

Jochen Bauer: Religious Education for All – A Multi-Theological Approach

[Jochen Bauer: Religionsunterricht für alle. Eine multitheologische Fachdidaktik (Religionspädagogik Innovativ). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 2019]

Preface

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Summary

The concept of *Religionsunterricht für alle* („Religious Education for All“) emerged in the 1990's in the German city state of Hamburg. It reflects the multi-religious reality in classrooms and outside world. It looks for dialogical learning in classes which do not separate the children according to their religious affiliation – as would be usual in the other German states. Hamburg must nevertheless follow the constitutional provisions of Art. 7 (3) GG: the content of religious education must be set by religious communities. In Hamburg only the Lutheran church was as yet legally responsible for religious education. As of 2012, however, the *Religionsunterricht für alle* is transformed in a way which will allow other religious communities to share.

This dissertation offers – for the first time - a systematic didactic foundation of the *Religionsunterricht für alle* approach. It proposes a „multi-theological“ method, not by imposing a „supra-theology“ on religions but by working with their theologies and assigning them specific roles and competences.

The multi-theological didactic is developed in five steps. The first, introductory part asks which „didactic tasks“ have to be approached and explains how this can be accomplished. The emergence of *Religionsunterricht für alle* is situated in its historical context and in the present discussion on interreligious learning. The introductory part discusses furthermore the relationship of the multi-theological method to the theology of single religions, to pedagogics, cultural studies etc. Finally, it designs a structural model which guides the further analysis.

The second part deals with the „didactic space“ of *Religionsunterricht für alle*. It analyses its basic parameters, i.e. its legal, political and sociological side. This will make plain: The ability for pluralism is – simultaneously - precondition and goal of *Religionsunterricht für alle*.

Part three analyses the notion of religion and derives three central „didactic dimensions“: content, identity and truth. They prove to be the determining factors of the *Religionsunterricht für alle* approach. Their delineation includes the analysis of their influence on learning and instruction.

After these primarily analytical steps the teaching itself comes into focus in the fourth part. Six „didactic orientations“ refer to principles which should be taken into account while teaching *Religionsunterricht für alle*. They become concrete in „didactic orientational strategies.“

The fifth and final part describes the role and the tasks of teachers as „didactic actors“ in Religious Education. It discusses the significance of their own confessional identity and summarizes the teaching concept within *Religionsunterricht für alle* in guidelines.