



R E V I E W

by Assoc. Prof. Ivo Georgiev Yanev, PhD
of Laurentiu-Ioan IAGARU's dissertation on
**"Development of religious education in Romania
from the communist period to today"**

for awarding the educational and scientific PhD degree in
professional field 2.4 Religion and Theology (Religious Education)

Supervisor of the PhD student: Assoc. Prof. Andrian ALEKSANDROV, PhD

1. Information on the procedure

The present procedure was opened on the proposal of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Theology on 23.03.2023, protocol No. 09 and order No. RD 38-152/03.04.2023. At its first meeting, held on 20.04.2023, the scientific jury in composition: Prof. Dbn Dilyan Nikolchev, Assoc. Prof. PhD. Ivo Yanev, Prof. PhD. Magdalena Legkostup, Prof. Prot. PhD. Ludmil Mlalev and Assoc. Prof. priest PhD. Teodor Stoychev established that the procedure was organized in compliance with all legal requirements. After discussions, Assoc. Prof. PhD Ivo Yanev was elected as the chairman of the scientific jury, and Prof. PhD Magdalena Legkostup and Assoc. Prof. PhD. Ivo Yanev were elected as reviewers. To the other members - Prof. Dbn Dilyan Nikolchev, Prof. Prot. PhD. Ludmil Mlalev and Assoc. Prof. priest. PhD.



Teodor Stoychev was assigned to prepare written opinions. The deadline for submission of reviews and opinions was 29.05.2023, and the date for the open meeting of the scientific jury and public defense was 12.06.2023. All deadlines for the procedure were correctly observed.

2. Information on the doctoral student

Laurentiu-loan IAGARU is from Craiova, Republic of Romania, in 2012 he graduated from the Orthodox Theological Seminary "St. Grigoriy the Theologian" in Craiova, in 2016 a bachelor of theology at the Orthodox Theological Faculty in Craiova and Public Catering Management at the Faculty of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest, in 2018 he graduated with a master's degree at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Theology, MP "Faith and Life" and master's degree in Cultural Theology at the University of Craiova. Mr. Iagaru was a self-study doctoral student at the Department of Practical Theology from 2019 to 2022. He passed the exams set according to his individual plan and successfully passed the department's internal discussion procedure.

3. Information on the dissertation

The presented dissertation work of the doctoral student Laurentiu-loan IAGARU is 261 pages long, 418 footnotes and has the following structure: **Preface, Introduction, three chapters, Conclusion and Bibliography**. The dissertation is written in Romanian, with an extended abstract in Bulgarian in the volume of 101 pages.

The **introduction** presents the relevance of the research, a brief historical background on religious education in Romania, the state of research on the subject, the aim - to present religious education in Romania from the time of communist

rule to the present day, the main tasks that I believe that are correctly performed, and the object, subject and hypothesis of the research are also indicated - Christian religious education has an important importance in the history of Romania and, as a confessional, it does not contradict the secular nature of education.

The **first chapter "EDUCATION AND RELIGION IN ROMANIA DURING THE COMMUNIST REGIME"** presents the situation before the coming to power of the Communist Party, the autonomy of the Church after 1925, the guarantee of the fundamental rights of religions in the law of 1928. An important place here is the activity of a candle. Mihail Bulacu (1898-1985) – one of the most famous Romanian religious educators, who reformed theological education as well as the teaching of religion in Romanian schools. A major role here is also played by Fr. Prof. Dimitru Kalugar (1907-1988), who laid the foundation for the best religious education textbooks of his time, Ion Gavanescul (1959-1949), Stefan Bursonescu (1895-1984), Vasile Buncila (1987-1979) and others.

The situation created by the communist rule, the bans and the persecutions and finally the current context, the so-called "transitional period", in which new conditions for the life of the churches and the teaching of the subject of Religion appear. According to Art. 27 of the new Constitution, no religious denomination has the right to open and manage educational institutions. A number of reforms were carried out among the clergy and monasticism, aimed at limiting his ministry and influence in Romanian society. Interesting data on the activities of the Securitate in connection with the implementation of these reforms and actions against the Orthodox Church have been traced.

In the **second chapter "RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ROMANIA AFTER 1989. RELIGIOUS PLURALISM"** presents the beginning of religious education and its spread in Romania after 1989, the main tools of the three main religious

communities in Romania - Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism - are presented. After the fall of communist power in Romania, there was a spiritual awakening and religious education was returned to the education system at the end of 1989. In September 1991, an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Education and the Orthodox Church, according to which religious education is provided as optional or elective subject. Since the academic year 2004-2005, the subject of religion has been included as part of the general core curriculum, gradually giving up its status as a compulsory elective subject. All legally recognized religious communities in Romania have the right to teach their religion. The status of religion teachers is different from that of other teachers, because they, in addition to the general state requirements, are also subject to the special regime required by the respective religion that gives its approval for their appointment. If the teacher commits serious deviations in the teaching of the relevant religion to which he belongs and teaches, he can withdraw the contract for teaching religion, which leads to the termination of the teacher's employment contract with the school. The following is the presentation of Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant education on the territory of Romania, through an analysis of the main textbooks.

The **third chapter** is the most important part in this dissertation research "**YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ROMANIA TODAY - A STUDY**". A study based on the attitudes of today's young people towards religious education in Romania is presented. The conclusions from it are interesting - the Church, together with the family, has an important influence on religious education, and there is mutual complementarity between it and the school; the most effective influence on students by the Church is through religious instruction and worship; among young people there is a high degree of trust and

attachment to the Church; students are satisfied with the way the Church provides answers to important existential and moral questions and the total number of students who refuse to contact the Church is insignificant.

In the **Conclusion** of the dissertation, the doctoral student has made a summary of the entire study with relevant conclusions that defend the place of religious education in the Romanian educational system.

Some comments about the dissertation.

In the review of the state of research on the subject, information should be given on more authors and titles, and a brief critical analysis of the more significant ones should be made. Thus, the contributing moments of the dissertation research would stand out even more brightly.

There is a slight disparity between the first chapter and the other two chapters in the work.

Some of the tables from the youth survey could go into an Appendix, thus relieving Chapter Three.

I would ask the dissertation, after his analysis of religious education in Romania, in his opinion, is the interest in this type of education increasing or the number of students studying the subject of religion decreasing in the last five years or so?

4. The abstract correctly presents the content of the dissertation in an extended version, according to the requirements of the normative documents for language protection of a country of the European Union. The abstract presents the main points of the development, indicating the contributions and results of the dissertation research, as well as the publications on the topic.

5. Articles

The author has listed three published articles, relating to the topic of his dissertation.

6. No plagiarism was found in the dissertation submitted for defense.

I hereby declare that I have no affiliated business or activities, or co-authorship with the author of this dissertation, Mr. Laurentiu-loan IAGARU, and also that we do not fall within the hypotheses of the legal documents defining conflict of interest.

7. Conclusion

Based on everything stated so far, I think the PhD student has done a good job and presented the situation regarding religious education in Romania from the time of the communist rule to the present day. The work with the archives, as well as the excellent and professionally conducted research among young people about the importance of religiosity and faith in their lives and education, is particularly important in this topic.

Having in mind the compliance of the dissertation work of Laurentiu-loan IAGARU with the requirements laid down in the normative documents defining the nature of this type of scientific work, as well as the observance of all procedures related to the preparation of the doctoral student and the advancement of the work for defense, as well as the fact that the doctoral student meets the national requirements regarding the individual scientometric data for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", laid down in the law, **all this gives me**

grounds to vote positively, and to recommend the other members of the scientific jury to vote the dissertation student to be awarded the scientific degree PhD in 2.4. Religion and Theology (Religious Education).

Sofia,

23. 05. 2023

(Assoc. Prof. Ivo Yanev, PhD)