

Perhaps nowhere are the contradictory positions of the Orthodox Church on the one side and the minority churches on the other side more pregnant and visible than in the controversies concerning the legal and institutional set up of religious education. The starting point of these debates however was dominated by a baseline consensus, rather than by contradictions. After decades of officially-backed atheism, one of the first demands of churches put forth after December 1989, was the resumption of pre-university religious education in public schools. In January 1990, less than one month after Nicolae Ceausescu's overthrow, the new Secretariate of State for Religious Denominations, together with the Romanian Orthodox Church's collective leadership structure, the Holy Synod offered their support for the introduction of religious education in public schools at all pre-university levels. An optional religion class, for which students were not to be graded, was to be included in the pre-university curriculum, with students declaring their religious affiliation in consultation with their parents. Students who were atheist or non-religious had the opportunity to opt out of the classes. However, in Romanian society, the number of people without any belief is very low.<sup>63</sup>

The Law of Education<sup>64</sup>, adopted in July, 1995 and applied since September, 1995, stipulates that religion is an obligatory discipline in the curricula of primary education, an optional discipline in gymnasium [high school] and a facultative discipline at university. According to this document, "the student, with the agreement of the parents or legal tutors, will choose the religion and the confession." Although Romania has signed the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights, which in Article 2 of the first additional protocols includes the obligation of the State to "respect the right of the parents to assure the education according to their religious and philosophical convictions," there is practically no room left in the Law of Education for any non-religious or philosophical alternative. Yet, as a result of a contestation of

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<sup>63</sup> At the Romanian Census of 2002, 12 825 people declared that they have no religion, and 8524 claimed themselves atheists <http://www.insse.ro/RPL2002INS/vol4/tabele/t7.pdf>

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Liviu Vanau The Easter Ball. Interaction between secularism and religion in Romania [http://www.georgefox.edu/academics/undergrad/departments/soc-swk/ree/VANAU\\_ROM.html](http://www.georgefox.edu/academics/undergrad/departments/soc-swk/ree/VANAU_ROM.html)

Article 9 of the Law of Education, the Constitutional Court decided that this article is constitutional *only if* "the convictions" of the parents or tutors are respected.

The first source of tension between churches concerning religious education originates from the provision that only the 18 recognized religions are entitled to hold religion classes in public schools. Thus, religious associations are excluded from this right. The leader of one such organization, the Enayati of the Baha'is, recently complained that without religious denomination status the Baha'is.

On the other hand, while the law permits instruction according to the faith of students' parents, some minority recognized religious groups complain that they were unable to have classes offered in their faith in public schools. The Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Baptist Church, and Jehovah's Witnesses continued to report such cases. According to minority religious groups, the local inspectors for religion classes are typically Orthodox priests who deny accreditation to teachers of other religions. According to Baptist reports, in some cases, school directors denied access in their schools to teachers of neo-Protestant religions.

Religious teachers are permitted to instruct only students of the same religious faith. However, minority religious groups, including the Baptist Church, credibly asserted that there were cases of children pressured to attend classes of Orthodox religion. The Seventh-day Adventist Church also complained that the School Inspectorate of Cluj County included only one of the requested three classes on Adventist religion in the school curriculum, although there were enough students for three full classes. In addition, the Baptist Church reported that, at some festivities in public schools, all students, irrespective of their religious affiliation, must attend Orthodox religious services.<sup>65</sup> Minority religious leaders are also concerned about the fact that very often during classes, Orthodox teachers of religion refer to other religious communities – even those recognized as religious denominations – with the term “sect,” which in Romanian context has a pejorative and even offending connotation.<sup>66</sup>

The accusation of proselytising is often formulated during classes not just against Neo-protestant churches but even against the historical Greek-

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<sup>65</sup> International Religious Freedom Report 2005 Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor [http://209.85.135.104/search?q=cache:R5n\\_VhkT73IJ:www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51575.htm+%22confessional+schools%22+Romania&hl=ro&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=ro&client=firefox-a](http://209.85.135.104/search?q=cache:R5n_VhkT73IJ:www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2005/51575.htm+%22confessional+schools%22+Romania&hl=ro&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=ro&client=firefox-a)

<sup>66</sup> During communism the official party jargon used the term “sect” as a stigma, in order to discredit new religious movements and non-recognized communities of faith.

Catholic Church.<sup>67</sup> There is no law against proselytizing, nor is there a clear understanding by the authorities of what activities constitute proselytizing. Although protected by law, several minority religious groups, which include both recognized and unrecognized religions, made credible complaints that low-level government officials and Romanian Orthodox clergy impeded their efforts to proselytize, interfered in religious activities, and otherwise discriminated against them.<sup>68</sup>

Leaders of the Baptist Church expressed their concerns about the fact that in the new Law of Cults adopted in 13 December, 2006, the requirement that denominational schools will have to provide pupils of other faiths with religious education after their own faiths, will eliminate specific denominational education, and cause undue burdens on denominational schools. The Baptist Union is worried about Article 39, paragraph 4 of the draft, which appears to require schools set up by religious denominations for their own communities to offer religious education to pupils of another faith who voluntarily choose to attend the school. Another concern was expressed by the Enayati of the Baha'is, who told Forum 18 that without religious denomination status, the Baha'is, who he says do not engage in proselytism, cannot even be invited into schools during comparative religion classes to explain what they believe.<sup>69</sup>

Another category of inter-confessional controversies originate in the different perceptions of school as a public space. After 1989, in many Romanian schools, it became customary to publicly display religious symbols (crucifixes, icons). Certain minority religions (such as Jehova's Witnesses) have contested the legitimacy of this practice, arguing that schools as public institutions, should remain a neutral place from denominational point of view and should not expose children who belong to other faiths to the religious symbols of the majority faith. Their arguments are however systematically rejected both by Orthodox Church representatives and lay educators, who are usually invoking the historical link between Orthodoxy, Romanian national and state identity.

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<sup>67</sup> In a recently published official manual of religious education, Greek Catholic Church has been charged by the authors with "historical proselytism" to the detriment of the Orthodox Church. After strong criticism from minority churches and civil society organizations the authors withdrawn this statement and apologized the Greek Catholic Church.

<sup>68</sup> International Religious Freedom Report 2005 Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.wvrn.org/article.php?idd=19116&con=46&sec=36>

## The Status and Role of Denominational Schools

Differences of *perception* also originate from differences of *tradition*. While religious education is perceived as a concern by all recognized churches, denominational schools belong to a cultural tradition primarily linked to minority religious and ethnic communities, being much less frequent and less characteristic within the Orthodox population.<sup>70</sup> That is why the recognition of lay denominational institutions of education has not been a political urgency for the Government of a country with a predominant Orthodox population – which hardly has any tradition of church based education apart from the training of its own church personnel. By contrast, the minority churches, which prior to Communism had a large number of educational institutions, repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with the Government's failure to allow by law the proper establishment of confessional schools.

Religious minorities are contesting what they perceive a privileged position of the Romanian Orthodox Church within the state, and continue to have an important role in asserting ethnic and confessional pluralism in post-communist Romania. The denominations closely linked to the ethnic Hungarian minority (Roman Catholic, Reformed, Evangelical-Lutheran, and Unitarian) constantly advocate minority rights and have been very effective in the mobilization of ethnic Hungarians in favour of legislative changes beneficial to the national minorities. They also fulfil an important role in minority institution building in the fields of education, culture, and social services. In 2000, for instance, these denominations provided the legal and institutional umbrella for the new private universities and faculties with Hungarian teaching language, which were set up with the support of the Government of Hungary in several cities of Transylvania (Tirgu Mures, Miercurea Ciuc, Cluj and Oradea).

The normal functioning of minority denominational education is hindered by the fact that in many cases religious minorities have not succeeded in regaining actual possession of their buildings which hosted confessional schools in the past. Many properties returned by government decree, house state offices, schools, hospitals, or cultural institutions would require relocation. Lawsuits and resistance by current possessors have delayed restitution of the property to the rightful owners.

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<sup>70</sup> Within the framework of the Orthodox Church (which claim the allegiance of more than 86 % of the population) there are 39 theological seminaries. By contrast there are 16 Roman Catholic and 9 Reformed high schools, which is a much higher number than in the case of Orthodox Church, if taking into account the number of adherents each denomination has.

The historical Hungarian churches, including the Roman Catholic as well as the Protestant churches (Reformed, Evangelical, and Unitarian), have received a small number of their properties back from the Government. The communist regimes confiscated many of these groups' secular properties, which are still used for state owned public schools, museums, libraries, post offices, and student dormitories.<sup>71</sup> Approximately 80 percent of the buildings confiscated from the Hungarian churches are used "in public interest." Of the 1,791 buildings reclaimed by the Hungarian churches, 113 buildings were restituted by government decrees. Of these 113, 80 should have been restituted according to government Decree 94 of 2000. Of the remaining 33, the Hungarian churches could take full, or at least partial possession of only 18 buildings. Restitution of the remainder has been delayed due to lawsuits or opposition from current possessors.<sup>72</sup>

Another category of concerns results from the ambiguous and uncertain legal status of confessional educational establishments. The denominational schools set up by minority churches after 1989, although intended by their founders to function as basically lay institutions promoting religious values, in conformity with the Orthodox model, were only recognized as secondary school level theological seminaries. They were financed by the state, but were also fully integrated into the state education system. The churches responsible for these schools were encountering difficulties in exercising their right of supervision and in obtaining approval for non-theological training.

A relatively new development in this field has been the modification of the Constitution, which is recognizing the right of the churches to set up their own institutions of lay education. Amendments to the Constitution enacted in October, 2003, allow the establishment of confessional schools subsidized by the State. However, this provision was not implemented so far. The modified Constitution also mentions the possibility – but not the obligation – of state financial support to be granted to existing denominational schools. Minority representatives expressed their strong hope that this new constitutional stipulation will soon be translated into an adequate legal framework

Apart from problems related to location and recognition, the efforts to re-establish denominationally based education are hindered by other unfavourable social factors as well: (1) the almost complete absence of

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<sup>71</sup> *ibidem*

<sup>72</sup> Statement of László Hámos, President of the Hungarian Human Rights Foundation, at a Briefing on Property Restitution and Compensation in Post-Communist Europe: A Status Update before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe September 10, 2003, 334 Cannon House Office Building <http://hhrf.org/natoexpansion/index.htm>

continuity, both at the level of mentality (particularly in the case of middle aged, who have been insufficiently integrated into religious education under communism) and at the level of educational resources (lack of well prepared educators and other specialists); (2) *insufficient institutional-organizational experience* and *inadequate infrastructure endowment*; (3) - lack of confidence concerning the legality of confessional schools and the attestation of studies in denominational institutions as equivalent with studies in the state directed educational establishments.

In these circumstances, the question to be raised is that to what extent and under what conditions can the denominational institutions become a viable alternative to the lay educational system today. In a public opinion poll of a representative sample of 820 people belonging to Roman-Catholic, Reformed or Lutheran churches conducted by the authors in the city of Oradea (located in north-western Romania), 83,12% of the respondents agreed in principle with the establishment (or reestablishment) of denominational schools. However, only 21,5 % declared that they would use the services of such educational institutions. This gap obviously denotes a reserved attitude towards denominational education. In spite of the fact that it overwhelmingly recognizes the necessity of the changes that confessional schools might induce, still a certain kind of restrained attitude persists, manifesting itself predominantly at the level of individual options.

In a survey we conducted among students in 5 confessional educational establishments in the city of Oradea (three secondary schools belonging to the Roman-Catholic, Reformed and Baptist denominations and two higher education institutions belonging to the Reformed and Baptist Churches respectively) the advantages of confessional teaching establishments most often mentioned by our respondents have been the higher potential of denominational schools to offer firm religious moral values and standards of behaviour to the young generation as well as *the possibility to study in the native language*. By contrast, the most frequently listed disadvantages concerned the infrastructure, organizational matters, and the recognition of studies. Behind such opinions it is possible to observe a certain degree of scepticism towards *alternative* educational practices and the preference for well established (state-directed) institutional structures in this field. The aspiration to offer coherent and consistent value systems to the next generation is manifesting itself in practice - as yet - only in small extent at the level of personal options in favour of denominationally based educational institutions.

*Table 1: Student motivat in opting for confessional school*

Motivational factor	Number of student options	Percentage of student options
Christian community environment	80	36,4
Coherent value system	41	18, 6
Greater chances for upward mobility	29	13, 2
Rejection by other schools	11	5, 0
Greater chances of admission	12	5, 5
Quality of teaching	29	13, 2
Other	8	3, 3
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100, 0</b>

At the same time, the results of our research point to the essential role of family level value structures in determining orientation towards denominational schools. The demographic and social peculiarities of the population of parents who prefer confessional education for their children coincides to a large extent with the demographic and economic characteristics of the religiously active part of society (as identified by previous investigations). The large share of economically inactive people, of rural inhabitants and of people with low level of studies within the population of parents, denotes a degree of social and economic marginality of this religiously active segment. This phenomenon can be partly explained by the consequences of the anti-religious restrictive and discriminatory policies pursued by the Communist regime. Under such conditions, today denominational education seems to act also as an additional channel of inter-generation mobility for religiously involved, but socially disadvantaged families.

*Table 2: Distribution of students by father's occupational status*

<b>Father's occupational status</b>	<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Qualified physical worker	107	<b>48,6</b>
Clerkly occupations	14	<b>6,3</b>
Intellectual occupations	19	<b>8,6</b>
Other active	34	<b>15,7</b>
Inactive	46	<b>20,8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100,0</b>

As it can be seen, from sociological perspective, the educational activities of churches tend to offer an additional possibility for diminishing distances within the society and at the same time, to create new channels of upward mobility for members of various denominations. The continuously increasing expectations can be, however, satisfied only if churches will succeed in attracting well-qualified lay collaborators. In this way, it is possible to hope that the specialized confessional institutions will be more and more able to adequately respond to the diverse and increasing social needs and to be competitive with the similar non-ecclesiastical establishments.

## **Conclusions**

The restoring of religious education in post-communist Romania should be interpreted in the context of the historical inter-twinning between religious and ethnic identity specific to this country, which contributed to the preservation of the traditional cultural attitude characteristic to Orthodox identity, and created a social-cultural environment in which religion persisted as a fundamental element of community cultural value systems. The role of religion as a marker of identity contributed to the vitality of religious sentiment. For the national majority population, this led to a strong link between Orthodoxy and Romanian identity. For the minority churches and ethnic communities, the use of religion as an identity marker contributed to the importance of church membership in asserting and protecting minority ethnic identities. This has been intensified by the consequences of the minority status.

In addition, the impact of the 1989 evolution, and the specific conditions which accompanied the change of political regime, created a particularly high legitimacy for religion, religious communities and institutions. While the old political system and its official ideology collapsed, the strong position of religious values ensured a certain degree of stability on deeper cultural levels. This created a new social space for religion and religious institutions and very high expectations towards them. All these factors explain the great importance attributed to the issues pertaining to religious education.

At the same time, however, the fact that in Romania ethnic and religious identity are in large extent overlapping, completing and reinforcing each other, lead however to an increasing distance, even gap, between the ways in which majority and minority communities define themselves. This phenomenon tends to increase the difficulties of inter-ethnic and inter-confessional communication, which manifested itself also in controversies between the majority Orthodox Church and the minority churches concerning the implementation of religious education within the Romanian educational system. Symbolic manifestation of identity has often been preferred to pragmatic attitudes in order to ensure equality of chances, and thus promote reconciliation between historical churches and national communities.

In spite of the difficulties of the transition period, confessional education could become a credible alternative if the educational tasks based on traditional religious values are to be successfully applied to the contemporary social needs. This process of adaptation could gradually lead to the opening up of a new type of social relationships between lay and ecclesiastical partners, based on equal dignity and recognition. Such evolution will be possible, however, only as a result of significant transformations in the sphere of social values and attitudes, both at individual and community levels. As long as in the society a gap between the predominantly passive manifestation of religiosity and the active forms of religious behaviour in everyday life continues to exist, the objectives assumed by confessional schools can only be partially achieved.

In order to be able to successfully respond to the challenge of the plurality of values and also to the contemporary social problems, churches must undertake a process of self-assessment and self-revision, not so much in the theological sphere, but much more in the field of ecclesiastical practice, in the institutional structure and in the modes and techniques of social interaction and communication. In order to achieve a highly efficient adjustment, churches should open up towards society, as much as society itself is becoming more open towards religion and religious institutions.

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## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN BULGARIAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS: PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES**

The introduction of religious education in public schools has provoked contradictory reactions in post-Communist Bulgarian society. The abolishment of atheism as a ruling principle of the state government has created favorable conditions for the return of religion in the public sphere. This process, however, has not been unproblematic. The return to religion hasn't been accompanied by a restoration of the pre-1947 confessional state whose dominant faith was Orthodox Christianity (Tarnovo Constitution, Art. 37), but takes place in a secular state. This situation has confused many people who are not able to distinguish the former rule's atheism from the present one, guided by secular principles. As a result, they tend to regard both policies as a rejection of religion. In addition, the majority of Bulgarian citizens are ready to identify religion with Orthodoxy, which leads to an unequal treatment of religious minorities. Finally, the introduction of "Religion" as a school discipline, optional or required, was linked to the debate about the Communist past and thus became part of the political struggle between the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) and the Union of the Democratic Forces (UDF).

If the former Communists resisted the study of religion in public schools, the Democrats would perceive its introduction into school curricula as a restoration of the continuation of the pre-Communist past. Therefore, the right-oriented interim government of Stefan Sofiyanski (February-May 1997) established a special "Commission on religion" at the Ministry of Education. Its members had to prepare a concept for the study of religion in public schools. Their work was doomed to failure by the schism in the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the political changes in the country.<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, the study of "Religion" was introduced in the school year of 1997/98 as optional classes were registered based on Orthodox theology. Two years later such classes were also organized for the Muslim students in the regions with compact Turkish and Pomak (Bulgarian speaking Muslims) population. In these regions, the high participation of Muslim children in these classes increased the interest of Christian students as well. As regards the rest of the country, however, the average attendance of religious classes

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<sup>73</sup> Ivan Denev, "Religious Education in Bulgaria," *Religious Education within the Context of the Common European Home. International Symposium on Religious Education, Held in Bulgaria*, I. Denev and Engelbert Gross eds., (Sofia, 2004), 20-21.

remained below 1 %.<sup>74</sup> At the same time, this development turned the local schools in the religiously mixed regions into a place of division between the Orthodox students and their Muslim classmates. This situation has raised many questions: Are public schools the proper place for a confessional study of any religion? Will such a religious division among students assist their knowledge and cooperative skills after they finish their education? Is there any difference between one's right to study his/her mother tongue and his/her right to study religion?

### Theologians as Teachers of Religion

The first religious classes were organized in the autumn of 1996 as a pilot project in selected kinder-gardens in Sofia.<sup>75</sup> This timing was not accidental. It coincided with the graduation of the first generation of Bulgarian female theologians. They were enrolled in the Faculty of Theology after its restoration to Sofia University by the UDF's government on July 24, 1991. This act brought about the end of the gender discrimination in the studies of Orthodoxy. In the Communist era men and women were both taught in an ecclesiastical academy in the Cherepish monastery, a wild mountainous area not very far from Sofia. The academy's only task was to prepare clerics for their obligations in the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.<sup>76</sup> Becoming part of the Sofia University again, the Faculty of Theology restored the pre-Communist practice to take on women. This act, however, provoked a new problem – the recognition of female theologians as professionals in the field, who almost outnumbered their male colleagues.

The Faculty found a solution for women in their additional training as “teachers of religion.” In reality their qualification had no practical value because there was no subject named “Religion” in the public school program. Therefore, in 1996, the Faculty of Theology launched another initiative. With the support of the Holy Synod, it introduced “Religion” as a school discipline. It stated that the theologians were discriminated by the state that did not allow them to become teachers on equal grounds with the other students in

<sup>74</sup> In 2005/06, religious classes were attended by 10,000 Christian and 4,000 Muslim students. (“Only 14,000 children take classes in religion,” newspaper Standart, September 5, 2006:5) The latter are concentrated in the regions of Kardzhali, Razgrad and Shumen. These figures also reveal a higher interest in these classes among the Muslims who represent 12,2 % of the entire Bulgarian population, while the Orthodox ones are 82,6 %, according to the 2001 Census.

<sup>75</sup> Ivan Denev, 20.

<sup>76</sup> The higher theological education was established in Bulgaria in 1923. It was an integral part of the Sofia University from the very beginning. In 1951, however, the faculty was closed down by the communist regime and transferred into an ecclesiastical academy under the supervision of the Holy Synod. This measure aimed to isolate the future Orthodox clergy from the secular people's intelligentsia.

humanities.<sup>77</sup> The concept's creators, however, forgot to mention the proper name of the discipline "Pedagogy" in the Faculty's curricula, which was "Pedagogy (Catechisis)." The methodology of teaching, i.e. the other discipline that justified their professional skills as teachers, was listed as "Methodology of teaching theology," which excluded any non-Christian religions as well as the Catholic and Protestant theologies. This meant that their training was limited to Orthodoxy and thus these teachers had no ability to teach any other confession.

The 1996 Concept was not well elaborated. Written by representatives of the Sofia Faculty of Theology, it reduced the term "religion" to Eastern Orthodoxy. The concept also suffered from internal contradictions. On the one hand, it stated that the new discipline would not be an Orthodox or another indoctrination which was a monopoly of the officially registered religious institutions in the country (Part 2, §4, §7). On the other hand, it required the classes of religion to be taught only by theologians, i.e. the graduates of the Faculty of Theology (Part 3, §13), whose training did not exceed the Orthodox understanding of religion. Their knowledge of the other religious traditions was insufficient and often did not recognize any views that differed from the Orthodox one.<sup>78</sup> The Faculty's curricula included only one mandatory discipline dealing with the other religious denominations, called "History of religions" (3,5 ECTS or 45 academic hours) and one optional – "Non-Orthodox Christian denominations" (3,5 ECTS). This meant that the young theologians could receive maximum 7 credits out of the total number of 240 credits necessary for their successful graduation.<sup>79</sup> This state of affairs questioned their expertise not only in non-Christian religions but also in non-Orthodox denominations.

## The Model of Confessional Teaching of Religion

Despite the statements in respect of the freedom of religion, the authors of the above mentioned concept pleaded for teaching Orthodox theology as a regular school discipline, i.e. mandatory for all students. Their major argument concerned the fight against sects, foreign 'spiritual' invaders and centers, "planning to establish a 'new world order' that will destroy all

<sup>77</sup> "Concept for the introduction of "Religion" as a regular discipline in Bulgarian public schools" Tsarkoven vestnik [Church Newspaper], No. 9 (February-March, 1996: 3-4)

<sup>78</sup> In 2002, the award of Cardinal Walter Kasper as doctor honoris causa of Sofia University provoked some students and members of the teaching staff of its Faculty of Theology to protest against this act with an open letter, where they stated that the only theology that could exist was the Orthodox one.

<sup>79</sup> The Faculty curricula is available in Bulgarian on its website: <http://www.uni-sofia.bg/faculties+bg/theology+bg/curriculum+bg.html>

national features and traditions” (Part 3, §10; Part 5, Application to the Concept, Art. 6).<sup>80</sup> In addition the authors asked for a revision of the term “secular.” In their view, the separation of church and state did not liberate the latter from its duty “to take care of the entire and full cultural education and upbringing of young people, including [religious] traditions and linked with them religious views” (Application to the Concept, Art. 2) In this way, the introduction of “Religion” was expected to bring “the policy of state atheism” to its end (Application to the Concept, Art. 14).

This initiative was supported by both parts of the then divided Bulgarian Orthodox Church – the Synod of Patriarch Maxim and the Alternative one. Both had direct interests in the Orthodox catechization of children. It was also politically backed up by the Union of Democratic Forces that considered the rejection of atheism as an automatic introduction of religion in public schools. Thus they assisted the institutionalization of the higher theological education from the very beginning. At the same time, they were not able to fulfill this plan due to the short life of their first government in 1992. They returned to it again in the period between 1997-2007, during their second mandate, when six handbooks on “religion” were published for public school students of the first eight classes.<sup>81</sup> The authors were affiliated with the UDF and most of them taught in the Sofia Faculty of Theology.

In the school year of 1997/98, “Religion” was introduced in public schools as a facultative discipline for the II up to the IV classes. In the next school year, the teaching of religion was extended to the first eight classes. In 1999, facultative lessons in religion were also organized for the Muslim students in the regions with compact groups of such population. They were taught by graduates of the Sofia Institute for Higher Islamic Education, established in March 1998.<sup>82</sup> In this way, the study of religion in Bulgarian public schools combined the principle of the freedom of conscience,

<sup>80</sup> Tsarkoven vestnik [Church Newspaper], No. 9 (February-March, 1996: 3-4

<sup>81</sup> T. Koev, Uchebno pomagalo po blagonravie za II-IV klas. Za uchenitsite ot Natsionalniya ucheben kompleks po kultura [Handbook on Religious Morality for the students of the National Educational Center on Culture] (Sofia: 1997); I. Denev, T. Koev, I. Zhelev, K. Yanakiev, D. Kirov, M. Dimova. Uchebno pomagalo. Eksperimentalno posobie po religiya. [Handbook. Experimental school book on religion], ed. D. Korudiev, (Sofia: 1998); I. Denev, D. Kirov, A. Krastev, Eksperimentalno uchebno pomagalo za V-VI klas po religiya [Experimental school book on religion for V-VI classes], (Sofia: 1998); I. Denev, D. Kirov, A. Krastev, Eksperimentalno uchebno pomagalo za VII-VIII klas po religiya [Experimental school book on religion for VII-VIII classes], (Sofia: 1998); Moyata parva Bibliya v kartinki [My first Bible in pictures], [trans. from Keneth N. Taylor, (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 1989)], Bulgarian Edition (Sofia: 2000); P. Vasilev, Hristiyanskata religiya. Hristomatiya po religiya. [Christianity: Reader in religion], (Sofia: 2000).

<sup>82</sup> This Institute was a successor of a semi-higher school for Islamic education that existed from 1991 to 1998. See: <http://islambgr.googlepages.com/higherislamicinstitutesofiacity>

expressed in the right of students to choose whether to participate in these classes, with the principle of confessional belonging, i.e. the Orthodox Christian students studied religion separately from their Muslim classmates. In 2003, optional classes in religion were also organized for the last four classes (IX-XII) in Bulgarian schools, but the interest in the subject never exceeded 2 % of all Bulgarian students. In 2006/07, it was studied only by 16 667 students (12,925 from the I-IV classes, 2,748 – from the V-VIII classes, and 994 – from the IX-XII classes).<sup>83</sup>

The lack of interest in religious classes is a result of many factors. To a great extent they were discredited by the schism in the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (1992-2004) and the internal divisions in the Muslim leadership. The politicization of religion in the process of transition also had a negative effect on Bulgarian society. On the one hand, evidence appeared about the collaboration of the Orthodox episcopate with the former Communist regime. In addition, some metropolitans were discredited by their use of the restored church property as their own one. The Orthodox Church's lack of care for the social problems of its believers also decreased the interest in such classes. Moreover, the political parties used the Church and religion as means to achieve their personal aims. The UDF government supported the Alternative Synod, but rejected the legitimacy of the Synod of Patriarch Maxim that had the assistantship of the Socialist Party. The latter, however, was not in favor of religious education before securing Maxim's monopoly over the entire Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

The situation changed after the adoption of the new Denominations Act (December 21, 2002). Its Art. 10 registered *ex lege* the Synod of Patriarch Maxim and secured its monopoly over Bulgarian Orthodoxy. The Muslim leadership also overcame its internal conflicts. In addition, the three major political parties (National Movement Simeon II, Movement for Rights and Freedoms and the Socialist Party) reached a political consensus concerning the legal status of religious classes in public schools. This stability allowed a return to the issue of their status in national education. The 2002 amendments of the Law on educational degrees, minimum disciplines and school curricula included "religion" in one of the eight obligatory educational-cultural areas together with social sciences and civil education (Art. 10, §4). It added the classes of mother tongue and religion to the group of so-called "mandatory optional disciplines" which are included in the minimum hours necessary for receiving a certain degree of education (Art. 10, §3).<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Official statistics of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education.

<sup>84</sup> Law on the educational degrees, minimum disciplines and school curricula was adopted in 1999 and amended in 2002. Its text in Bulgarian is available in Internet: <http://www.paragraf22.com/pravo/zakoni/zakoni-d/44054.html>. According to Art. 15,

In 2003, the Rules for the Application of the Law of People's Education were changed as well. They allowed the study of "religion" as a "mandatory-optional" or a "free-choice optional" discipline in all public schools (Art. 4, §3).<sup>85</sup> On this basis, in 2003, the classes of religion were extended to the final school years (IX-XII class). The Rules defined that "Religion" had to be studied in terms of philosophy, history and culture through the educational material distributed in different school disciplines (Art. 4, §2). Four months later, Mr. Vladimir Atanasov, then Minister of Education (July 24, 2001-July 17, 2003), issued Instruction No. 2 which considered the classes of "Religion." Its Art. 3, §3, requires these classes to be organized on the basis of the concepts of teaching "Religion" and "Religion-Islam." The latter was specifically designed for Muslim students. In agreement with this confessional approach, Art. 11 defines that the graduates of the faculties of [Orthodox] theology and the Higher Institute for Islamic Studies are the only professionals eligible to teach these disciplines.<sup>86</sup> This meant not only a confessional separation of classmates within the framework of public schools, but also an Orthodox or Islamic indoctrination (or faith-teaching) of students which contradicted the constitutional and law principles for secular education.

## **Towards Non-Confessional Study of Religion**

The confessional disposition of religious classes had not provoked serious concerns in society for about 10 years. The situation changed in 2006, when the religiosity of the Muslim community, especially in the regions mainly populated by them, became more visible in a short time. In June 2006, two girls appeared in their high school with headscarves in the city of Smolyan. Their behavior provoked hot debates about the use of religious symbols there. The supporters of secular education accused the girls with using religious symbols in school. In fact, the more serious argument against the headscarf was based on the rules of this particular school. They required the students to wear uniforms and the girls broke them. Still the girls refused

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there are three types of disciplines in public schools: mandatory, optional mandatory and free-choice optional. Religion and mother tongue are optional-mandatory. "Mandatory" disciplines could be regarded as "major disciplines" in American education, while "optional mandatory" as "minor disciplines." The "mandatory-optional" disciplines are between 10 and 55 % depending of the school year (Art. 16). It is minimal for the first for years (I-IV class) and maximal for the last four (IX-XII class).

<sup>85</sup> Rules for the Application of the Law of People's Education, State Herald, No. 15, February 24, 2003. The text is available in Bulgarian in Internet: [http://rio-lovech.hit.bg/index\\_files/PPZNP.htm](http://rio-lovech.hit.bg/index_files/PPZNP.htm).

<sup>86</sup> Instruction No. 2, issued by the Ministry of Education on June 23, 2003, State Herald, No. 60, July 4, 2003.

to obey. They stated that the “headscarf” was not simply a symbol of their faith, but their religious duty. In the beginning they had the support of a local Muslim NGO and the Chief Mufti’s office, but later both were silenced by the decision of the Commission for Defense against Discrimination, issued in August 1, 2006.<sup>87</sup> It forbade the use of Muslim headscarves in public schools, where students are obliged to wear uniforms. The two girls had to choose either not to cover their head, while being in school, or to leave the school and to finish their education as private students.<sup>88</sup> They preferred the second option.

Soon it became clear that the Commission’s decision was a solution for a particular case.<sup>89</sup> The Smolyan example was followed by others in public schools whose statutes did not require uniforms. Their increasing number provoked some doubts about the compatibility of the secular nature of schools with the presence of religion there (crosses, crucifixes, headscarves, religious rituals, faith indoctrination, etc.) By this time, however, the debate on the place of religion in schools revealed that the majority of Bulgarians were less sensitive in the cases where Christian symbols were involved. Nobody required the same strict prohibition in terms of wearing necklaces with crosses in schools or conducting Orthodox rituals there. Instead the debate was concentrated on the use of Muslim headscarf in schools as a threat against education.<sup>90</sup>

The headscarf case questioned the confessional approach to the classes of religion in public schools. Today Bulgarian society is divided. There are people, who reject any study of religion, either on the basis of atheism or on the secular nature of state and education. The other pole is presented by religious leaders as well as some nationalist political parties, who claim that

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<sup>87</sup> Marina Chertova, “Mufti and School Director in a headscarf debate,” *Novinar* [News Maker], July 13, 2006, (11) “The Mufti’s Office supported the headscarf-bearers in school,” *Sega*, July 27, 2006, (2); Aneta Kisyova, “Muftis insist on headscarves” *Telegraf* [Telegraph], July 29, 2006, (11); “The Mufti’s Office will refer with complains to European ambassadors,” *Sega* [Now], August 1, 2006, (4).

<sup>88</sup> These cases are discussed by the author in another paper entitled *The Secular and the Religious in Post-Communist Bulgaria: the Debate on Religion in School*, submitted for publishing in the volume of papers from the 2006 ISORECEA conference (Budapest). See also Aneta Kisyova, “The girls with headscarves become private students,” *Monitor*, September 13, 2006, (7)

<sup>89</sup> It concerns the case of Smolyan, discussed in another paper which is under print. D. Kalkandjieva, *The secular and the Religious in Post-Communist Bulgaria: the debate on Religion in School*.

<sup>90</sup> Velislava Dareva, “The headscarf as a fuse [that could inflame the religious peace in Bulgaria],” *24 chasa* [24 hours], August 7, 2006, (11-12)

the study of religion shapes the national identity.<sup>91</sup> In most cases the second groups regard “Orthodoxy” as a synonym for “religion.” There are also people who maintain that Bulgarian society needs a secular interdisciplinary and inter-religious study of religion in public schools as a means of conflict prevention and upbringing of tolerant young people. The necessity of such an approach originates in the religious demography of Bulgaria. Today 82,6 % of Bulgarians are affiliated with Orthodoxy, while 12,2 % - with Islam. At the same time, there is statistical evidence that the religiosity of Muslims (as well as of the other religious minorities) is higher than that of the Orthodox Bulgarians. For example, the number of the new Orthodox churches and chapels, built in the last 16 years, is 750,<sup>92</sup> while that of the mosques is 320.<sup>93</sup> The participation in optional classes on the two faiths, organized at public schools, reveals the same situation. In 2006, they were attended by 10 000 Orthodox children and 4000 Muslim ones.<sup>94</sup>

These developments raise many questions concerning the secular nature of education, laid down in the Bulgarian Law on Education. Does it concern the appearance of the students as well as their teachers? Is the post-Communist return to some Orthodox rituals in public schools, such as the water blessing ceremony at the beginning of the school year, against the secular nature of education and against the principles of freedom of religion? Is the public school a proper place for teaching the existent form of religion, which is optional but aimed at confessional indoctrination? Does this form of teaching religion need changes? Is it really necessary to study religion in public schools or should it be forbidden? The lack of answers could worsen the religious climate in Bulgaria.

## The Need of Inter-religious and Pluralistic Study of Religion

The analysis of the post-Communist confessional study of religion in Bulgarian public schools reveals a methodological error in it. These lessons were organized in analogy with the optional classes on studying one’s mother

<sup>91</sup> In February 2007, several Bulgarians, belonging to Islam, were arrested for organizing Islamist websites, promoting Sheria against civil law. The defendants were released in 72 hours without going to court. The case seemed to be more a media campaign than a criminal one. Most publications stressed the fact that two people of the accused Muslims had recently converted from Christianity to Islam. This was considered as an attack against the Bulgarian identity, because ‘by definition’ Orthodoxy is perceived an integral part of it. See “The third website of the former mufti was discovered”, *Trud* [Labor], February 22, 2007, (14); M. Tasheva, “A Turkisation [of Bulgaria]”, *Monitor*, February 23, (14).

<sup>92</sup> “750 New churches, built for 16 years”, newspaper *Standart* [Standard], June 21, 2006, (22)

<sup>93</sup> “Refugees [from Bulgaria to Turkey] donate money for mosques”, newspaper *Trud* [Labor], July 3, 2006, (7)

<sup>94</sup> “Only 14 000 children take classes on religion”, *Standart*, September 5, 2006, (5)

tongue. Today it is obvious that mother tongue and religion should not be approached in the same manner. Although both spring from the same principle (the equality of citizens irrespective of their ethnicity and religion), mother tongue is predestinate, i.e. it is not subject to choice and change as in the case of religious affiliation. These phenomena are of a different nature. One is secular or at least non-religious, while the other is religious. Therefore, they should be placed separately within the civil educational system. It does not mean to reject one's right to belong to a specific religion, but its confessional studying should be realized within the corresponding religious community, not in public schools. It also does not exclude the study of religion, as a phenomenon together with its various forms, in schools, but this endeavor requires different approaches, scopes and purposes. Today, the development of such "civil studies of religion" is the major challenge for the Bulgarian education. Its introduction is an important condition for the advancement of religious peace and tolerance in Bulgarian society.

The need of inter-religious study of religion in Bulgaria is not simply a result of the recent trends in the area of religious studies in the world, but also of historical circumstances. Bulgaria is one of the few European countries that have 6 century-long history of co-existence with Islam (although it was not always very peaceful). The contemporary religious demography of the country requires considerable attention to the dialogue between Orthodox Christianity and Sunni Islam. The Bulgarian stereotypical notions of religion are also challenged by the post-Communist spread of new religious movements and non-traditional religions such as Buddhism or by the appearance of neo-pagan movements. They provoke extreme reactions among the advocates of the so-called 'national' or 'traditional' religions. An inter-religious approach of the study of religion will help overcoming such problems. Still there is no clarity about the form of such studies: mandatory or optional; as a separate discipline or as part of other disciplines such as history, literature, philosophy, and arts; in first classes or during the entire school education, etc.

The second big challenge concerning the study of religion in public schools deals with the dialogue between the secular and the religious in society. The classes of religions shall not contradict the secular principles of the state government, at least under the conditions of the present constitution and legal system in Bulgaria. Still it is difficult to find the right balance between the secular principles and the religious values and beliefs of those students who are active believers. For example, some of them, mostly Muslims and neo-Protestants, do not accept the study of Darwinism in public schools because it contradicts their religious views. The notion of secular state is not clear either. Sometimes it is interpreted as a priority of the state over religions, while in other cases it is considered as a neutrality of the state

towards the existing religious and other worldviews. According to J. Habermas, the latter is not compatible with the political universalization of any secular view about the world and thus is a guarantee for the equal ethical freedom of every citizen.<sup>95</sup> In practice, however, this theory does not work so smoothly. The search for a proper balance between the religious and the secular remains the most important task of Bulgarian and other post-Communist societies.

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<sup>95</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *Dialektik der Säkularisierung*, trans. G. Kapriev, (Sofia: 2006), 41.

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## **CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN CROATIA: ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER RELIGIONS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS<sup>96</sup>**

### **Introduction**

Religion and religiosity as a way of man's relation with the world, as a possible answer to the crucial questions of human existence, and as practical-value orientation in life, are an integral and active part of culture. As other forms of human spirit, religion is also an active factor of every socio-cultural milieu, and thus a factor of development of spiritual and material culture. It has also practical implications on the behaviour of religious people and members of a certain religious community, as well as of those outside of it. All this suggests the importance that the young get acquainted with religious phenomenon through education in schools as well.

School, as one of the factors of socialization, exists within and is marked by a concrete socio-historical context.<sup>97</sup> Besides general results of development of basic human knowledge, educational contents in school are shaped by the tradition and the culture of an actual society. This is the reason why each state keeps making sure that through educational system, it passes on the values and norms that are in the foundation of social life.

### **Social and religious context in Croatia**

In former Communist system in Croatia (as the part of former Yugoslavia), religion and churches had negative connotation. They were suppressed in the private sphere and did not have any social impact. Although the Constitution guaranteed all forms of religious rights and freedoms, the desirable conformity patterns were non-religiosity and atheism. Ideological "struggle" against religion and churches had been fought in different areas of social life (with different intensity). Therefore, on the institutional level, they were invisible - for instance in the educational system and in the mass media.

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<sup>96</sup> The part of this paper was included in the Kotor Network project financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>97</sup> Other institutions can also influence the teaching content in schools. The example for it is a significant influence of the Catholic Church in Croatia on the teaching content in the state primary and secondary schools and introducing of religious instruction in kindergartens and public schools at the beginning of the 1990s.

However, religion and the church did not disappear from people's lives. They were widely spread in traditional forms across all segments of society, being constituent of traditional rural, as well as "modern" urban ambient (although lesser in the latter). In the context of confessional differences, Croatia was, together with Slovenia, the most religious part of former Yugoslavia. Sociologists recognized this widely spread traditional religiosity as the potential for revitalisation of religion in different social circumstances (Vrcan, 1995).

Post-Communist transitional context in Croatia, as well as in other post-Communist countries has been marked by transformation of institutional, industrial, economical and cultural structures of society, followed by parallel processes of liberalisation and democratisation as preconditions of political and social changes.

Religious changes had important place within the process of socio-cultural changes in the transitional period. Being shaped in Croatia dominantly by the leading party (HDZ) at the beginning of the 1990s, the major framework of these changes constituted the openness of political structure and the society in whole to religion and the church (especially the Catholic Church) - from institutional solutions to the change of their position and role in society. Another important part of this framework was the acting of churches in the pre-war, war and post-war period followed by national and religious homogenisation.

Crucial for our theme is the fact that religion and churches became present in public life, especially in the educational system. The change of their position after 1990 has been followed by a huge increase of declared religiosity. Different researches among adult population and youth pointed to this fact (Boneta, 2000; Cifrić, 2000; Črpić i Kušar, 1998; Goja, 2000; Mandarić, 2000; Marinović Jerolimov, 2000, 2001; Zrinščak, Črpić i Kušar, 2000; Vrcan, 2001). The strong identification with religion and the church became almost complete among the population, which places Croatia among the countries with a highest level of religiosity in Europe (behind Poland, Romanian Transylvania, Malta, Portugal, Italy and Ireland) (Aračić, Črpić, Nikodem, 2003; Davie, 2000; Zrinščak, Črpić, Kušar, 2000).

The revitalisation of religion and religiosity has been followed by the processes of desecularisation and deprivatisation. Casanova (1994) introduced the concept of deprivatisation to describe religious situation in modern societies after the 1980s, confirming certain turnabout in secular trends and emphasising the entrance of religion in the public sphere in order to participate in defining relationships on all levels of society and in all areas. Although the religious tradition had been recognised as the part of culture and social life like in West European societies, the revitalisation of religion in

Croatia followed a different path. It did not manifest a rise of the so-called *religion à la carte*, a religious *bricolage* or the processes of individualisation, detraditionalisation and decollectivisation. On the contrary, the revitalisation of religion in Croatia occurred more within the framework of retraditionalisation, retotalisation and recollectivisation (Vrcan, 1999). Some data from a recent research "Social and religious changes in Croatia" (2004) confirm these findings.<sup>98</sup> First of all, it confirmed the same level of declared Catholics as the 2001 Census, according to which 94 per cent of the population belong to some religion, and 6 per cent to agnostics, undeclared, not religious or were listed as unknown. The vast majority (88 per cent) declared themselves as Catholics, while belonging to different religious communities included as follows:

*Table 1. Confessional Structure of the Republic of Croatia*

	N	%
Roman Catholic Church	3 897 332	87.83
Orthodox Churches	195 969	4.42
Agnostics and undeclared	132 532	2.99
Not religious	98 376	2.22
Islamic Religious Community	56 777	1.28
Unknown	25 874	0.58
Greek Catholic Church	6219	0.14
Jehovah Witnesses	6094	0.14
Other religions	4764	0.11
Other protestant churches	4068	0.09
Evangelic Church	3339	0.08
Adventist Church	3001	0.07
Baptist Church	1981	0.04
Jewish Religious Community	495	0.01
Christ's Pentecostal Church	336	0.01
Old Catholic Church	303	0,01

*Source: Census 2001*

<sup>98</sup> The religious research "Social and religious changes in Croatia" was conducted by The Institute for Social Research of Zagreb in 2004 on the representative sample (N=2220) of adult population of Croatia.

Together with the indicators of religious identification, religious socialisation, religious belief and practice, it documents a highly visible trend towards the revitalisation of religiosity after the fall of communism.

For instance, elements of traditional church religiosity transferred through the religious socialisation such as religious upbringing at home and religious instruction in church or at school are spread in a very high percentage (81 and 83 % respectively). The same was observed concerning sacramental practice: 94% were baptised, 85% had first communion and 81% confirmation. The basic church beliefs also confirm these findings: 82% believe in God, 72% that God created the world and men, 70% that God is the source of morals, 53% in heaven and hell, and 52% in life after death. However, religious beliefs are fragmented, which is the fact that has been documented in different religious researches in Croatia (as elsewhere) for the decades. The regular religious practice (weekly church attendance) also increased although it is lower than other elements of religiosity.

### **Religious education in public schools**

Mediation of religious content in schools can be realized in at least two ways - in a form of confessional mediation as religious education (instruction)<sup>99</sup> and non-confessional one, as a separate subject<sup>100</sup>, or within other subjects. The aim of confessional education is to promote obligation towards a certain religion, while that of non-confessional is to give information on religion/religions, to encourage an understanding of religion in general and to train students how to perceive different religions and philosophies of life for possible their own cognizant choice.<sup>101</sup> Religious instruction as catechism presents actually "an initiation and leading the catechumens in their true growth and development in religion (cultivation of religion)" (Skledar 2001). So, as such it should be conceived in terms of confession and oriented towards ecumenism and dialogue.

Crucial for our theme is the fact that religion and churches became present in the educational system in Croatia. Pursuant to the decision of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Croatia, as if 1991/92 confessional religious instruction was introduced in schools as an elective subject. Religious communities were given a mandate to define the way of teaching, textbooks as well as to provide a necessary number of instructors

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<sup>99</sup> In European educational systems the following terms are used: religious education, religious instruction, religion, Christian knowledge and religious and ethical education, etc.

<sup>100</sup> Different terms are used for non-confessional religious education: religious culture, science on religions, ethics, religions and ethics, history of religions.

<sup>101</sup> These two approaches differ in many ways - time and place of instruction, teacher, position within a teaching program and the methods used in teaching and giving grades.

and to train them. It was introduced gradually depending on the number of interested students and available teachers (Peranić, 1998). At the very beginning, some mistreatment of the religious instruction was observed especially in the position of the subject in daily schedule and in schools where principals did not treat confessional religious instruction as other subjects. The same author pointed to some other problems of entering the subject into the schools: unfinished syllabus, no textbooks and manual for the teachers; shortage of teachers; lay persons who taught at the beginning did not have proper level of education; priests and nuns who taught did not have any methodical-didactical education; they were afraid of the way other teachers would accept them (Peranić, 1998). During the time, special attention was paid to the personality of the teacher of religious instruction in order to achieve better acceptance among pupils and other teachers (to be simple, human and sympathetic).<sup>102</sup>

The programme for primary education (curriculum) in the Republic of Croatia has been laid down in 1999. As far as religious instruction is concerned, it is only mentioned that it is an elective subject that should be held 2 hours per week, respectively 70 hours annually. The Contract of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Bishop's Conference stipulates that upon the proposal of the Croatian Bishop's Conference, the programme of the Catholic religious instruction will be enacted by the Minister of Education and Sports.

The first programme of Catholic religious instruction was drafted in 1991. In 1998 an amended Plan and Program of the Catholic Religious Instruction was published in a form of a comprehensive document. By virtue of the Article 3, paragraph 4 of the *Contract on the Catholic Instruction in Public Schools and Religious Education in Pre-school Facilities*, that was signed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Bishop's Conference in January 1999, upon the proposal of the Croatian Bishop's Conference, the Minister of Education and Sports approved the *Program of the Catholic instruction in Primary School* (2<sup>nd</sup> amended and supplemented edition). This amended edition, as well as its 1<sup>st</sup> edition from 1998, is based on theological-ecclesiastic and anthropological-pedagogical principles and criteria.<sup>103</sup> The amendments in 1998 and 1999 made in accordance with the

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<sup>102</sup> A large number of articles in the review *Kateheza* were dedicated to the desirable personal characteristics of the religious instruction teacher during 1999s and on.

<sup>103</sup> The programme follows the relevant catechetical and other documents of the Catholic Church, especially the documents of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council, the General Catechetical Directorate (GCD 1997), the Croatian Bishops' document "Joyful Announcement of the Gospel and Upbringing in Belief" (1983), Catechism of the Catholic Church (1993), basic starting points of the Plan and Programme of the Catholic Religious Instruction in Primary

social and ecclesiastic changes that always bring new religious-educational and enculturation challenges were connected with the needs of the pupils and their school education as a whole (Programme, 1999).

According to the Programme (1999), Catholic religious instruction emphasizes an integral education and upbringing of man, and having in mind the religious dimension, the promotion of personal and social general human and believers' values. Confessional characteristic of religious instruction is based on a universal educational and cultural meaning of a religious fact for a person, culture and society as a whole. The principles of the school religious instruction are the following: devotion to God and man, ecumenical openness and openness to a dialogue and correlation of religious upbringing and education (correlation among the subjects according to the principle of an integral education of pupils), and an intercultural approach to religious instruction and education.

The *purpose* of Catholic religious education in primary school is systematic and harmonised theological-ecclesiological and anthropological-pedagogical connection of revelation and church tradition with the worldly experience of the pupil. Its *goal* is to realize systematic and whole ecumenical and dialogically open introduction of the Catholic faith on the informative, cognitive, perceptible and active level in order to achieve the maturity of the Christian faith and wholesome human and religious education of pupils<sup>104</sup>. This compulsory-elective subject of religious education in primary school has no alternative subject.<sup>105</sup>

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School (1998) of the Croatian Bishop's Conference, and its document the Parish Catechesis in Renewal of the Parish Community (2000).

<sup>104</sup> Summarised general goals are related to the following: openness towards last questions (the meaning of human life and world, relationship of transient and eternal, etc.); achieve mature, human and religious personality, on both the individual and social level; achieve human and Christian consciousness towards oneself, others, society and the world; understand the biblical messages and connect them to everyday life; understand basic doctrine issues on God, the Holy Spirit, the trinity of God, Jesus Christ, the sacrament of God's love, on the Church as sacrament of the salvation of the people; understand the history of the Church and its meaning (as a whole and among Croatians); get acquainted with and inject into one's life wholesome Christian morality; be acquainted with and experience the spiritual power and salvation values of liturgical and church celebrations, sacraments, religiosity and religious life; be acquainted with other and different cultures and respect different cultures, denominations and religions (ecumenical and dialogical dimension); get to know the role of the family and develop the feeling for the individual's responsibility in the family and the wider societal community; learn how to resist negative life temptations and problems; develop spiritual and other creative abilities.

<sup>105</sup> Finland and Germany in some parts offer Ethics as an alternative subject for denominational religious education.

Production of textbooks followed promptness of reaching political and legal decisions regarding introducing of religious instruction. Concerning textbooks for primary and secondary schools, the Catholic Church used already existing parish catechism textbooks (Peranić, 1998). Textbooks had been published between 1992 and 1994.<sup>106</sup> They have been revised several times up to his time. Textbooks mainly follow issues that have been represented in the programme. All the themes are presented «in the context of God's revelation».

## Methodology

The main goal of our paper was to find how other religions and worldviews have been presented in the Catholic textbooks. In order to accomplish that, we analysed attitudes towards other religions and worldviews in textbooks for primary schools (from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade).

For this purpose, other religions and worldviews have been divided into four categories: other Christian confessions, non Christian confessions, new religious movements and non-religious worldviews. Other Christian confessions have been divided into three subgroups: Serbian Orthodox Church, traditional Protestant denominations and other denominations of Protestant heritage. Non – Christian religions' group consists of three further categories: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. New religious movements have been divided into three: NRM of oriental provenance, NRM of Christian provenance and New Age.

## Research results

In the analysed textbooks a general tolerant attitude towards all people, regardless of race, nation and religion, is present together with the emphasis of struggle against evil in the world. Such attitude is documented by a quotation from the UN Declaration on human rights: "Everybody has a right to freedom of thinking, consciousness and faith... ," by quotations of religious persons and religious books of non-Christian religions which "support Christians in struggle against evil" (Confucius, Buddha, Bhagavadgita, Kur'an, etc.) and by words of famous writers and philosophers (Selimović, Flaubert, Tagore, Ujević, Huxley, Pascal, etc.).

"Building a just and better world is not a task only of some individuals, but the inhabitants of all world countries, members of all races and religions, religious people and atheists, people of all professions. Nobody

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<sup>106</sup> Religious instruction manuals for kindergarten teachers and teachers who work with children with special needs have been made also.

is excluded. *Christians have to contribute on special and dependable way.* They are invited to do that by Jesus Christ. (Textbook *Pozvani na slobodu*, 2005: 15).

Examples of endeavours of other religions in building of the world have been reported (Muslims – example of zekat, Buddhist priests, Jews, etc.).

The most often cited Catholic Church documents are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council document *Gaudium et spes*, *Hope within us* (Secretariat for non-Christians) and *Catechism of Catholic Church*.

Textbooks take into account culturological aspect of pre-Christian popular religions using statements (Diogenes, Indian sayings) and photos (Egyptian pyramids in Gizeh, Sfinga, Horus and Isis, old Egyptian Gods, etc.).

## Other Christian confessions

### *Serbian Orthodox Church*

In the chapter named "Open wounds of Christian schism" historical and cultural circumstances of schism within Church has been accounted, but nobody was accused. The range of reasons causing schism is listed, with stress on differences between Greek (eastern) and Roman (western) mentality and political reasons. The significance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council and ecumenism and necessity of prevailing that "wound of both churches until this days" have been emphasized (Textbook *Zajedno u ljubavi*, 2004:104).

Fundamental facts connected to the organization of the Orthodox Church in the world have been presented together with short outline of historical development and organization of the Orthodox Church in Croatia today. In addition to the Serbian Orthodox Church, Macedonian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches have been mentioned.

### *Traditional Protestant denominations*

Context of Reformation ("wounds of new schism in the West") is presented in historical context, objectively, as a consequence of crisis within the Church. Guilt for schism is put down to both sides. However, it is stressed that "the main reason of tragic schism was Luther's different understanding of the faith, the Holy Scripture, the Church, the sacraments, man and his salvation" (Textbook *Zajedno u ljubavi*, 2004: 110). In the context of Protestantism, three of its wings have been mentioned and shortly presented: Evangelical–Lutheran, Calvinist and Anglican. Some other churches of reformation heritage (Baptist Church and Pentecostal Church) are only mentioned. In textbooks authors claim "that Protestantism is not deeply rooted and that only a few protestant churches with small number of

believers act today in Croatia.” But as you could see from table 1, according to the 2001 Census data, there were about 1% of Protestants in Croatia, and some of the church of Reformation heritage have pretty active religious and social (humanitarian, publishing) life.

*Ecumenical movements* in the world, ecumenical principles and the most important ecumenical events has been considered. Ecumenism is defined as the movement for the unification of Christians. It is presented, for example in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade textbook through three pictures of Pope Benedict XVI, the Protestant priest and the Orthodox priest connected with cross and the state below “One Christ, one pray, one baptism, one Holy Scripture, one belief” (Textbook *Zajedno u ljubavi*, 2004: 106.).

Regarding the next doctrinal and normative issues comparative approach is present:

(1) Issues about Catholic sacraments in general; Orthodox and Protestant sacraments are listed.

(2) Issues regarding baptism: «the main protestant churches» baptise, as same as Catholics and Orthodox, by sprinkling.

(3) Issues regarding confirmation: in the context of confirmation it has been mentioned the existence of "initiation in other religions" such as Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism.

(4) Issues regarding differences in usage of liturgical language are mentioned.

(5) The "holy order" differences between Christian churches are stressed.

(6) Issues regarding doctrinal attitudes towards marriage in different Christian churches and also in Islam are presented.

(7) Issues regarding differences in the attitudes towards Mary in the Christian religions and Islam are presented.

It is not mentioned that the most of the churches of Reformation heritage (that are part of the Evangelical movement) baptise by immersion. The Eucharist differences between Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant confessions are not declared.

## **Non – Christian religions**

### *Judaism*

The connection with and importance of Judaism for development of Christianity is strongly stressed in the textbooks from the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade on. The Old Testament and other important books, together with religious life of Jews and fundamental notions related to religious practice and habits, are

elaborated. A dialogue between Christianity and Judaism is emphasised, with stress on common characteristics (spiritual heritage) but also differences are mentioned in accordance with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council document *Nostra aetate* (Declaration about relationship towards non-Christian religions). Necessity of knowledge and respect of each other is emphasized repeatedly throughout most textbooks.

However, an inherent proselytism could be recognized in the following statements:

"The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council teaches us that guilt for Christ's torture must not be put down to all Jews, *although* Jewish authorities had insisted on his death."

"Although The Church is God's new nation, Jews should not be presented as cursed and rejected by God, because it is not written in the Holy Scripture. On the contrary, according to Saint Paul, God loves them and together with the prophets and apostles waits for the day which only God knows, *when the people will call God with one voice*".

### *Islam*

Islam is presented in the context of religious diversity in the following example: four children from all over the world are living in the same town (Ana, David, Sanela and Chen). They belong to different religions but they are friends. They have in common a belief in God. In the table, there are comparatively presented founders, God, symbols and Holy books of Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Judaism. The Ten Commandments common to Judaism and Christianity, a part from Kur'an on piety and part from Buddha's moral teaching are presented.

Basic facts about Islam, Allah, Mohammad, Kur'an, Kaba, mosque, minaret, Ramasan, Hijra, Mecca and Medina, together with spreading of Islam are presented in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade textbooks. Teachings are not presented.

The approach to Islam is neutral, considering it as one of the biggest world religions based on Judaism as well as on Christianity.

### *Hinduism and Buddhism*

Hinduism and Buddhism are presented very shortly, with a few fundamental facts. The general attitude towards non-Christian religions is illustrated through a statement from the *Nostra Aetate*: "In the relationship towards non-Christian religions the Catholic Church does not reject anything which is truthful and holy *in nuce*. With honest respect, it looks at these ways of acting and living, commandments and teaching, which, although in many respect different, reflect enlightening truth".

They are also presented as origins of new religious movements (in that context predominantly in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade textbook).

## New religious movements

The way of life in the contemporary world is presented as the basis for development of NRM and sects. According to authors, they connect what is incompatible, and are especially attractive to young people who join these groups because of the deficiencies in their private lives.

The use of the term "sect" and "cult" in the context of new religious movements is negatively connotated ("the youth is often victim of the sects", "sects – alienation from the own roots", "adolescence as a time of escape", "making god to one's own desire (golden calf)", "non-critical interpretation of the Bible," etc.) The Evangelical goal is emphasised in the textbooks of religious instruction. It is visible from many titles in the textbooks' contents: «Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of the longing presenting in all world religions;» "Jesus set me free from idols – power, pleasure, dependence, different religious movements and sects," etc.

Although Christian theological literature finds the reason for the joining of young people to NRMs deficiencies within the Catholic Church, there are no such self-reflections in the textbooks.

One of the examples of NRM is *Transcendental meditation* presented through basic neutral informations. But concerning the founder of TM Maharishi Maheshi Yogi, there is the following statement: "In India, where lots of similar prophets could be found, a "new saint" was not broadly accepted. That is the reason he decided to offer his experiences to the West" (Textbook *S Kristom u život*, 2005:43).

Another example is presented concerning Swami Prabhupada: "His divine grace Swami Prabhupada came to New York in 1965 in his 70s, with only 7 dollars in his pocket and wornout suitcase. At the moment of his death, twelve years later, he left an organisation with several thousands of believers and multi million dollars worth property" (Textbook *S Kristom u život*, 2005: 43.).

The New Age movement, Scientology and concepts of esoterism and occultism are presented shortly. The chapter about Christian NRM is titled "Delusion about the end of the world and paradise on Earth." Jehova's Witnesses, Mormons, Adventists, Children of God and Moonies are mentioned in that context. They are named sects. New Age is presented as the syncretic movement completely detached from traditional beliefs and life in society and connected with elements of spiritism, occultism and magic, which are labeled as sins in Catholic worldview.

## Non-religious worldview

Atheism is in general neutrally defined as “absence of belief in God.” But religious indifference is stated as the origin of atheism. It is not considered as authentic worldview, because all people are basically religious, but the religious upbringing is necessary in order to recognise God. Besides theoretical (philosophical) atheism, there is also practical atheism. As a worldview, it is influenced by science and technology (if they are uncritically accepted), success and fame, humanism without God and customary religiosity.

"The biggest sins against the first God commandments are: superstition, idolatry, horoscops and astrology, fortuneteling and magic, blasphemy and simony, atheism and indifferentism" (Textbook *Zajedno u ljubavi*, 2004:28).

Atheism is absolutely unacceptable from the Catholic point of view. There will be a gradual decrease of atheists in the world if Christianity as the "civilisation of love is offered," if people, media and society are engaged for the thruth about men and God". (Textbook *S Kristom u život*, 2005:40).

## Conclusion

As same as the syllabi, textbooks are firmly based on doctrinal teachings of the Catholic Church and its normative theology. Textbooks communicated moral values originating from the Catholic ethical teaching – from Catholic truth and the Catholic origin of morality.

From the analysis of primary school textbooks, it is visible that they emphasize formative nature of the Christian (Catholic) values in education – helping to form the Christian (Catholic) identity. As it was already said, one of the principles of school religious instruction is “ecumenical and dialogical openness.” Respecting this principle, textbooks authors present monotheistic religions (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) and Oriental religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism). Other religions have been treated systematically and tolerantly with present limitation that is inherent to confessional approach that is deficient by definition, no matter how much it has been tolerant and dialogical. No matter how much it would be ecumenical, it validates these religions from a confessional outlook. However, the tolerant and dialogical approach gives up in the case of new religious movements which authenticity and distinctness was denied. New religious movements and atheism are presented as a consequence of different shortcomings of society and the church.

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STANKO GERJOLJ

## **KIRCHE ALS ERZIEHUNGSINSTITUTION VOR NEUEN HERAUSFORDERUNGEN – AM BEISPIEL SLOWENIENS**

### **Wirkungsbereiche der Kirche als Erziehungsinstitution unter dem Kommunismus**

In totalitaristischen Staaten werden gewöhnlich die Grenzen der Lebens- und Wirkungsbereiche der Andersdenkenden und von ihren Institutionen vom Staat bzw. dessen Regime gezogen. So bestimmte auch in Slowenien bzw. im ehemaligen Jugoslawien die Kommunistische Partei als Machtbesitzerin, was die Kirche tun durfte und vor allem, was sie nicht tun durfte. Bekannterweise war in diesem Zusammenhang die Erziehung stets ein Streitpunkt.

Da in Slowenien die katholische Kirche weitgehend die größte Glaubensinstitution war, hat das kommunistische Regime den mächtigsten Druck auf sie ausgeübt, wobei sie am häufigsten als Feindbild abgestempelt und in diesem Zusammenhang im Vergleich mit anderen religiösen Institutionen ausgespielt wurde (Gerjolj 1997:32). Nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg bedeutete somit einen der Höhepunkte der repressiven und feindseligen Bildungspolitik das Jahr 1952, als die Theologische Fakultät von der Universität ausgeschlossen,<sup>107</sup> der Religionsunterricht als Schulfach endgültig verboten,<sup>108</sup> der Lehrkader in sämtlichen Schulen unter ideologischen Gesichtspunkten reduziert und vielen SchülerInnen und StudentInnen das Recht auf das Studium aus ideologischen Gründen entzogen wurde (Sobotkiewicz 1993:11). Privatschulen waren ohnehin nicht gestattet. Damit wurde die Kirche aus dem formalen Bildungs- und Erziehungsbereich, zu dem im Kommunismus ausschließlich nur die Schule zählte, gänzlich ausgeschlossen und wurde gezwungen, im Bereich der Erziehungsarbeit Alternativwege zu suchen.

Nachdem also der Religionsunterricht von den Schulen entfernt wurde, versetzte ihn die Kirche – unter äußerst schwierigen Bedingungen und

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<sup>107</sup> Das Ausschlußdokument wurde mit dem nicht bestehenden Datum von 31. Juni 1952 versehen (Vovko 1994:93).

<sup>108</sup> Das Ministerium der Volksrepublik Slowenien für Erziehung und Kultur verbot mit dem Erlass vom 19. 01. 1952 die Erteilung des Religionsunterrichtes in sämtlichen Schulräumen (Šuštar 1991:408).

mit unzähligen Kontrollen und Schikanierungen verbunden – in die kirchlichen Räume. In den meisten Fällen fand der Religionsunterricht in der Kirche oder in den Sakristeien statt, da andere kirchliche Räumlichkeiten der Kirche rücksichtslos entnommen bzw. verstaatlicht wurden.

Die statt religiöser Unterweisung in der Schule eingeführte Gemeindegatechese, die sich didaktisch und methodisch vom gewöhnlichen Religionsunterricht wenig unterschied, besuchten während der gesamten kommunistischen Zeitperiode 60%-70% der Kinder und Jugendlichen zwischen 7 und 15 Jahren.<sup>109</sup> Somit wurde Gemeindegatechese zum tragenden Wirkungsbereich der religiösen Unterweisung im Kommunismus. Dies besagt zugleich, dass jegliche noch so erfinderische Strategie des kommunistischen Regimes, diesen tragenden erzieherischen Wirkungsbereich der Kirche zu vernichten bzw. zumindest zu verringern, versagte<sup>110</sup>

Ein zweiter Wirkungsbereich der kirchlichen Erziehungstätigkeit war die Jugendarbeit und Jugendgathechese, die vor allem in den siebziger und achtziger Jahren intensiviert wurde. Allerdings wurde die Jugendgathechese nie zu einer Massenbewegung.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Der Prozentsatz bewegte sich im Laufe der kommunistischen Regierungsperiode zwischen 60% und 80%. Einer im Jahre 1969 durchgeführten repräsentativen soziologischen Untersuchung zufolge besuchten 17,8% der befragten Kinder eine Gemeindegatechese "nie". Aus derselben Untersuchung wurde ersichtlich, dass ca. 20% der 12 - 14-jährigen nach dem Empfang des Firmensakramentes mit der Gemeindegatechese aufhörten (Hribar 1972:159). Einen Tiefpunkt mit gut 60% erreichte der regelmäßige Gemeindegathechesebesuch in den späten siebziger Jahren, stieg aber dann wieder an (Gril 1988:12).

<sup>110</sup> Um die an sich freiwillige Teilnahme an der Gemeindegathechese zu erschweren, war die KP neben geläufigen Schikanen auch auf der Ebene der Gesetzgebungen sehr erfinderisch. In dem im Jahre 1976 verabschiedeten Gesetz über die rechtliche Lage der Religionsgemeinschaften in der SR Slowenien wurden noch immer genügend "rechtliche Mittel" verankert, von denen die KP für Druckausübung auf die Gemeindegathecheseiteilnehmer immer Gebrauch machen konnte und gegen die sich die Kirche kaum wehren konnte. So wurde z. B. der Glaubensunterricht im Rahmen einer Gemeindegathechese in den kirchlichen Räumen gesetzlich gestattet und als freiwillig deklariert. Es durfte niemand dazu gezwungen oder daran gehindert werden. Allerdings war für das Besuchen einer Gemeindegathechese bei Minderjährigen neben seinem eigenen Einverständnis auch die Zustimmung beider Elternteile erforderlich. Dadurch konnte vor allem auf jene Familien Druck ausgeübt werden, bei denen ein Elternteil eine verantwortungsvolle, d. h. mit einer – den Statuten der Kommunistischen Partei entsprechend – religiösen Überzeugung nicht vereinbare Funktion ausübte, woraus hervorging, dass es sich nicht „ziemt“ seine Kinder zur Gemeindegathechese zu „schicken“ (Gerjolj 1997:140-141).

<sup>111</sup> In den siebziger Jahren wurden in mehr als der Hälfte der Pfarreien Jugendgruppen gebildet, die sich im Rahmen der Gemeindegathechese mit verschiedensten Lebensfragen auseinandersetzten. Der Prozentsatz der Gemeindegathechesebesucher stieg nie über 15% einer gesamten Jugendgeneration hinauf (Lešnik & Valenčič & Potočnik 1983:37-40).

Als dritter Wirkungsbereich der Kirche als Erziehungsinstitution können Studentenseelsorge und Erwachsenenbildung angesehen werden. Bereits 1967 wurde das erste sogenannte theologische Seminar an der Theologischen Fakultät abgehalten, die Erwachsenen und Studenten gewidmet wurde. Ab diesem Jahr findet ununterbrochen bis in die Gegenwart herein jedes Jahr, nun in verschiedenen Orten Sloweniens im November ein zweiwöchiges Seminar mit aktuellen Themen und Lebensfragen statt.<sup>112</sup> Dazu kommen noch unzählige Vorträge und Erwachsenenseminare, die in einzelnen Pfarreien abgehalten werden.

Der vierte Wirkungsbereich der Kirche als Erziehungsinstitution im Kommunismus waren Ehevorbereitungsseminare, die von großer Mehrheit der kirchlich Getrauten besucht wurden. Diese umfassten ein eigens dafür vorbereitetes Programm mit meistens ca. 5 Vorträgen von verschiedenen Fachleuten (Theologen, Ärzte, Psychologen, Pädagogen), die entweder abends oder als Einkehrtage angeboten wurden.

## Das Problem der Doppelerziehung

Nachdem mit dem Anbruch des Kommunismus sämtliche kirchlichen Organisationen und Vereine aufgelöst worden waren, konnte die Kirche beinahe nur noch im Bereich der informellen religiösen Erziehung wirken. Dieser widmete sie große Aufmerksamkeit.

Wie in sämtlichen vom Kommunismus geprägten Gesellschaften und Staaten, gab es auch in Slowenien einerseits zahlreiche Konflikte und Spannungen zwischen staatlicher atheistischer Erziehung und kirchlicher religiöser Erziehung, andererseits aber auch einige Parallelen. Selbstverständlich wurde die Gemeindekatechese als Doppelerziehung bzw. Gegenerziehung gegenüber der staatlichen atheistischen Erziehung interpretiert und angesehen. Unabhängig davon, ob die Schule als Erziehungs- und Lebensbereich in der Katechese ignoriert oder berücksichtigt wurde, bedeutete für die Katecheseempfänger dies eine zweite Erziehung, die nicht in Einklang mit der ersten zu bringen war. Grob gesehen wurden zwar teilweise von beiden Erziehungsinstitutionen dieselben Werte vermittelt,<sup>113</sup> die Art aber, wie diese meistens vermittelt wurden, in welchen Zusammenhang sie gebracht wurden und welche unterschiedlichen Ziele die Erziehungsinstitutionen Schule und Kirche befolgten, machten es den

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<sup>112</sup> Bis 1996 wurden 393 verschiedene Vorträge abgehalten, darunter 301 von Priestern und 92 von engagierten Laien (Knep 1996:185).

<sup>113</sup> "Der wissenschaftliche Unterricht und die sozialistische Erziehung" waren "auch für die Christen annehmbar, solange sich hinter diesen Begriffen nicht eine Atheisierung verbirgt" (Baloban 1982:280).

Edukanden unmöglich, diese zwei Erziehungsinstitutionen als kompatibel zu empfinden. Es handelte sich eindeutig um zwei verschiedene und überwiegend entgegengesetzte Menschenbilder und Lebenseinstellungen, die zumindest teilweise auf beiden Seiten von der Weltanschauungsfrage und von gegenseitigen fundamentalistischen Exklusivismen geprägt wurden.

Der kommunistische Fundamentalismus wurde auf der von der KP ausgelegten marxistisch-atheistischen Ideologie aufgebaut, wonach sich die KP als Machthaberin auch zur Wahrheitsbesitzerin berufen sah. Aus dieser Position wirkte sie auch im Bildungs- und Erziehungsbereich mit allen ihr zur Verfügung stehenden Mitteln. Diese ermöglichten ihr nicht nur, ihre Ansichten als absolute Wahrheit zu vermitteln, sondern auch über die Ansichten der Andersdenkenden mit absoluter Sicherheit und unantastbarer Autorität zu urteilen (Perko 1979, 7). Sie, die sich als Partei der Atheisten deklarierte, wollte bestimmen z. B. auch, wie und was die Christen zu glauben haben und „wusste“ mehr und besser als die Christen selber über die christliche Anthropologie, über das christliche Menschen- und Gottesbild etc. (Stres 1979:5).

Auf der anderen Seite wirkte im Rahmen ihrer Möglichkeiten die katholische Kirche, die ebenso dazu neigte, in verschiedenen, vor allem philosophischen Fragen ihre Ansichten als die absolut geltende Wahrheit zu präsentieren. Es gehört zwar klargestellt, dass die Gemeindegatechese auf freiwilliger Basis stattfand, was aber für die Kinder, die meistens in die Kirche „geschickt“ wurden, beinahe unbedeutend war. Wenn auch nicht im gleichen Ausmaß und mit der gleichen Intensität wie es die KP tat, so griff die Kirche doch zu ähnlichem Erziehungsstil zurück, wie in der Schule verwendet wurde.<sup>114</sup> Das bedeutet, dass die Gemeindegatechesebesucher eine zweigleisige Erziehung erteilt bekamen, da ihnen von zwei grundsätzlich verschiedenen Erziehungsinstitutionen zwei ebenso verschiedene und kontradiktorische Wahrheitsbilder vermittelt wurden, wobei jedes als das jeweils richtige Wahrheitsbild präsentiert wurde. Wenn solche Tendenzen in der Praxis intensiviert wurden, fassten vor allem die Jugendlichen die marxistisch-atheistische Erziehung in der Schule bald als "Staatsideologie" und die religiöse Erziehung auf der anderen Seite als "kirchliche Ideologie" auf, was gewöhnlicherweise dazu führte, dass von ihnen beide Erziehungsstile zurückgewiesen wurden oder ihnen zumindest mit Skepsis begegnet sind (Brkić 1969:12).

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<sup>114</sup> So wurde z. B. einerseits im Handbuch für Katecheten zum Glaubensbuch der sechsten Stufe der Gemeindegatechese der Atheismus schlechthin als Sünde (Medškofijski katehetski svet 1983a:55) und andererseits im Handbuch zum Glaubensbuch der siebten Stufe der Gemeindegatechese die Kirche als die einzige Vermittlerin der "gesamten Offenbarung" und somit der "ganzen Wahrheit" vorgestellt (Medškofijski katehetski svet 1983b:82).

Die sozialistische Schule neigte in ihren Bildungs- und Erziehungsprozessen sicherlich stärker zur Polarisierung bzw. zur sogenannten Schwarzweißmalerei als die Kirche. So wurde die KP als die absolut positive Autorität schlechthin dargestellt. Als negative institutionelle Autorität wurde die Kirche, vor allem die kirchliche Hierarchie, herangezogen. Die Kirche wurde oft mit dem Feudalismus und dem Kapitalismus sowie mit dem Nazismus und dem Faschismus in Zusammenhang gebracht und zusätzlich als Feind jeglicher Wissenschaft behandelt (Gerjoli 1997:25).

Im Rahmen der Gemeindegatechese wurde die Kirche ebenfalls äußerst positiv und als eine sündenlose Institution dargestellt. Während in der Schule die Kommunisten als sündenfreie Helden gemalt wurden, hat man in der Kirche Heilige in einer naiven Weise behandelt, als sie nie im Leben persönliche Probleme gehabt hätten. Allerdings gehört erwähnt, dass sich die Gemeindegatechese – im Gegensatz zur Schule – mit negativen Bildern im Sinne von Gegenautoritäten so viel wie gar nicht befasste. Im Zusammenhang mit der damaligen Politikausübung wussten allerdings trotzdem alle, dass als die institutionelle Gegenautorität der Kirche die KP zu betrachten sei.

Im Zusammenhang mit den Initiationselementen kam die Doppelerziehung auch bei sakramentaler Katechese zum Tragen, vor allem bei Taufe, Erstkommunion, Firmung und Eheschließung. Interessanterweise wurden auch bei der sozialistischen, d. h. schulischen Erziehung und Bildung Initiationselemente verwendet, die sowohl im Bezug auf ihren Charakter als auch im Bezug auf die Art und Weise der Erteilung und nicht zuletzt auf die Zeit der Überreichung den Initiationssakramenten der Kirche viele Parallelen und eine auffällige Ähnlichkeit aufweisen (Gerjoli 1997:23-25). Der einzige ausschlaggebende Unterschied zwischen den kirchlichen Initiationssakramenten einerseits und den sozialistischen Initiationsmomenten andererseits mag – rein äußerlich gesehen – darin bestanden haben, dass in der Schule solche Feierlichkeiten mit militaristischen Elementen übersät wurden, während in der Kirche mehr eine beruhigende und geheimnisvolle Atmosphäre geschaffen wurde.

Interessanterweise lassen sowohl die vom Staat als auch die von der Kirche durchgeführten soziologischen Untersuchungen darauf schließen, dass die Kirche im Bereich ihrer Jugendkatechese – im Gegenteil zur Kinderkatechese – weitgehend undogmatischer und schon gar nicht fundamentalistisch wirkte, sondern tatsächlich bemüht war, sich mit den Fragen der Jugendlichen auseinander zu setzen, und ihnen – nicht nur als Gläubigen – zu helfen versuchte, mit Lebensfragen und -problemen

umzugehen und neue Lebensperspektiven zu finden.<sup>115</sup> Da die Jugendlichen sämtliche pluralistischen und demokratischen Handlungs- und Lebensprinzipien von der Kirche präsentiert bekamen,<sup>116</sup> schenkten sie ihr auch entsprechend mehr Vertrauen als sozialistischen gesellschaftspolitischen Institutionen.

## Die Kraft der Zweitrangigkeit

Nachdem die Kirche nach den ersten Nachkriegsjahren wieder lebensfähig wurde und nachdem ein Großteil der Bevölkerung begriff, dass die sozialistische Revolution zur Diktatur der KP führte, spielte die Kirche in Slowenien eine zunehmend wichtige Rolle.<sup>117</sup> Die Kirche wurde zwar während der ganzen Zeit der kommunistischen Regierung verschiedensten pauschalen, populistischen und oberflächlichen Beschuldigungen – vor allem des Klerikalismus, der Unwissenschaftlichkeit und Naivität, der Weltfremdheit etc. – ausgesetzt (Ribičič 1976:2), dies konnte aber die Kirche nicht zum Schweigen bringen. Sie konnte auf solche Beschuldigungen und repressive Politik keinesfalls aggressiv reagieren. Im Gegenteil, sie suchte auch unter solchen Bedingungen ihren Lebens- und Wirkungsbereich.<sup>118</sup>

In der "Opposition" entdeckte die Kirche bald neue Chancen und Herausforderungen. Sie war die einzige organisierte Institution, die sich mit der Parteipolitik nicht einließ.<sup>119</sup> Mehr als je zuvor in der Geschichte des slowenischen Volkes wurde sie "gezwungen", sich mit "Benachteiligten" zu identifizieren und für diese da zu sein. Dies gab ihr die Freiheit, nicht um die Macht kämpfen zu müssen, sondern die gegebenen Möglichkeiten für den Dienst an konkreten Menschen zu ergreifen. "Die Kirche wirkte im Stillen und in den Jahrzehnten, als sich die Regierung bzw. die politische Macht mit

<sup>115</sup> Auf die Frage, "warum nehmen Sie an einer Jugendkatechese teil?", wurden eher nichtreligiöse Argumente angeführt, wie z. B.: Gespräch, freie Diskussionen über Lebensfragen, Unterhaltung, kulturelle Betätigungsmöglichkeit etc. (Bajzek 1984:207; Hribar 1972:159).

<sup>116</sup> Es kam zwar bis in die neunziger Jahren immer wieder vor, dass verschiedene von der Kirche ausgegebene Artikel verboten und als solche beschlagnahmt wurden, was bei den Jugendlichen nur noch zu einem steigenden Interesse an solchen Artikeln und Mitteilungen führte.

<sup>117</sup> Ähnliches lässt sich auch für Kroatien behaupten, obwohl dort die Kirche im Vergleich zu Slowenien enger mit der Nation verbunden ist (Gereben 2001:308).

<sup>118</sup> "Die Kirche ist nicht dazu da, einige gesellschaftspolitische Systeme zu unterstützen und wieder andere zu bekämpfen. In ihrer Geschichte musste sie verschiedenste politische Systeme überleben. Sie muss versuchen ihre Arbeit zu tun unabhängig davon, ob es einem politischen System passt oder nicht" (Stres 1979:5).

<sup>119</sup> Ausgenommen ein paar Einzelfälle, gelang es der Partei nicht, die Kirche als Instrument für die Unterstützung ihrer Machtpolitik auszunutzen.

der Gesellschaft auseinandersetzte, widmete sie sich dem Menschen" (Bizilj 1991:139).

Erwartungsgemäß sahen die Unterdrückten und Benachteiligten zunehmend mehr einzig und allein in der Kirche die Chance, dass – mag es wegen vieler Kontrollmechanismen und absoluter Machtposition der KP noch so unwahrscheinlich geklungen haben – es auch zu einer politischen Änderung kommen könnte. Denn sie, die Kirche war während der kommunistischen Regierungszeit die einzige ernstzunehmende Opposition, die – entgegen der Ideologie der Partei – in der Praxis doch musste geduldet werden. Nur im Zusammenhang mit der Kirche konnte eine andere, nicht-totalitaristische Perspektive erwartet werden.

Die Partei versuchte zwar im Sinne der Maxime "divide et impera" die kirchliche Hierarchie von den Gläubigen zu trennen und diese anders zu behandeln. Trotzdem hatte die kirchliche Hierarchie in der Bevölkerung genügend Rückhalt, um immer wieder ihre kritische Stimme gegen den kommunistischen Totalitarismus erheben zu können. Für die entscheidenden Schritte in Richtung Demokratie ist allerdings mit Sicherheit ausschlaggebend die Tatsache, dass die Kirche während der gesamten Zeit der kommunistischen Regierung die Erziehungsarbeit nie vernachlässigte. Es bleibt zu erwähnen, dass die kommunistische Antipropaganda und der Druck, der auf die Kinder bzw. ihre Eltern und auf die Jugendlichen, die einen Religionsunterricht in der Kirche besuchten, ausgeübt wurden, bei ihnen oft das Gegenteil bewirkte. Es machte den Religionsunterricht nur noch attraktiver, interessanter und vor allem glaubwürdiger. Vor allem unter Jugendlichen kam es immer wieder vor, dass sie sich vom kommunistischen Fundamentalismus herausgefordert fühlten, auch die andere Seite kennenlernen zu wollen (Kastelic 1984:36).

## **Folgen der kommunistischen Ideologie**

Dem Kommunismus gelang es nicht, die Menschen nach seinen Vorstellungen umzuformen. Es gelang ihm aber, die meisten Menschen umzubilden, so dass sie jetzt Schwierigkeiten haben, persönliche Meinungen zu vertreten und beinahe nicht fähig sind, sich für irgendeinen dauerhaften bzw. unpragmatischen Wert zu entscheiden.

### *Korrumpierte Beziehungen*

Im Kommunismus wurde dem Menschen zur Gewohnheit, pragmatische, oberflächliche und kurzfristige Entscheidungen zu treffen. Er lernte sein Denken und Privatleben zu verstecken, von seiner Kindheit an ein während der totalitären Gesellschaft gut funktionierendes Doppelleben zu

führen und sich dem Druck und den Erwartungen des Machtapparates zur Gänze anzupassen (Stres 1998:142-143). Dabei spielte die Schule eine wichtige Rolle.<sup>120</sup> Dies machte ihn zum »Bestandteil einer unsensiblen und oberflächlichen Masse, die in dem Moment, als der Totalitarismus zusammenbrach, die Orientierung verlor« (Stres 1992:333). Da der tonangebende, wenn auch schlechte staatliche Machtapparat als Orientierungsinstitution plötzlich verschwand, hatte der Mensch weder Gegenspieler noch Mitspieler zur Verfügung.

Die vor fünfzig Jahren begonnene sozialistische Revolution brach auch radikal mit der Vergangenheit. Alles, was an die Vergangenheit erinnerte, musste ab diesem Moment gehasst und verachtet werden. Der Zwang, wie in einem Erstanfang, d. h., ohne eigene, kulturelle, religiöse und nationale Geschichte leben zu müssen, rief vor allem bei den jüngeren Generationen das Gefühl der Geschichtslosigkeit und einer damit zusammenhängenden Lebensunsicherheit hervor (Rode 1995:124).

Diese Oberflächlichkeit und Unsensibilität der Geschichte und den Andersdenkenden gegenüber bei kommunistisch erzogenen Generationen, die heute bereits erwachsen sind, schlägt in neuen gesellschaftlichen und politischen Verhältnissen wie ein Bumerang zurück. Die Erwachsenen haben im Moment des Umsturzes ihre Glaubwürdigkeit verloren. Sie wissen auch, dass sie ihre Lebenseinstellungen nicht von heute auf morgen schlagartig ändern können, vor allem nicht innerlich überzeugend und glaubwürdig. Dies hat die Erwachsenen selbst in eine schwierige Lage versetzt, in der sie sich nicht zurechtfinden.

Auch von der Jugend bleibt dies nicht unbemerkt, und sie versucht, daraus Kapital zu schlagen. Das führt nicht selten zu Beschuldigungen und Aggressionen. Es handelt sich hier nicht bloß um den gewöhnlichen Generationskonflikt. Viele Jugendliche erleben die politische Änderung als Orientierungskrise, die eindeutig in den Lebenseinstellungen und im Verhalten der Erwachsenen liegt. Wenn in der postkommunistischen Gesellschaft die Jugendkriminalität und -aggressivität zunehmen, so geschieht es nicht etwa nur deswegen, weil sich die Jugendlichen von Erwachsenen nicht verstanden fühlen würden, sondern vielfach auch deshalb, weil sich die kommunistisch erzogenen Erwachsenen allzu schnell und zu sehr dem »wertlosen« Pragmatismus anpassen, weil sie – selbst den Jugendlichen gegenüber – keinen Widerstand leisten und weil sie zu wenig Lebenskraft ausstrahlen und keine Initiative ergreifen wollen. Sie haben gelernt, Konflikten auszuweichen und zumindest nach außen hin ein konfliktloses, d. h. unechtes Leben zu gestalten. Die Jugendlichen wollen aber keine

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<sup>120</sup> "Es war eine Schule für widerstandslose und ergebene Egoisten, die das totalitäre Regime leicht manipulieren konnte" (Ocvirk 1994:30).

oberflächlichen und verlogenen Halblösungen. Sie dulden also gerade jenes Verhalten und jene Lebenseinstellungen nicht, zu denen die Erwachsenen in postkommunistischen Gesellschaften verstärkt neigen.

Ein weiterer Grund dafür, warum die Jugendlichen in den postkommunistischen Gesellschaften apathisch und aggressiv wirken, liegt darin, dass sie Erwachsenen begegnen, die selber apathisch und nicht selten auch aggressiv sind. Die Erwachsenen werden häufig herausgefordert und beinahe gezwungen, zuzugeben, dass sie ein System unterstützt oder zumindest geduldet haben, dass im Kern totalitär und unmenschlich war. Sie müssen zugeben, dass sie ihr Leben für etwas aufgeopfert haben, das im Augenblick des Sturzes der kommunistischen Diktatur als perspektiv- und sinnlos zusammenbrach. Dies drängt sie in eine Identitätskrise, in der sie sich eingestehen müssen, ein falsches Leben gelebt zu haben.

Die Erwachsenen versuchen ihre Identitätskrise zu überbrücken, indem sie nach zweierlei Auswegen suchen. Einerseits wollen sie von der Zeit des Kommunismus nichts mehr wissen, auf der anderen Seite handeln sie aber genauso, wie sie es einst im Kommunismus gelernt hatten.<sup>121</sup> Um nach dem »falschen Leben« nicht gefragt zu werden, setzen sie alles darauf, sich bei den Jugendlichen beliebt zu machen. In dem Sinne findet die Jugend keine standhaften Gesprächspartner, die fähig und bereit wären, sich zu verteidigen und mit ihr zu streiten. Viele Eltern fürchten sich vor den eigenen Kindern und sind weder willig noch fähig sich in Konfliktsituationen mit ihnen selbstbewusst und angstfrei, d. h. ohne Aggressionen auseinanderzusetzen. Die angelernte Anpassungsfähigkeit kommt auch hier, selbst bei den Intergenerationsbeziehungen innerhalb der eigenen Familien voll zum Tragen. So müssen sich viele Erwachsene manche überspitzte und pauschale Anschuldigungen anhören, gegen welche sie sich nicht wahren können.

Die Erwachsenen sind gegen pauschale Anschuldigungen besonders empfindlich und machtlos, da sie selber als Kinder der kommunistischen Revolution motiviert wurden, alles, was mit der kommunistisch geprägten Erziehung und mit dem Sozialismus nicht übereinstimmte, zu verachten und zu hassen. Dies galt auch für die eigenen Eltern, wenn sie mit dem Kommunismus nicht mitziehen wollten. Nun befinden sie sich in der Situation, wo ihre Kinder das gleiche tun, allerdings mit dem Unterschied, dass die Anschuldigungen, die sie über sich ergehen lassen müssen, realistischer und wahrheitsnäher sind als jene, die sie – als Kinder des Sozialismus gegen ihre zu wenig sozialistischen und daher »altmodischen« Eltern – erhoben hatten. Solche Lebenssituationen, wo sich Erwachsene unberechtigt angegriffen

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<sup>121</sup> Die vielen Korruptionsfälle sind nämlich wiederum ein Zeichen dafür, dass die Erwachsenen bestrebt sind, das bestehende System voll auszunützen und somit auch zu unterstützen.

fühlend zurückziehen und wo die Jugend keine widerstandsfähigen Erwachsenen findet, können beide Generationen zur Apathie und Aggression verleiten.

Die Jugend wird also nicht apathisch und aggressiv, weil sie nicht etwa fähig wäre, sich mit Konflikten auseinanderzusetzen, sondern vielmehr deshalb, weil sie apathischen und passiven Erwachsenengenerationen begegnet, mit denen sie alles machen und erreichen kann, was sie will. Daher können Apathie und Aggressivität der Jugendlichen nicht als Kapitulation vor zu vielen Konflikten, sondern in einem gewissen Sinne viel mehr als Folge des Mangels an ausgetragenen Konflikten gesehen werden. In diesem Kontext besteht eine der Herausforderungen der kirchlichen Erziehungsarbeit sicherlich darin, nicht nur an einer Bewusstseinsänderung zu arbeiten, sondern genauso Situationen zu ermöglichen, wo Intergenerationskonflikte bereinigt werden und Versöhnungsprozesse geschehen können.

### *Öffentliche Schule und die Frage des Religionsunterrichts*

Da die ersten Schritte in Richtung Demokratie die Kommunisten selber vorbereiteten, konnten sie es erreichen, dass heute viele dem Kommunismus treue Politiker in sämtlichen neuen Parteien verteilt und zerstreut sind. Egal, für welche Partei sie nun arbeiten, sie sind nicht fähig und schon gar nicht willig, sich von der kommunistischen Denk- und Handlungsweise zu distanzieren.

Die ersten Wahlen, die von einer Koalition der neuentstandenen Parteien gewonnen wurden, können vorwiegend als Protestwahlen verstanden werden. Da die Wirtschaft ohnehin vor dem Kollaps stand, konnte den Menschen die erste demokratisch gewählte Regierung das, wonach sie sich sehnten, nämlich Freiheit und Wohlstand, nicht bieten. So trauerten bald zunehmend mehr Menschen, unterstützt durch die kommunistisch denkende Opposition, den "babylonischen" Zeiten des Kommunismus nach. Als sie merkten, dass es ihnen wirtschaftlich nicht besser, sondern eher schlechter ging, rückten die Werte der Demokratie und der Entscheidungsfreiheit in den Hintergrund. Mit der vom Kommunismus anerzogenen und oft in der Praxis verwirklichten Auffassung, dass der Zweck die Mittel heilige, wurde für viele ein möglichst breit ausgelegter, pragmatischer Anarcholiberalismus zur Weltanschauung und zum Lebensprinzip.

In diesem Zusammenhang wird im Erziehungs- und Bildungsbereich von sogenannter "ideologisch neutralen" und "autonomen" Schule gesprochen (Gaber 1990, 16; Zgaga 1992, 25). Dahinter kann allerdings in sämtlichen theoretischen Auslegungen das Bestreben der kommunistisch

gesinnten liberalen Politiker entdeckt werden, die Schule weiterhin als politische Institution anzusehen und diese dementsprechend ideologisch zu fundieren. Die ehemalige "wissenschaftliche Weltanschauung" wird nun von der neutralen und autonomen ersetzt, wodurch vor allem die Ansichten der nach wie vor kommunistisch gesinnten Liberalen vermittelt werden sollten (Rode 1995:152-153). Für diese Politiker spielt Ideologie eine dermaßen wichtige Rolle, dass sie sogar für ein Pflichtfach "Religion" plädierten (Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport 1995:27), wo die religiöse Lebensdimension selbstverständlich durch ihre Brillen und vor allem kirchenfeindlich interpretiert hätte werden sollen.

Diesem Konzept widersetzen sich Vertreter mancher anderer Parteien und auch der Kirche, indem sie einen alternativen und den Prinzipien der demokratischen Denkweise entsprechenden Vorschlag verbreiten, der eine konfessionelle ethisch-religiöse Erziehung als Wahlpflichtfach vorsieht. Ein solcher Vorschlag gäbe dem Individuum gewiss mehr Verwirklichungsmöglichkeiten, da dieser auf Lebensfragen, die unter verschiedenen Gesichtspunkten interpretiert werden könnten, verschiedene Antworten bot und somit auch Lebensentscheidungen gewährleistete. Nach länger als zwei Jahre andauernden und von vielen kommunistusartigen Schikanen begleiteten Gesprächen konnte bisher keine für beide Seiten (Kirche und Regierung) akzeptierbaren Lösung gefunden werden.

Nach dem jetzigen Standpunkt der Schulgesetzgebung gibt es im Rahmen der Pflichtschule in den ersten sechs Jahren keine religiöse Erziehung. Demgegenüber gibt es aber in den letzten drei Jahren ein Pflichtfach, das in etwa dem Ethikunterricht in manchen westlichen Staaten gleicht und, das „Ethik und Heimatkunde“ heißt. Bei diesem Fach werden neben allgemeinethischen Fragen auch Fragen der Religionen, allerdings in einer äußerst intoleranter Art und Weise, im Sinne einer oberflächlichen marxistischen Religionskritik, behandelt. Parallel zum oben genannten Pflichtfach „Ethik und Heimatkunde“ führte die staatliche Reformkommission der Pflichtschule noch ein weiteres Fach ein, das „Religionen und Ethik“ heißt und als Wahlpflichtfach konzipiert ist. Inhaltlich und didaktisch soll dieses Fach eine Erweiterung und Vertiefung der im Pflichtfach behandelten Fragen bedeuten. „Logischerweise“ sind nach den Maßstäben der staatlichen Gesetzgeber auch für dieses Fach die ehemaligen „Marxisten“ die am besten ausgebildeten und geeigneten Lehrer, für die allerdings eine kurze „Umschulung“ vorgesehen ist. Da sich dieses Fach in der Menge von über 40 – teils Wahlfächer und teils Wahlpflichtfächer (die Situation ändert sich von Jahr zu Jahr) – befindet, ist die Anfrage äußerst gering. Wie sich diese Frage weiterentwickeln lässt, ist zurzeit noch ungewiss.

Auf der anderen Seite befindet sich die Gemeindegatechese, die von vielen Kindern nach wie vor entweder als „Parallele“ oder gar „Gegengerziehung“ erlebt wird. Es gibt zwar Einzelfälle, wo Schulen und Gemeinden bzw. Lehrer und Katecheten recht gut zusammenarbeiten, allerdings wird dies von Seiten der Schulbehörde nur ungern geduldet und es gibt Fälle, wo manche Lehrer, die sich für eine solche Zusammenarbeit einsetzen, schikaniert werden. Auf alle Fälle ist es der Medienpropaganda gelungen, die katholische Kirche dermaßen abzustempeln, dass große Zweifel bestehen, ob ein Referendum hinsichtlich der Frage des konfessionellen Religionsunterrichts an öffentlichen Schulen für die Kirche positiv ausgehen würde. Nicht zuletzt gibt es in Slowenien 26 registrierte Religionsgemeinschaften. Hinter dieser großen Zahl der Religionsgemeinschaften verbirgt sich vor allem hinsichtlich der staatlich fungierten medialen Förderung die alte politische Taktik "divide et impera", die um so wirksamer ausgeführt werden kann, je größer die Zahl von Gruppen ist, die berücksichtigt werden müssen. Hinter der in der Staatsverfassung verankerten Bestimmung von der Gleichberechtigung aller Religionsgemeinschaften steckt nach wie vor die Intention, alle Religionsgemeinschaften in gleicher Art und Weise auch behandelt werden zu müssen. Wenn aus der Sicht der Kirche auch vorgesehen ist, dass andere Religionsgemeinschaften ebenso einen konfessionellen Religionsunterricht anbieten könnten, ließe sich vor allem mit Hilfe mancher kleinen und sektenartigen Gruppen diese Frage stark manipulieren.

Eine der Visionen der Kirche besteht auch darin, dass die Schule die Gemeindegatechese zumindest als Wahlfach anerkennt. In diesem Falle würde die Katechese weiterhin in den Räumen der Kirchengemeinden stattfinden, die Lehrpersonen würden Katecheten bleiben, einen Teil der Stunden würden aber auch als Wahlfach im Schulzeugnis erscheinen.

## **Pädagogische und methodische Trends der Gemeindegatechese**

Wenn die Katechese bis in die siebziger Jahre noch vorwiegend dogmatisch verlief, merkte man bereits bei den ab 1970 erschienenen katechetischen Lehrbüchern, dass die Katechese zunehmend anthropologisch konzipiert wird. So befand sich schon damals zu Beginn einer jeden Katechese eine „anthropologische Geschichte“, die zum katechetischen Inhalt verleiten helfen sollte. Der Inhalt selbst blieb allerdings weiterhin hauptsächlich „dogmatisch“ erläutert und erklärt.

In den achtziger Jahren wurde dann der Versuch gewagt, Katechese zu modernisieren, indem für die ersten vier Stufen der Pflichterziehung neue

Lehrbücher geschrieben, für die höheren Stufen der Pflichterziehung aber die österreichischen Religionsbücher übersetzt und den slowenischen Verhältnissen angepasst wurden. Dabei sei darauf hingewiesen, dass vor allem die übersetzten Religionsbücher nie richtig Fuß fassen konnten, nicht zuletzt auch deswegen, weil diese für den schulischen Religionsunterricht und nicht für die Gemeindekatechese gedacht wurden. Teilweise liegt der Grund dafür, dass die neuen Religionsbücher verhältnismäßig wenig verwendet wurden auch darin, dass viele Katecheten, zu denen in der damaligen Zeit beinahe ausschließlich Priester zählten, nicht den Mut und den Willen fanden, sich neue und im Vergleich zu dem „Dogmatischen“ sicherlich anspruchsvollere Methoden, Katechese zu erteilen, anzueignen.

1991 wurde ein neuer Lehrplan für Katechese erarbeitet. Nach diesem Lehrplan wurden auch neue Lehrmittel (Religionsbücher, beiliegende Arbeitshefte für die Schüler sowie didaktische Hilfen für die KatechistInnen und Katecheten) neu erarbeitet und herausgegeben. Sowohl der Lehrplan als auch die Lehrmittel wurden mit der Absicht verfasst, Gemeindekatechese und keinen schulischen Religionsunterricht zu erteilen. Dabei hatten die Verfasser auch die Tatsachen zu berücksichtigen, dass es in Slowenien „noch“ keinen Religionsunterricht in der Schule gibt, dass sowohl die Schule als auch die Öffentlichkeit weiterhin weitgehend gegenkirchlich und gegen religiöse Erziehung tendiert, und dass sich im Bereich der Werterziehung in Slowenien der sogenannte Anarcholiberalismus verbreitet. Nicht zuletzt deswegen werden mehrere Schritte unternommen, auch Eltern in den Prozess der Kinder-Katechese einzubeziehen. Dementsprechend sind vor allem Lehrbücher für die ersten vier Stufen der Gemeindekatechese mit Texten und „Sonderaufgaben“ für Eltern vorgesehen.

Den letzten Untersuchungen nach besuchen in Slowenien ca. 63% der Schüler zwischen dem 6. und 15. Lebensjahr eine katholische Gemeindekatechese.

## **Privatschulen**

Als Demokratisierungserfolg darf die gesetzliche Zulassung von Privatschulen angesehen werden. Das im Jahre 1997 verabschiedete Schulgesetz sieht eine staatliche Finanzierung von 85% vor (Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport 1997, § 86). Auf der Ebene der Mittelschulbildung gibt es zurzeit sechs Oberstufengymnasien, die als Privatschulen funktionieren. Vier davon werden von der katholischen Kirche geleitet. Diese Schulen stellen bezüglich der Glaubenszugehörigkeit keine Bedingungen, ihr Kurrikulum umfasst aber einen konfessionellen Religionsunterricht.

Im Bereich der Pflichtschulausbildung gibt es nur eine Waldorfgrundschule, die als Privatschule arbeitet. Nicht unproblematisch ist nämlich die im Gesetz über Finanzierung des Schulwesens verankerte Bestimmung, dass dem Staat bzw. der Regierung zugesprochen wird, die finanzielle Unterstützung – wenn es sich herausstellt, dass in einem Gebiet eine Privatschule die staatlichen bedrohen kann – jederzeit zu entziehen (Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport 1997, § 87).

Vor allem die im Bereich der Bildungs- und Erziehungsinstitution »Schule« wirkenden Vertreter des ehemaligen kommunistischen Schulsystems begegnen nämlich den Privatschulen mit Skepsis und verhalten sich ihnen gegenüber politisch aggressiv. Trotzdem wagt die gegenwärtige Regierung an einer Gesetzesänderung zu arbeiten, wonach die Klausel der „Gefährdung“ der öffentlichen Schulen gestrichen werden sollte.

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ANIELA RÓŻAŃSKA

## THE SILESIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF AUGSBURG CONFESSION AS AN EDUCATIONAL AND THE YOUTH INTEGRATING INSTITUTION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

### Historical background

Contemporary Czech Republic belongs to the most atheistic European nations, where 59% of the population declare to be non-believing in any form of God and where 26,8% of the population belong to Roman Catholic Church, 4,9% are Protestants of different denominations, 0,2% are Russian Orthodox, 0,2% are Jehova's Witness and 8,8% haven't declared their faith<sup>122</sup>. Historically Czech countries Bohemia and Moravia have been influenced by Catholicism and Hussitism, while Silesia by Lutheranism. The part of Czech Republic, Silesia, where Polish minority has lived, is called, mostly by Polish authors Zaolzie<sup>123</sup>, while by Czech scholars the term Teschen Silesia is used.

The Silesian Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession cultivates long tradition of Lutheran churches in Silesia. It has always been the most important church after the Roman Catholic in Teschen Silesia. The first Lutheran churches date back to the Renaissance when a great number of Silesians studied at German Universities and brought Lutheran teachings back to their homeland. Large territories of Silesia were inhabited by Germans who came there in search for better condition of living. Gradually German language became a kind of lingua franca for inhabitants of this area and the way of social and cultural advancement through German orientated education. Out of these German communities arose Polish churches with independent structures and institutions but often influenced by German leaders. The language question was a battlefield for national identity and significantly marked history of the national Lutheran relations. Events after 1848, The Springtide of Nations gave an incentive to initiate the national

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<sup>122</sup> According to the Czech National Census in 2001.

<sup>123</sup> The term Zaolzie describes the part of Teschen Silesia that was connected to Czechoslovakia after The First World War on the basis of the decision made by the Council of Ambassadors of the Allies on 28th July 1920. As a result of this on Czechoslovak territory 138 thousand Poles were left forming 48,6% inhabitants of Zaolzie. They became the national minority in foreign country. Because of various changes and assimilation processes 36,5 thousand Poles live nowadays on Zaolzie forming 10,1% local inhabitants.

churches, especially Polish speaking churches, but still in the frame of existing churches.

The fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918 gave birth to Czechoslovakia and Poland, which issued some claims to historically disputable areas. Teschen Silesia was such disputable territory and was finally divided into two parts along the river Olza in 1920. It also affected the church structure and hierarchy which began to function independently in their church policies. The Lutheran church in Czechoslovakia comprised Polish minority, while most of the Czech churches followed Huss' teaching and gathered in the Czech Brethren Church, and Germans attended German Evangelical Church. The Polish minority registered their church as the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession (SEChAC), which name is officially used until the present day. The SEChAC consists of 22 parishes that covers the area of the whole Zaolzie and nowadays expands outside of it. The head of the SEChAC is a bishop elected by church synod for four years' term. The SEChAC today belongs to small churches and has 35 thousand members of mixed Polish-Czech nationalities. There exists a bilingual policy in all fields of the church activities. Church life characterized by senior generation using Polish language in every day contacts and young generation which, in their majority, uses Czech language. There is another certain characteristic of this area: it is the use of local dialect which is used by both national groups in unofficial contacts. On Sundays, 37% of services are performed in Polish, 42% in Czech and 21% in mixed Czech-Polish language formula.<sup>124</sup>

## **Theological and Cultural Conditions of the Church Educational Doctrine**

The Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession affirms in her educational practice the Lutheran teaching which puts the Bible in the centre of all didactic efforts. The Lutheran theology recognizes Luther's principle of *sola scriptura, solus Christus, sola gratia, sola fide and solus verbum* as the heart of its belief. It means that only the Scripture (The Bible), Christ and a belief in his word can lead to complete realization of life. Most of the mainstream educational objectives focus on achieving deep-seated understanding of these principles. It is realized on all levels of key church education from Sunday schools, through confirmation lessons and Bible study sessions to religion lessons. Traditional Reformation texts written by

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<sup>124</sup> A. Różańska: Działalność edukacyjna Śląskiego Kościoła Ewangelickiego Augsburgskiego Wyznania na Zaolziu. (Educational Activities of the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Zaolzie). Český Tešín 2002, ŚKEAW, (208)

Martin Luther and Philip Melancton are the examples of temporary teachings useful for all ages and are not doctrinally binding; especially accented during confirmation preparatory lessons. It is worth mentioning the Lutheran doctrine of two realms the earthly and the spiritual, which in pedagogical practice request equal share of religious education about Godly matters and the secular ones.

Contemporary educational doctrine of the SEChAC is influenced by rich protestant thought of last centuries as well as local theological tradition<sup>125</sup>. In a centre of the doctrine is a man with his search for God and spirituality in secularized and atheistic society which the Czech Republic belong to. Life in the church, forms of religiosities and pieties, and family values are in constant challenges and demand Christian stance to oppose ongoing de-Christianization of Czech society. The role of the church and its educational efforts is to provide satisfactory answers to contemporary challenges. The church is aware of crises of traditional religious teaching in situation of globalization, materialism and terrorism. The church with its mission of building God's kingdom engages in activities which relieve existential pain of present persons in need.

The key educational principle to be effective must be multilayered in three educational environments: family, church and school. This crucial observation by Van Brummelen underlines the pivotal role of family complemented by church and school.

Furthermore, the Christian education acknowledged by the SEChAC is centered around the ideas of Christ centrism, personalism and Christian existentialism<sup>126</sup>. Christ centrism directs all educational activities to Christ, who is the highest educational ideal for Christians and a power for the inner transformation to sanctity, freedom and love. Personalism redirects human personal development toward a man who is free-willed and intelligent, realizing his human destiny without and against fatalism, determinism and environmentalism. Christian existentialism as a search for the sense of life through opening on the transcendental and divine. (S. Kirkegaard, K. Jaspers, J. Tarnowski).

In conclusion, Protestant and Evangelical educational doctrine accept some fundamental concepts: (1) the Bible is the highest educational authority; (2) universal priesthood; (3) individual relation with a personal God – Jesus Christ; (4) autonomous and free consciousness of believers; (5) education to an aware choice of biblically-based set of values.

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<sup>125</sup> SEChAC has been strongly influenced by pietistic movement since the 17th century.

<sup>126</sup> A. Różańska: Działalność edukacyjna Śląskiego Kościoła Ewangelickiego Augsburskiego Wyznania na Zaolziu. Opcit, 113-116.

Religious education is supported by a few concepts which are present in the church practice: (1) kerugmatik concept (F. Scheiermacher, G. Bohne, K.Barth, H. Kittel); (2) hermeneutic and existential concept (W.Dilthey, M. Heidegger, R. Bultmann); (3) Martin Stallmann's concept of the 'here and now' approach; (4) thematic and problem-oriented concepts (H.B.Kaufmann, K.E.Nipkow)<sup>127</sup>.

The Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession is indebted to German theologians for a number of concepts, none the less young church educators heavily rely on American Evangelical concepts due to literature in English or scholarship practice in the USA. This new trend tends to introduce a new methodology into educational practice and different approaches in educator – pupil relations.

Whatever the conditions and doctrines are, the main objective of Evangelical education of the church is supporting an integral development of a person and to direct the person to discover his human identity in God and people's place on earth: in life, family and society.

## **Educational contents of the church activities**

The Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession attempts to answer the current needs of the youth, which demands new forms of educators – pupil relations open to modern ways of thinking. Traditional forms of conveying truths are questioned (authoritarian and hermeneutic language, for instance) while a prerequisite to practice dialogue appears, open discussion and tolerance for differing opinions. The contents of religious education should include these, in order to face postmodernist society with its challenges. The church's position is to support the young in their search to find answers for their everyday needs. The religious education provides such answers, more than psychologists, philosophers or scientists can put forward. Religious education dares to face all social and personal queries such as HIV, pessimism, injustice and violence. All these are included in the contents of the SEChAC religious education; where some contents are of religious and non-religious in the character.

Another aspect of religious education puts emphasis on the age and social background of pupils, which demands proper contents for different age groups or social milieu. Religious pedagogy suggests contents with which pupils are familiar in their immediate surroundings. Education should not be

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<sup>127</sup> B. Milerski: *Elementy pedagogiki religijnej*. (Elements of Religious Pedagogy). Warszawa 1998, ChAT.

abstract from life practice. The Bible is nevertheless in the centre of all religious education.

Silesia belongs to the multi-faiths regions where ecumenical movements are present and observed in church and educational sphere. It is also an important element of religion lessons. Educational contents form two approaches to ecumenism: the first 'in' defines believers' own church, the second 'ad' describes one's attitude towards other faiths, beliefs and sects.

Moral and ethical education is high in religious education agenda and is subdued to the Ten Commandments as a model for moral behavior. Evangelical education adds to it the education to feel and be thankful for all terrestrial well-being.

The latest trend in religious education is concerned with pro-ecological awareness of Christians built through adequate theology and attitude. It often demands for complete shift of values within communities, and religious education cannot overlook it. Despite so varied topics, recent surveys among young people indicate that some hot topics are neglected by religious educators. The scope of these neglected topics is presented in table No. 1.

*Table 1: Neglected topics in religious education (choices in per cent)*

Topics	Male	Female	Total	Importance
Violence prevention	52	34,9	41,2	I
Sex education	44	27,9	33,8	II
Ecumenism	16	41,8	32,3	III
Politics	8,7	20,9	16,2	IV
Ecology	12	11,6	11,7	V
Others	13	9,3	10,6	VI

Remark: contents might have been chosen more than once

The table shows to what degree the needs for covering such topics like violence, sex education, ecumenism or politics have not been fulfilled by religious educators. It may be due to the personality of the educator or the improper syllabus which should have included these crucial questions for the youth.

## Organization and methods of educational activities

Educational activities of the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession is realized by pastors and lay workers on levels of school, parish and other educational initiatives, such as society meetings, ecumenical conferences and seminars organized by both Christians and non-Christians.

In the 1990s, religious education was introduced to the Czech system of education, which allowed religion lessons in state funded schools to all legally registered religious organizations. Religious education on primary, secondary and middle-school levels is organized as extracurricular lessons but only for children who want to attend it.<sup>128</sup> Although religious education is non-compulsory, its evaluation is written on school certificate if the child has attended the lessons. The religious education is paid by school and the contract with church is signed. The church appoints the educator (pastors, catechetical educators) for the school. Nonetheless religious attendance to these lessons is small due to marginalization of religion in Czech society. An interesting fact is that in Teschen Silesia only SEChAC and the Roman Catholic Church have introduced religious education at schools; other Protestant denominations do not have the school religious education so far.

The church in her efforts to Christianize the secular Czech society, has introduced some new initiatives which bring Christian ideals to large public. The scale and extent of selected parish initiatives is presented in table No. 2.

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<sup>128</sup> The Ministerial Decree of Czech Ministry of Education from 20.08.1991.

*Table 2: Youth education through communal initiatives*

<b>Form of activity</b>	<b>Number of groups</b>
Sunday schools	51
Confirmation lessons	21
Post-confirmation youth meetings	18
Mature youth	17
Town Christian clubs	15
Summer camps	26
Marriage conventions	18
Discussion groups	20
Youth services	30
Clubs and circles in parishes	10
Work for/with dysfunctional youths	5
Ecumenic summer camps	A few times a year
Trekking camps	4 times a year
Christian Olympics	Once a year
Excursions	At least 1 per parish

Remark: Ecumenical summer camps, trekking camps, Christian Olympics Games and excursions are organized for all interested people and the precise number of groups cannot be provided.

A separate questionnaire among church youths demonstrate that 38% of the young people is actively engaged in preparation and participation in the above presented initiatives. It is worth underlying that 80% of the educators connected with church activities are lay members of the church.

The successful organization of all these educational activities is possible because of some golden rules followed by educators in model evangelical education: (1) Autonomy and freedom; (2) Responsibility and critical

approach; (3) Sense of community; (4) Social awareness and pragmatism; (5) Dialogue; (6) Multiculturalism<sup>129</sup>.

These principles are especially important since the Czech Republic became a member of the EU in recent complicated socio-cultural situation. There are new dangers; new challenges and completely new forms of educational reactions must be worked out. Globalization has brought questions in the sphere of religion and identity. The answer to these questions, which practiced in the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, is a dialogue in action. It comprises the learning of own cultural identity and the dialogue with other cultural identities on the levels of one-on-one relations up to the church venues – ecumenical in their dimensions. The area of the SEChAC activities embraces young people of two national identities: the Polish and the Czech, which should be respected in all church initiatives. Both Czechs and Poles come from different religious backgrounds and in mutual contacts need a dialogue to overcome prejudices, differences and alien identities. Fortunately, the majority of both groups rely (91,4%) on the dialogue as the ideal form of intercultural understanding.

On the level of inter-faith dialogue, there are several noteworthy initiatives which epitomize the core ecumenical mission among evangelical (and Lutheran) churches. These events are organized at regular time and mostly take place during the summer and cover only the territory of Teschen Silesia (Zaolzie). They may be identified as: (1) Youth inter-faith prayer meetings; (2) Prayer week for Christian unity; (3) Days of Grace-giving and Joy in Bohumin (organised by the Catholic, the Evangelical, the Czech Brethern and the Apostolic Church); (4) Ecumenical Bible Days in Karvina; (5) Summer ecumenical camps in Smilovice; (6) Ecumenical Christian Society meetings; (7) Christian Youth Academy<sup>130</sup>.

The research among the youth living in Zaolzie on church engagement in these inter-faith dialogues shows that 18,6% of respondents evaluate the church initiatives as good, 29,2% as satisfactory and 34,5% as non-satisfactory. Overall research shows that only 28,7% of church youth have ever participated in any interfaith initiatives.

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<sup>129</sup> A. Różańska: Działalność edukacyjna Śląskiego Kościoła Ewangelickiego Augsburgskiego Wyznania na Zaolziu. *OpCit*, 247.

<sup>130</sup> A. Różańska: Dialog międzywyznaniowy i międzyreligijny w świadomości młdziej zaolziańskiej *Zmiana i kontynuacja. (Inter Faith and Inter Religious Dialogue in the Consciousness of Young People from Zaolzie. The Change and the Continuum)*. In: T. Lewowicki, J. Urban (eds.): *Edukacja międzykulturowa na pograniczach w pierwszych latach rozszerzonej Unii Europejskiej – teoria i praktyka. (Intercultural Education on the Borderland Areas in the First Years of after Joining EU – Theory and Practice.)* Katowice 2007, Gnome, 239-240.

In recent years a new educational inter-faith initiative has been introduced through the Christian Youth Academy, which is a week of lectures for middle-school and university students. The lectures and workshops attempt to use modern forms of art and technologies to find consensus in current issues. The participants come from different religious backgrounds and some of them are agnostics or atheists. As a result of hot debates, a new enriched cultural identity and attitudes are formed often in the spirit of tolerance and understanding.

The Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession began in 1995, which was a project 'Benjamin' for the Gypsy minority in the Orlova area. It is a project that aims to integrate both Czech and Gypsy communities through summer fortnight camps. During the camps the integration objectives are realized through sports, games and time spent together on Bible studies in the evenings. In these camps 46,4% of the youth from Evangelical churches participated, 46,8% from other Christian churches, and 6,8% of the participants were Gypsy children. This integration project is financially supported by the town council of Orlova, which approves the church initiatives to organize free time activities during summer school vacation. The camp was also possible, thanks to the whole-hearted engagement of the Orlova pastor, who visits Gypsy families, talks to them and invites them to the church parish life. The camps and pastor's approach to this minority ethnic group resulted in the increase of their church attendance and engagement in the parish's life, especially of the young generation. To meet an unusual interest in the scheme, the Orlova parish opened its doors twice a week mainly for Gypsy youth. This initiative lasts till today.

## Conclusions

The Silesian Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession plays an important educational and integrational role in its own society. The church history goes back to Polish and Silesian Lutheran traditions, which were to be transformed, due to shift of identity, political status and recent globalization pressures. Nowadays, not much is left from the old Polish church identity, which is changed by the Czech language and state influences. The church came through an uneasy period of secularization, de-Christianization and collaboration with Communist regime to look for a new identity after 1989. The decades of atheistic education devastated morally and spiritually all strata of Czech society. The last 17 years of the SEChAC history formed attempts to rebuild its unstable position in society. The church began to participate in education (religious education), government consultation groups (social justice) and ecumenical initiatives to be present in community life. In

situations when religion is presented as a tribal superstition or phenomenon affecting mentally dysfunctional people, the Church position is not the easiest. It is through systematic contribution of dedicated pastors and church laymen that rehabilitation of the church has taken place. Religious education has been reintroduced into school system; church has got a leading authority in charity initiatives and care of socially dysfunctional citizens. A couple of years ago, a Christian class in Trinec was also open which follow a special Christian syllabus for primary schools. It is an enormous step forward for a church that lacked such educational traditions and aspirations for the last half century. To comply with these challenges the Church opened a theology course at the Ostrava University, which covers all demands for catechetic educators and qualified church workers with the master's degree. The catechetic faculty is in care of church pastors cooperating tightly with the university academics.

The church involvement in social justice (through casual wards, charity collections and church houses for asylum seekers) and cultural initiatives (ecumenical choir meetings, pageantry performed by disadvantaged children or summer evangelism conventions) and church promotion programs (radio broadcasts, book and newspaper publishing) enhances the process of establishing some alternative, non-materialistic set of values based on religious criterion. It is the essence of all integration initiatives of the church.

The church objectivities, those that are theological and educational, are attempted to be achieved through the essential form of effective communication – dialogue. It helps the church to convey its distinct vocation in inter-faith and multicultural settings with deep respect, tolerance and understanding. The engagement in this educational process through the dialogue results in building a friendly climate for ideals represented by the church. Additionally, it is an intercultural and inter-faith task to learn *the other* through genuine dialogue, meeting and negotiating of ideas proceeded on public, school, and parish levels of church activities. This task of open dialogue – however difficult it is – with persons who are closed in their personalities and may be also prejudiced against church ideals, is the priority for current educational activities.

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