

STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teodor Bozidarov Stoychev

member of the jury in the competition for the award of Doctor of Science degree
in 2.4 Religion and Theology/Religious Pedagogy

for the dissertation of Lauretsiou-Yoan Yagaru

on "THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN

ROMANIA FROM THE COMMUNIST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT"

Faculty of Theology of the University of St. Kliment Ohridski"

The proposed topic is of interest to our science because it presents the experience of another Orthodox Church in the affirmation of the Christian faith. Moreover, it has a historically similar fate to ours, I am referring to the communist period, which will help us synchronically look at the events and derive the necessary benefits for us.

The work is well structured. It consists of an introduction, three main chapters, a conclusion and references used.

The introduction meets the scientific criteria. Laurentiu-Joan Iagaru puts the relevance of the problema in perspective by giving a brief overview of the early evidence of religious education in Romania. Clearly, he seeks through his study to dialogue between religious and secular education in the country, in order to develop, as he himself writes, an educational process aimed at educating and building the inner life of man with a view to his spiritual growth. Furthermore, he tries to distinguish himself from similar studies to his by considering the situation of the period under study "simultaneously historical and religious-pedagogical and it from the perspective of the theological paradigm".

Chapter One: Education and religiosity in Romania during the the communist regime

Expectedly, the doctoral student describes the plight of the church in Romania during this period, which was reflected in its placement outside the law, confiscation of property, arrests, etc. The presentation thematically links education and political situation during the period. Although the themes are conditioned, I think it would have been better to address more the issue of the content of religious education and its promotion among the people. What is missing in the whole study, at least to me, is information on how exactly the direct outreach to the people took place. On the contrary it is more historical than theologically engaged, despite the claim made in the introduction. Information about the active and principled work of certain bishops is useful. But whether their role was the decisive factor in having so many people following the Church after the Communist period is a question which I think remains open. Rather, according to Laurentiu-Joan Jagaru, the processes that took place between wartime and the period of communist rule led to the particular place of the church in people's lives after the communist period.

Chapter Two: Religious Education in Romania after 1989. Religious Pluralism

During this period, the main goal of the Romanian educational system was, through speciphical methods to contribute to the maintenance of the nation's identity in the context of European values. The doctoral candidate stresses the extraordinary acceptance that the Church finds in society. The Romanian nation is presented as one of the most religious in Europe. Here again I would like to mention the lack of a deeper analysis of the processes that led to these results. The religious phenomenon in Romania can hardly be reduced solely to the entry of religion as a subject into the education system. The information on the theological

educational system of the Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Protestantism is useful, as it is comparative and allows to trace the different methodological approaches. The content presented is mainly that of textbooks, which I am not convinced is sufficient, since it only highlights familiar differences. To put it another way, more space is given, in my opinion, to the textbooks than to the educational strategy itself.

Chapter Three: Young people's attitudes to religion religious education in romania today - a study study.

In this chapter, the Ph.D. student shies away from extreme idealizations, but seeks objectivity in determining the real relationship between religiosity, belonging, and the actual activity of a person.

In conclusion, I would say that the work is historically comprehensive and has more of a survey character. As I have already pointed out, it lacks that analytical-critical approach that would have given the exposition a more discursive orientation.

In spite of the brief and well-intentioned critical remarks, I believe that the submission meets the criteria for the degree of PhD. I therefore give a positive evaluation to Laurentiu-Joan Jagaru.

28.05.23 г.

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