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RELIGIONS, EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY THE NECESSITY OF INTER-RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE MODERN PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

During the twentieth century, European societies have passed through a process of secularization. That means that the institutional organization of states was separated from the religious ideas and churches have declined considerably.² This approach was the result first of all of confessional diversification,³ and secondly of the Enlightenment's critique against the religion that had three clearly distinguishable dimensions: a cognitive one, directed against metaphysical and supernatural religious worldviews, a practical – political that was against ecclesiastical institutions and a subjective expressive – aesthetic – moral directed against the idea of God.⁴ However with the emergence of the modern world, religious organizations had to adapt to two new circumstances. The first is that Berger describes with the term "individualization". This term means the private religion that "is a matter of the 'choice' or 'preference' of the individual or the nuclear family, ipso facto lacking in common, binding quality such private religiosity, however 'real' it may be to the individuals who adopt it, cannot any longer fulfill the classical task of religion, that of constructing a common world within which all of social life receives ultimate meaning binding on everybody".⁵ The second that Berger underlines with the term "plural-

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² Martin, D. (1968), *The Religious and the Secular: Studies in Secularization*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969.

³ Protestantism legalised the individual religious faith. Protestantism offered to the individual the opportunity of choosing his own faith. Manheim Karl, *Ideology and Utopia* Routledge 1998.

⁴ Casanova, J. (1994), *Public Religions in the Modern World*, The University of Chicago Press, p.30.

⁵ Berger, P. (1990), *The Sacred Canopy. Elements of a sociological theory of religion*, Anchor Books Editions, pp. 133-134.

ism", means that "different religious groups are tolerated by the state and engage in free competition with each other".⁶ This has as consequence that "the religious ex-monopolies can no longer take for granted the allegiance of their client populations",⁷ and that religious tolerance became a necessity. The "individualization" and "pluralism" are two elements that allow the religion to activate itself freely, as private initiative, in the post-modern societies, or as content of personal identity, or as content of national identity. Also the demographic locomotions from the East to Europe, gave religion the possibility to play a new role in the determination of identities. The existence of a growing number of visible minorities and of non – Christian faiths in Europe within the various groups of Asian, Middle Eastern and African immigrants, allows an understanding to emerge that Europe is a "multi-religious" society. The new religious ideas that came into the European space and the recognition of the right of everyone to choose his own religion, constitutes a new frame in Western societies. Religious freedom was recognized as a human right, which is protected internationally and is connected with the democratic ideas of modern societies.

If religion is a private affair, nevertheless its presence in the public space becomes today more perceptible, because religion combines the personal with a public character. Clifford Geertz underlines that "religion is (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long – lasting motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods seem uniquely realistic".⁸ Geertz's theory about religion suggests that there is no separation between religious and non-religious life for people of religion, because their beliefs account for all of their experience and influence the manner in which they interpret all their life activities. The lack of separation between the religious and the non-religious life, leads to a lack of separation between the private and public social space. Many times, citizens and faithful constitute together two undistinguishable aspects of religious persons. Thus religion comes back in the public area as a more or less developed aspect of human action. However, the return of religion to the public space creates problems of determination of its content. According to Jeremy Gunn, "one of the many difficulties encountered in reaching a consensus on a legal definition of the term is that, at root, 'no convincing general theory of religion exists'"⁹ and this,

⁶ Id. p. 135.

⁷ Id. p. 138.

⁸ Geertz, C. (1966) "Religion as a Cultural System". In Michael Banton, *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*. London, Tavistock, p. 4.

⁹ Gunn, J.(2003) "The Complexity of Religion and the Definition of "Religion" in International Law" *Harvard Human Rights Journal*, Vol. 16.

because there are three different approaches about religion: “first, the religion becomes comprehensible as metaphysical or theological sense (e.g., the underlying truth of the existence of God, the dharma, etc.), second, as psychologically experienced by people (e.g., the feelings of the religious believer about divinity or ultimate concerns, the holy, etc.), and third, as a cultural or social force (e.g., symbolism that binds a community together or separates it from other communities)”.¹⁰ In the two first cases religion is a private affair of persons, but in third, religion acquires a social presence, creating a social identity.

The reproduction of religion as metaphysical, psychological experience or as a social force, presupposes a type of learning. All religions use systems of learning, which have as their aim to transmit the religious theories and practices to their members, attracting also new members. For this reason, religions have often sought to retain responsibility for religious education or its control. The growth of Christian theology during the 19th century created a systematic study of Christianity. “The study of theology has a long history, working through different ages to define the position of the Christian faith in relation to changing social environments. In the nineteenth century, despite the growth of secular and rationalist thought, the essential truth of Christian revelation remained the predominant cultural orthodoxy and provided an important source of legitimation for colonial expansion. Non-Christian religions were studied for the perspective of Orientalism, which ... looked at other faiths only by way of comparison to the yardstick of religious truth – the Christian revelation”.¹¹

At least four forms of education exist which religious organizations provide: “1) The *catechetical*, which is an induction into belief of new believers, or the reaffirmation of the belief of lapsed believers and non-believers. 2) The *seminarist*, on a higher intellectual level than above, with institutions for the preparation of priests, missionaries and other religious persons who perform rituals and take on the religious nurturing of the masses in establishments of type. 3) The *parish, choir and cathedral* schools, the Bible classes of the Christian denominations, the maktabib, kuttabib and madaris of Islam, the Talmud-Torah yeshivot and the hadarim of Judaism or the langgar of Indonesia, and many other types of religious schools intended for different sections of the population at different age and scholarship levels. Though offering at least a minimum of secular knowledge and skills, these are all by origin religious schools. 4) A more *general schooling*, less narrowly or not at all religious, also at different academic levels, which the ‘established’ religion had formerly provided

p.194.

¹⁰ Id p. 195.

¹¹ Sutton, N. (1993) “Issues arising from the distinctions drawn between theology and religious studies” *DISKUS* Vol. 1, n. 2, p. 55.

for the education and professional preparation of the heirs of the ruling and administrative class of the state in which it exists, a process now extended to the wider population".¹²

Today there is a distinctive approach between theological and religious studies. According to Sutton, the distinction is a matter of perspective, approach and methodology. "Religious Studies involves descriptive phenomenology from a position of neutrality, while theology allows, and at times demands, interaction and personal dialogue with the subject matter, though without the necessity of asserting a definite position within a tradition of faith".¹³ "Religious Studies" correspond more to the requirements of modern public education and public school in open society. The use of the term "public school" means a school which is acceptable to all students regardless of their parent's religious or philosophical convictions. Nevertheless, there continues to be confusion about the use of term "religious education". Hobson distinguishes two different approaches in religious education: "education in faith" and "education in religion". The first way has aim "to bring about commitment to a particular faith"¹⁴ and to strengthen the student's belief in particular religious tradition. On the other hand, "in the model of education in religion, the primary aim is to bring about knowledge and understanding of religion as a sphere of human thought and action on general rather than commitment to any specific faith".¹⁵

A global meeting in Oslo devoted to *"Teaching for tolerance, respect and recognition in relation with religion or belief"* and the *"Open Society Institute"* adopted a distinction between "denominational religious education" and "non-denominational religious education". The denominational religious education has traditionally been directed to a particular faith. "In countries with a confessional approach to religious education, churches and other religious communities have responsibility for religious education in public schools, although in some countries religious institutions deliver the teaching under the supervision and general responsibility of the state. Different religious traditions, ethical conflicts etc., are usually discussed from the point of view of a particular religion or denomination. Teachers must be believers of a particular religion or denomination (for example, a teacher of Catholic religious education must be Catholic), and so on".¹⁶ On the other hand "non-denominational or non-confessional religious education aims to teach about the different religious beliefs

¹² Tulasiewicz, W. (1993) "Teaching Religion", in *World Religions and Educational Practice*, Cassell, p. 14.

¹³ Sutton., p. 58.

¹⁴ Hobson, P., Edwards, J. (1999): *Religious Education in a Pluralist Society*, Woburn Press, London – Portland, Or., p. 17.

¹⁵ Id, p. 18.

¹⁶ Kodolja, Z., Bassler, T. (2004) *Religion and Schooling in Open Society: A Framework for Informed Dialogue*, Open Society Institute, Ljubljana, Slovenia, p. 10.

and practices without engendering belief or a desire to participate. One form of non-confessional religious education is *'teaching about religions'*. This term denotes non-confessional study of the beliefs, values and practices of one or another religion. The aim is to bring about knowledge and understanding of religion as a sphere of human thought and action. In this non – confessional education about religions, it is intended that young people learn about the tenets of different faiths in order to develop the social tolerance to which democracies aspire".¹⁷

If the process of religious education or as a "denominational", or "non-denominational" educational practice, provides a possibility of choice for democratic society, the public school does not have this possibility of choice, because its aim is not the transmission of a concrete religious faith. The European Union, with the 1720/2005 Recommendation, entitled: *"Education and religion"* (art.7) underlines that "School is a major component of education, of forming a critical spirit in future citizens and therefore of intercultural dialogue. It lays the foundations for tolerant behavior, founded on respect for the dignity of each human being. By teaching children the history and philosophy of the main religions with restraint and objectivity and with respect for the values of the European Convention on Human Rights, it will effectively combat fanaticism. Understanding the history of political conflicts in the name of religion is essential". The public school is required by the democratic system to be an independent institution of knowledge. For this reason the European Union separates religious knowledge from faith: "Knowledge of religions is an integral part of knowledge of the history of mankind and civilizations. It is altogether distinct from belief in a specific religion and its observance. Even countries where one religion predominates should teach about the origins of all religions rather than favor a single one or encourage proselytizing". (art.8).

Of course, one part of Human Rights is the parents' rights. According the *"Declaration on Eliminating all Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief"* (art.5.1), "the parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up". If the right of religious education is transmitted by the parents or by the legal guardians, the independent religious knowledge may be problematic, because the "parents with different religious or philosophical convictions have the possibility to choose private schools based on specific moral, religious or secular values. If there are no such schools, parents have the right to establish them". In America the parents can select a private education for their children, which is provided in the house through the internet as a complete program of teaching, if

¹⁷ Id., p. 10.

they do not wish their children be “polluted” by the ideas of secular society provided in the modern public school.¹⁸ Consequently, religious choice, as human right, is not independent from restrictions, which many times over lead to denominational of religious education. The substitution of multi-religious learning with a denominational religious choice in the name of freedom, cancels the objectivity of knowledge which the public school guarantees, so that a news-conservatism is cultivated in the educational system. However, the ascertainment of European Union for the familial religious education is that «the family has a paramount role in the upbringing of children, including in the choice of a religious upbringing. However, knowledge of religions is dying out in many families. More and more young people lack the necessary bearings fully to apprehend the societies in which they live and others with which they are confronted».¹⁹ If the family has a sovereign role in the religious education, this education cannot be similar to that provided by the modern public school, because the religious education in the public school aims at extended and systematically organised knowledge, which is independent from ideological, philosophical and religious engagements. If “knowledge of religions is an integral part of knowledge of the history of mankind and civilizations”, this knowledge is altogether distinct from belief in a specific religion and its observance”. For this reason the European Union proposes, that “even countries where one religion predominates should teach about the origins of all religions rather than favor a single one or encourage proselytizing”.²⁰

Today in Europe there are a lot of different approaches in religious education, depending usually on the legal relations between state and religion, or from the role and value of religion in society, or on the relation between religion and history or politics. “The range of approaches goes from no religious education in public schools (mainly in France, also in Montenegro, Slovenia and in Albania for different reasons) to models with exclusive responsibility of the state to cooperative models where state and religious communities share responsibility for religious education, to confessional or denominational approaches where religious education in school is the responsibility of religious communities. In many countries – such as Norway – there has been a development from a confessionally oriented approach to a non-confessional one, especially in those countries where a state church was dominant (or still is), such as England, Denmark, Sweden or for that matter Norway. Where churches and religious communities still have a legal say in public education, they see their involvement in education and religious education in public schools

¹⁸ Apple, M. (2001), *Educating the right way. Markets, standards, God and inequality*. RoutledgeFalmer, New York, p. 180 e.t.

¹⁹ “Education and religion”, *Recommendation 1720* (2005), art. 3.

²⁰ Id. art. 8.

mainly as a service to society and as a field of close cooperation with the state rather than primarily as an activity to nurture church members. Nowadays religious education as a subject in schools is taught chiefly in line with the criteria of general education. It is understood as learning about religion (knowledge based) and learning from religion (based on the experience and existential questions of the students)".²¹ Also the enlargement of Europe with the attendance of new members, particularly from the Central and Eastern European countries creates not a single perception for the religious education. Accordingly to Peter Schreiner there are three general features or experiences that influence the place of religion in society in Central and Eastern Europe: "(a) *Memory and yearning for the time before communism*. In Hungarian society before 1948 religion and church played a central role in the life of people. The religious milieus were strong and well structured. This model has been suppressed due to the direct influence of the Soviet Union in the development of Hungary. And now some people would like to re-connect to this time before communism. (b) *The experience of the contradiction between private and state ideology in education*. The Communist regimes tried to educate a new socialist oriented type of human being, weakening the influence of parents and forcing the Communist ideology. Those parents who tried to educate their children in a different way had to do that secretly. Out of that experience many do not have a great trust in the public education system. (c) *The French or American model*",²² which does not incorporate religious education in the public school. Several authors suggest that the system of French education suits in modern Europe, while others argue that it cannot become model for Europe, because it fails to take into account the diversity between European states, on issues religious education.²³

If we use the differences that exist between the confessional religious education and non-confessional as a criterion for the classification of religious education in European Public Schools, we can create the following tables:

²¹ Schreiner, P. (2005) "Religious Education in Europe" ICCS, Oslo University, p. 3.

²² Id, p. 4.

²³ Jackson, R. (2005), *Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality*. RoutledgeFalmer, London and New York.

Confessional Religious Education in Public Schools		
Compulsory Subject	Compulsory – Optional	Optional Subject
Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland	Belgium, Lithuania, Lux- embourg, Portugal	Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Serbia

Non - Confessional Religious Education in Public Schools
France, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, England, Wales, Netherlands, Scotland, Slovenia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania

Source: Schreiner, P. "Different Approaches – Common Aims? Current developments in Religious Education in Europe" CoGREE and Comenius Institute. (2002)

The assertion that religious education in Europe is a "multi-layered" subject and that "education systems generally – and especially state schools in so-called secular countries – are not devoting enough resources to teaching about religions, or – particularly in countries where there is a state religion, and in denominational schools – are focusing on only one religion",²⁴ leads to the conclusion that the role of religious education in state schools, especially in open societies, needs re-definition..

Assuming that there is a political will to create a common European policy on the issues of religious education, what shape should it take? This question presupposes extended political consent for the necessity of religious education in the modern state school. The Council of Europe underlines "that each person's religion, including the option of having no religion, is a strictly personal matter. However, this is not inconsistent with the view that a good general knowledge of religions and the resulting sense of tolerance are essential to the exercise of democratic citizenship".²⁵

If the presence of religious education in the modern school is necessary, this political will aims to realise concrete needs related firstly to the role and function of the school and secondly to the role and function of religion in the modern world. If the religion has as its aim the creation of religious persons, the role of the school is to create thinking citizens, who, through the knowledge of religions, can understand the presence of religion as an integral part of human history and culture. For this

²⁴ "Education and religion", id, (art. 9).

²⁵ Id, (art. 1).

reason Charles Haynes underlines six principles of religious education in the state school:

- 1) The school's approach to religion is academic, not devotional.
- 2) The school strives for students' awareness of religions, but does not press for student's acceptance of any one religion.
- 3) The school sponsors the study about religions, not the practice of religion.
- 4) The school exposes students to diversity of religious views, but does not impose any specific view.
- 5) The school teaches about all religions; it does not promote or denigrate any religion.
- 6) The school informs students about various beliefs; it does not seek for students to conform to any particular belief.²⁶

In certain countries, religious knowledge is provided via other school subjects such as history, philosophy, literature, etc. However, the necessity of religious education as a separate subject is essential today, because the role of religion in open society becoming more important, while "there is a religious aspect to many of the problems that contemporary society faces, such as intolerant fundamentalist movements and terrorist acts, racism and xenophobia, and ethnic conflicts...Extremism is not religion itself, but a distortion or perversion of it. None of the great age-old religions preaches violence. Extremism is a human invention that diverts religion from its humanist path to make it an instrument of power".²⁷

However what could include in the subject of multi-faith education? Peter Hobson distinguishes three approaches to the content of religious education courses. The first is *Education for Commitment*, "which goes hand in hand with the education in faith...While this may be appropriate for church schools it is not appropriate for religious education that aims to meet the goals of contemporary liberal education. Because of its goal of producing religious commitment to one faith, it fails to satisfy the condition of critical rationality and may fail the condition of scientific coherence if the concern for commitment affects the way other subjects are taught".²⁸ The second is *Education about Religion*. "In this interpretation the course makes no attempt to deal with issues of personal belief but simply aims to present a descriptive account of the major religions or world views...It is more akin to a branch of social studies which may or may not be covered in other areas of the curriculum".²⁹ The third is the *Open-ended Exploration of World Views or Philosophies of Life*, in which

²⁶ Haynes, C. (1994) *Finding Common Ground: A First Amendment Guide to Religion and Public Education*, Nashville, Vanderbilt University Press.

²⁷ "Religion and Democracy", Recommendation 1396 (1999), art. 3.

²⁸ Hobson, P. id. 18.

²⁹ Id. p. 19.

“the only major pre-supposition is that the quest for a philosophy to guide our life or the attempt to find solutions to ultimate questions is important and worthwhile, and that the potential answer may be found in a realm that transcends the purely physical word. Such an answer could be a conventional religious view or it could utilize some alternative way of reaching religious understanding, for example, perhaps drawing on mystical experience, meditation techniques, altered states of consciousness, and so on. The answer for some may come to lie in interpreting religious statements as mythic or poetic attempts to express important features of human experience rather than as stating literal truths about the world”.³⁰

In the first occasion we focus on the knowledge of one religion. In the second, this knowledge becomes more extended because it includes the presence of other religions. In the third, religious knowledge includes various philosophical and religious doctrines about life, in order for people to have a contact with different opinions. In addition, we must remember that religions and other socio-philosophical systems create knowledge about the world and have an influence on the human life. But we wonder whether religions can use the different considerations of this religious and socio-philosophical systems as ways of communicating among them, and between them and other traditions that have an interest in the “ultimate” human question (of life and death). This kind of co-existence would contribute to communication between ideas and the civilizations.

Nowadays, every child is influenced by religious and cultural traditions at home before he starts to attend school. Therefore, it is necessary for state schools to teach religious education not only in order to present religions simply, but also because students must a) understand the differences between religions, b) discuss different religions, c) incorporate them as part of their pluralistic society, d) understand that the religions view of life is not the sole cultural creation, e) find other traditions which try to answer the same questions of the religions, f) criticize their religious and philosophical views of life and society.

We understand that provision of comparative religious education in the contemporary school facilitates the dialogue between the religious and philosophical traditions. This kind of teaching is better than the dialogue that religions alone create because it develops students’ confidence in religious differences and communication of them. The communication guarantees a democratic and liberal education, which is in operation in an open society. Dialogue among religions is based on the integration of the participants in a concrete religious theory in their attempts to impose it to the others, and on the use of their differences as elements of their identity.

³⁰ Id. p. 19.

On the contrary, the school tries to understand religious theories via the pluralistic presence of the ideas. That means that the mentality of the school is not the creation of a religious faith but an opportunity for the co-existence of different religious convictions as a part of cultural development, within the framework of common transmission of knowledge. In this way, any kind of intolerance stemming from the student's family or religious community is ameliorated by critical thought, which is the product of the co-existence of varied perceptions of the philosophy of religion. Additionally, we must remember that the school has to increase the knowledge, to balance different influences and to offer the student freedom from the acts of fanatical or uneducated parents. All these concepts lead to the conclusion that the school is a unique vehicle for a true re – interpretation of religion with a measure of respect for human rights, which is necessary for co-existence.

On the other hand this comparative religious education is connected with the theoretical and practical education of the teachers who will teach this subject. However, the European Union admits to a lack of well – prepared teachers of this subject. "Unfortunately, all over Europe there is a shortage of teachers qualified to give comparative instruction in the different religions, so a European teacher training institute needs to be set up for that purpose (at least for teacher trainers), which could benefit from the experience of a number of institutes and faculties in the different member countries that have long been researching and teaching the subject of comparative religion".³¹ For that reason, this kind of teaching is suggested at the elementary and secondary levels of the educational systems of member states. At the same time the European Union suggests the creation of a European Institute for the education of teachers of comparative religious education. But the most important idea is that this Recommendation (1720/2005) accepts teachers of comparative religious education from different cultural, social or religious backgrounds.³² In this way we understand that the teaching of religion in the modern school is something that overcomes individual influences (from the culture, society, or religion) on the students and teachers, and this subject becomes very important part of their general education.

Nevertheless, we realize that many students and teachers are members of a traditional religious community. This fact is not contrary to multi-faith education, because it helps everyone to have a critical view of his own ideas and cultivates equal communication among peoples and cultures. Thus, the different opinions that exist in the modern school represent the thoughts that students have within multi-faith education. Comparative Religious Education has to focus on a) the ability to

³¹ "Education and religion", Recommendation 1720 (2005), art. 10.

³² Id. (art. 14, 5).

understand others, b) a critical attitude towards traditional social roles, c) tolerance in the face of opposing opinions and d) the development of communicative ability in humans.³³ Moreover, this plurality and the collaboration of students contribute to find answers to many religious issues.

It is clear that in the school, if each opinion is respected by everyone, teachers and the students will develop a personal interest in the ultimate answers. These answers will have meaning for each student individually because they will help everyone to understand itself through others and to co-exist and co-operate with the others on issues of people and their society.

Consequently, Comparative Religious Education is not a different subject to the others. On the contrary, its content imposes the same respect as the other subjects. This subject improves on religious education because those who do not belong to a particular religion can teach or attend it. On the other hand, it helps everyone to discover the true human dimensions of his religion which is very important in order for people to be without religious prejudices of domination and imposition.

In any event, religions do not attract more “believers” in this way. But many researchers note that religions do, in this way, attract valuable interlocutors who contribute to the application of the most important elements of religions to people and society.³⁴ Many cultures have had religious experiences as the central source of their artistic development. The huge variety of religious ceremonies throughout the world, religious symbols, the religious places, myths and religious traditions have influenced all the art. The most impressive achievements in literature and poetry have the stamp of religious inspiration. Moreover, religious leaders have to overcome their autocratic attitudes and they must understand the benefits that can be offered by the development of diversity in their presence in society. For this reason, “It is worthwhile considering the potential benefits of effective teaching about religions—and of helping learners to engage with the ethical and other questions inherent in religious texts and practices - to school curricula. Particular attention should be paid to identifying content and methodologies that encourage understanding of the self and others, relate teaching and learning to the student’s own values and value choices, and contribute to the development and modeling of the school community as micro-cosms of an open society”.³⁵

The Comparative Science of Religion, like any other knowledge in the school, requires the presence of role models of the acceptance of diversity and its inclusion as components that contribute to the emergence of religious conscience.

³³ Govaris, X. (2004), *Introduction in the intercultural education*. Atrapos, Athens, p. 178.

³⁴ Karamouzis, P. (2007), *Civilization and Interreligious Education*. Greek Letters, Athens.

³⁵ KodelJa, Z., p.27.

This means that the management of the decision of someone to be “different” from others – in their way of life or interpretation of religious belief does not automatically contribute to the creation of communication among religions. In the case of that the adoption of this difference constitutes an anti-social action, or it has an impressionable character, then religious variety ceases to be a social right because it has no dialectical relation to the difference. In any event, the difference is determined by the content of canonical laws a person has to respect if he wants to manage his difference. Finally the most important point is not to teach children what means to be different in a specific way, but to teach children how to be different in the right way.

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Abstract

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RELIGIONS, EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY THE NECESSITY OF INTER-RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE MODERN PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

To summarize, we must point out that the religious education should not be a factor of secondary importance for democratic societies, with the condition that it constitutes one important aspect of each culture separately. If democratic societies are indifferent, provision of religious education will potentially be passed to religious communities because the state school will be unable to manage an objective multi-faith education.

Key words: Religions, Education, Democracy, School, European Union, Comparative Study of Religions.

Резиме

Поликарнос Карамузис

РЕЛИГИЈЕ, ОБРАЗОВАЊЕ И ДЕМОКРАТИЈА НЕОПХОДНОСТ МУЛТИКОНФЕСИОНАЛНОГ ОБРАЗОВАЊА У МОДЕРНОМ ЈАВНОМ СИСТЕМУ ОБРАЗОВАЊА

Потребно је указати да верско образовање, треба да буде од највишег значаја за демократско друштво и то тако да одвојено представља аспекте сваке културне заједнице. Ако демократска друштва буду индиферентна по овом питању, одредбе о верском образовању ће потенцијално прећи у надлештво верских заједница, будући да државни систем образовања неће бити у стању да спроведе непристрасно мултиконфесионално образовање.

Кључне речи: религије, образовање, демократија, школство, Европска унија, упоредна студија религије.