

## **Editorial and Summary in English**

by  
Manfred L. Pirner

This Editorial is intended to make the major contents of the contributions in German known to an international readership. It is based on the supposition that such an additional overview of the journal's articles is more profitable to international English-speaking readers than just additional English abstracts at the beginning of each German article.

We appreciate any reactions and comments by readers from outside the German language context and are grateful for suggestions that can help us to further improve our journal's accessibility and attractiveness for an international readership.

(You are invited to e-mail your comments to [manfred.pirner@fau.de](mailto:manfred.pirner@fau.de)).

**The thematic part** of this issue of Theo-Web deals with a topic that has only recently become prominent in religious education discourse in Germany. It is not quite easy to translate the German term "Öffentliche Religionspädagogik" into English. It means a theoretical approach to religious education that connects with the approach of "Public Theology". Like the latter term, it emphasizes the public dimension and responsibility of religious education. I have chosen "Public Religious Pedagogy" for translation.

Beside the thematic issue you will find some interesting contributions on diverse themes in the section "**Research and Discourse**".

### **Thematic Issue**

#### **Public Religious Pedagogy beyond the area of responsibility of the church**

##### **Introduction to the Thematic Issue**

By  
Michael Wermke

#### **"Religionskulturopädagogik" (Pedagogy of Religion and Culture)**

##### **Public formation of religion, exemplified by kindergarten**

by  
Christian Kahrs

Formation of religion is a phenomenon that can, inter alia, be identified in the context of public educational practice. Starting from this observation and using kindergarten as an example, the article advocates to further develop the concern that is voiced under the label of "Public Religious Pedagogy" to a "Pedagogy of Religion and Culture". In this concept confessional religious pedagogy as well as general pedagogy are analyzed in the perspectives of cultural theory and religious policy. This meta perspective – as the major perspective of the academic discipline of religious pedagogy – is sketched along the key words "the public as a religious education category", "public identity as educational regulative", "formation as discourse about valid knowledge", and "Pedagogy of Religion and Culture as co-operative project".

### **Child day care centers: public square for communication about religions. A contribution to the discussion about “Public Religious Pedagogy”**

by  
Anke Edelbrock

Exemplified by child day care centers funded by local authority, the article underlines that academic religious pedagogy is responsible for religious and interreligious education in the public realm of a pluralist society. At the same time it is a contribution to the discussion about “Public Religious Pedagogy”. To this end, structural and intellectual references are made to the concept of “Public Theology”, in order to reflect on questions that arise in the area of elementary religious education.

### **The terrain of religious education beyond confessionalism. A perspective from Switzerland**

by  
Monika Jakobs

Academic religious pedagogy at universities in German-speaking countries is usually regarded as a discipline of confessional theology while scholarly work on religious education without confessional basis as well as on religious education in church contexts both are marginalized. The article makes a plea for the responsibility of academic religious pedagogy for religious and ethical education beyond the confessional terrain. The discipline must be prepared to take societal responsibility for the religious education of all and to constructively contribute to the development of concepts for a school subject Religious Education that is non-confessional and embraces all the major religions.

### **Religious formation in elementary education in Austria**

by  
Martin Jäggle  
with assistance of Christine Mann and Martin Rothgangel

Starting with controversies over religious education in kindergarten, this article (1) offers a brief and exemplary overview of the corresponding legal situation and (2) of initiatives in the field of educational policy in Austria. Subsequently (3), those parts of the curriculum framework for Austrian elementary education are introduced that are relevant for questions of religious education. A closer look at the curricula for kindergarten in (4) Vienna and (5) Lower Austria follows. Against this background (6) the elaboration of the religious education curriculum framework from 2010 must be understood. It is shown (7) that in this context accepting religious differences and addressing them adequately in religious education is a remaining challenge.

**Religious education in the migration society.  
The “Thuringian General Curriculum up to 18” on the test**

by  
Michael Wermke

The Thuringian General Curriculum for young people up to the age of 18 is the orienting framework for the educational work in all informal, non-formal and formal educational institutions in the state of Thuringia such as families, day care centers, schools, associations and religious communities. For the first time in a Thuringian General Curriculum religious education has been established as an educational area of its own. The article investigates the potential of religious education with a focus on day care centers run by independent non-state institutions. The analysis especially considers the challenges by religious pluralization in our liberal-democratic society, not least aggravated by the current migration movement. The article concludes that comprehensive education without religious education remains incomplete and that non-religious educational institutions, too, should make efforts to integrate it into their educational programs.

**The end of a monopoly – belief in the public square**

by  
Hans-Ferdinand Angel

Belief in our country is mostly if not exclusively associated with religion or the church. This is a problem. It prevents an understanding of belief as an anthropological possibility not confined to the context of religion. It also prevents an understanding of belief as a process in time. But it is just the understanding of what goes on in a human being when he or she is (in the act of) believing that can activate those communicative potentials needed for educationally accompanying believers that are essential for a “Public Religious Pedagogy”.

**Laughing as a learning task. Or: Humorous literature as a place of learning for public religious education**

by  
Jens Palkowitsch-Kühl

Jokes, comedy and humor are a substantial part of our lives. Unintended comical situations as well as deliberately staged comedy shows often trigger laughing. However, such situations imply much more than just a laugh. In order to understand comical situations one needs subject knowledge, combinatory thinking and the ability to look behind things. Humor can only function by referring to knowledge. However, it can also produce and promote knowledge. In this article, the reciprocal effects between joke, humorous fiction and religious education are revealed.

## Research and Discourse

### **Religious Education at vocational schools as a laboratory of heterogeneity-concerned religious pedagogy. School-form related reflections on the confessionality of RE**

by

Bernhard Grümme

Nowhere is religious pedagogy confronted with such a high degree of heterogeneity as in RE in vocational schools. Here, often students with various different worldviews and from different religions and denominations study together. How can it be possible in this context to conceptualize confessional RE? By addressing this question, the article at the same time tries to show that RE at vocational schools constitutes something like a laboratory for experimenting with heterogeneity that is highly relevant for the future of religious education.

### **Is confessional RE in Austria future-proof? Insights into the situation, in current challenges and possible perspectives of religious education at public schools**

by

Alexander van Dellen

The recent violent conflicts in the name of religion once more raise the question about the best form of religious education at public schools. Thus, in Austria different models of religious education are currently discussed in politics and society as well as within the churches. The article introduces selected models and organizational forms of religious education, sketches the specific Austrian situation, identifies current challenges and discusses how future-proof the confessional model of RE at Austrian public schools is.

### **Correlations between religious adherence, religiosity and value orientation – an internationally and nationally representative analysis on the basis of the “Religion Monitor”**

by

Margit Stein

There are highly significant correlations between value orientations and religious adherence, and in a weaker form with religiosity in its different dimensions. Adherents of the big religious communities (Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism) and non-religious persons differ significantly in their value orientations. Clear differences can also be seen between the three major belief groups in Germany (Christianity, Islam, no religious adherence). In addition, certain dimensions of religiosity (intellectual dimension, ideology, public and private practice and religious experience) show correlations between certain value orientations.

## **Pupils' perspective on Protestant Religious Education in Bavaria. Selected results.**

by

Susanne Schwarz and Adriane Dörnhöfer

This article offers selected results from a quantitative study conducted in 2013 among the participants of Protestant RE in the German state of Bavaria. Ninth and tenth grade pupils in "Mittelschulen" (lower level secondary schools) and "Realschulen" (medium level secondary schools) were asked about their perspectives on the subject, on their church socialization and attitudes. The results reveal the degree of acceptance and relevance that RE has in the views of the pupils as well as characteristics of their religious or nonreligious socialization.

## **Rays of hope – Edward Hicks's "The Peacable Kingdom" in Religious Education. A cross-curricular approach.**

by

Jens-Peter Green

Throughout his life, Edward Hicks (1780-1849) painted numerous versions of the messianic peace among the animals (Isaiah 11:6-8). In most cases they show William Penn's Peace Treaty with the indigenous Lenni Lenape in the background. Hicks's Peaceable Kingdoms are painted sermons: in the face of the forced removal of the Native Americans and the divisions among the Quaker community, they affirm peace, justice and rebirth in the spirit of Christ. This paper advocates developing students' comprehension and language mediation skills through bilingual modules that enhance content and language learning (CLIL). The bilingual module presented in this paper shows how authentic English texts can be tailored for use in the German RE classroom from Year 8 onwards.

## **Religious learning through comparing media, exemplified by the novel and movie "Life of Pi"**

by

Norbert Brieden

On the basis of a reception aesthetic and constructivist reading of the phenomenological literary theory of Paul Ricœur the article explicates the opportunities arising for religious education from a comparison of literary source and film version. As an example the novel "Life of Pi" by Yann Martel (2001) is compared with its screen adaptation by Ang Lee (2012) in respect of its dealing with the question of God. To consider the cross-media dimension on the intersection between literary didactic, film didactic and religious didactic means to exactly perceive the presented configurations (mimesis II), to critically evaluate refigurations by others and oneself (mimesis III) as well as to understand the causes of different prefigurations (mimesis I) and estimate their influence on aesthetic judgments.