

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

RESTRUCTURING REGARDING THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL SKILLS IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT. The teaching authority of the religious education teacher is reflected positively in the students', parents' and community's view of the discipline. It takes time to win it, it is formed, it is practiced in accordance with the content values, the methodological demands, and the various challenges (informatic, technical, cultural, social etc.). Its quality and performance is highly important and revolves positively and negatively around the way in which it is valued, symbolized, accepted as a subject. In this article, we want to emphasise the importance and the dynamics of this skills reference, focusing on recent pedagogic, cultural, social development.

Keywords: religious education teacher, teacher training, training device, teaching skill.

Introduction

Every teaching act involves the reporting, acquisition and activation of certain specific skills for fulfilling the mission. Many of these dimensions are observed or practiced in the early stages of one's training: the bachelor's degree, the master's degree, and even more throughout the continuous training or the actual practicing of this profession. In this skill reference we include both the general skills of all teaching staff, regardless of their subject, but also specific aspects regarding the status and the values of one particular subject, which is, in this case, the religious education.

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The psychopedagogical skills focus on the conduct created by given elements, stable and long-lasting, as well as on their dimensions that can be won, changed or opened. The type of these skills is continuously shifting, expanding, covering more, being more specific, but also as hierarchy, position, ranking in an order of priority. The restructuring of this set of skills is due to the pressure imposed by the changes in society and culture, but also by the “object of education”, the child’s dynamic personality, the formal and informal context of education, the new connections regarding the involvement of educational factors.

1. Dilemmas and questions regarding teacher training

The Romanian University represents the main institution whose purpose is the initial and continuous training of the teaching staff. The quality of the training received by graduates/teachers is disputed or is proven to be scarce. This reality needs to be taken in, evaluated and overcome. There are various causes of the above-mentioned scarcity: the faulty organisation or the instability of the teacher training programme (institutional scarcity), a weak awareness of the importance of the psychopedagogical training from those who would become teachers (conduct scarcity), the precariousness of the entry system and the promotion monitoring system (scarcity of values) etc.

Several points of view state that teaching is yet to be defined, that experiments are still made in the field, while theories and actual training experiences are being tested. There are still many questions without an answer²:

- How are professional teachers different from the occasional ones (such as the parents)?
- What kind of qualifications – theoretical, practical – should someone who identifies and is known as a teacher must have?
- What training structure - and from which level – should the future teacher follow in order to achieve the acquisition of the specific skills?
- What difficulties could come up in this process and how could these be overcome?
- Which are the training strategies and policies that are most adequate and what dynamic should they follow to ensure a good teacher training?

Moreover, several dilemmas regarding teacher training, highlighted a long time ago, are not yet understood, leading to a series of confusions on a planning and praxeological perspective, such as:

² Ștefan Costea, *Profesiunea didactică în societatea cunoașterii. Studii și reflecții despre educație* (Omagiu profesorului Miron Ionescu) (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2003).

1. Which is the proportion between the academic training (specialised) and the psychopedagogical training; how much does the teacher have to be specialised on the teaching subject and how much is he or she prepared for the passing on of knowledge (or, eventually, generates it, builds together with the opinionmakers)?
2. Which is the proportion between knowing a specific field and knowing the connected or even farther fields, so that one can create inter-disciplinary or transdisciplinary teaching connections with the aim of developing transversal skills for pupils?
3. How well-prepared should the teachers be for working with children or teenagers and how well-trained should they be to connect with other adults (parents, colleagues etc.).
4. What types of aptitudes need to be formed in the initial training phase and what skills can be achieved in the continuous training?

Furthermore, with respect to the specific teacher-training means, answers are sought for the following questions: a) Through what kinds of institutional-organisational means is the teacher training insured? (The actual model, through the two levels of the pedagogic module; the Teaching Master's; the Faculty of Educational Sciences; Autonomous or regional Institutes/Centres etc) b) In which disciplinary manner? (Mono-disciplinary; inter or pluri-disciplinary (how many disciplinary ways?); c) What chronological structure? (Simultaneously, academic and psychopedagogical; successively (academic/3 years + psychopedagogical/1-2 years + practical/1 year); c) What curricular content? Which is the rapport between the academic subject and the group of teaching and psychopedagogical subjects; which is the rapport between the theoretical subjects and the pedagogical practice; What does their succession look like in the educational framework).

Regarding the religious education teacher, he or she is trained in the theological faculties, and follows a monodisciplinary teaching path, sometimes in connection with language and literature, but the path can also extend to history, geography, social studies or combined with farther subjects, if the law allows it.

2. Teaching competence and authority – a crisis?

On the larger scale of the general authority relativization and questioning, teacher status seems to have been going down. Although the teacher used to be perceived as a real apostle of the community, nowadays he or she is put under a lot of pressure, which could be symbolic, ideological, perceptual or even related to status, professional or financial. The teaching staff, once defined, worshipped

and enviable, as it was a point of great value in the society and its ethos, have become a subject of criticism for the recipients of the teaching process (students, parents), but also for those who supervise, monitor and benefit from their activity (mass media, stakeholders, local authorities etc.)

The knowledge society, beyond the ease of access and the democratisation of knowledge, brings several perverse effects. One of these consists in the questioning and erosion of the epistemic authority, of the expertise acknowledgement on the creation and management of cognitive systems, of our specialisation in creating activities by using the science we acquired. The illusion that everyone is good at doing everything surfaces, making us think that we can become experts overnight, that we no longer need to have people who validate or focus a certain area of knowledge and action. Almost everyone believes that they are good at politics, education, health, soul, technical stuff. It is alright to have opinions about one topic or another, but it is completely different to be an expert who has the know-how to evaluate the facts.

The perversity has gone beyond one expected: some use these techno-social opportunities to declaim abilities appropriated illegally. Through an autotelic procedure, the media creates and credits skills based on frequency, insistently, through some “voices” whose power derives from the system they have entered. The premises of training are no longer important, nor is the creation of a background for the assessing authority but is the power and magnitude of a voice. The expertise is no longer the result of an already shown activity, put the premise of quality to be summoned or determined. It is no longer the corollary of a socially instituted acknowledgement, but the begging of a type of individuality that wants to stand out.

Today’s virtual environment, the transparency and the immediate urge of passing on information brings about this crisis of authority. In former times, few people had access to information as it was hard to get, nowadays we see that it is limitless and accessible. Criticism lacks the developing dynamics, such as the extension and opening towards knowledge. Such an inconsistency can lead either to a deleterious use of the information, or to a trivialisation of the cognitive sphere. We know too well that a value is defined through rarity too, and its rate is also increased by a certain dearth or tension of search and discovery. In such a world with no demarcation, we can assist to some short-circuits or a generalised “noise” in which we do not know what one is capable of or must do. In the current “cyber-sphere” “anyone” can become “someone”: a writer or a poet, a guru, a politician, and of course, a teacher...

The ebb presented above comes to fruition in various ways: making education inferior, by not allocating enough money (the problem is not new and no further details are necessary), which makes this profession less and less appealing; the education process is unstable and unpredictable, due laws that

are constantly changing, in opposition with one another (the teachers are overwhelmed about what they have to do, what is their purpose and which authority should they listen to); the troublesome intrusion, in management, of political figures who discourage skilfulness (at least to intermediate authorities or of Ministry); the pressure and involvement of the unaware parents; students' more and more demanding behaviour; transparency, 'hunting', the excessive promotion and generalization of certain teachers' moral slippages; the lack, denial or infringement of some minimal rules of teaching; the admission and training of certain individuals who lack the needed abilities.

If before, authority was a quality given *ab initio*, obtained and acknowledged naturally, intuitively, today it is a value that is permanently being negotiated or is built through certain conventions and procedures. The formality and bureaucratisation of skills went farther than one imagined. The status of the teacher is no longer a given, but it is permanently adjusted through prescriptions that are made on short notice. Almost everything has to be turned into procedures, written as rules and regulations, through algorithms that have to be followed. The teachers, like any other civil servant, and irrespective of the fact that they work with children who are six years old or with mature students, have to pay attention to regulations before they pay attention to people, to check the methodology before doing anything else, to focus on abstract notions before focusing on real things. Our authority being overthrown is no longer based on factors that are subjective or unplanned, but by a system's ambition to delegitimize us of our attributes or natural responsibilities. The decline of the teachers' status is also the result brought about by a generalised entrepreneurship that unifies and forces us to lose personality. The school starts to resemble any economic organization, with strict regulations, with maximised profit and no loss.

The depreciation can unfortunately reach pathological dimensions, by questioning the security, including the physical one, of the teacher. Verbal abuse, insults, bullying in the virtual environment or even physical attacks – beyond or in school etc. have become more and more common. These realities require the regulations to be reconsidered or the implementation of new means of solidarity in order to prevent and defend teachers' rights.

If we, as a society, appointed the teachers to be in charge of our children's education (through clear, valid, transparent procedures) then we should respect their teaching, processing and functioning autonomy. As in case-law, "immovability" must prevail here as well. We cannot disregard the idea of praxiological authority or professional expertise, including in Paideia. "Regardless of our expectancies, we cannot avoid the temporal reality and our talents' indisputable limitations. We become prosperous because we become specialised and we develop formal and informal mechanisms and practices that allow us to trust each other when it

comes to the fields we are specialised in”³. After a rigorous process of selecting and attributing the “job” (here are many things that must be improved), we have to trust them. The principle of trust, based on a complied responsibility, is the one that will fix this lack of authority, which we believe is temporarily installed. We must redefine skills, as parents, as teachers, as pupils, as students, as stakeholders. The taking in and practising of a teacher’s skills is done simultaneously, while defining the skills of other educational factors. If we do not accept these attributes, with their purpose and status, then the “fuss” about statuses and roles will have increased. A system will work only when each will act based on their skill.

3. What is the teaching competence

For about a century we have heard about the need of focusing the Romanian education system on skill and performance at every level of training. We are not interested in the amount of knowledge that the student or teacher has, but what they are able to do with it, the way in which they apply the science they know and what strategies they use to activate and preserve the knowledge. Competence refers to that desirable behaviour that teachers and students must reach after being included in a training program. It is “designed” sort of abstractly, theoretically, as it is a projection that mature individuals seek to achieve. It is a set of traits that form a conduct that at the moment is left aside, although there is hope that one day it will be contained within. Performance refers to what students or teachers are actually doing. This conduct is an existing competence embodied and turned into act. It is clear that a competence is more valuable than a visible performance, as it is its “ideal” announcement. Performance is real, is tangible, whereas the competence is the projection, anticipation. Through reference to a competence we can observe what students/teachers had to do and through reference to performance we find out what they actually did.

Some believe that what is evaluated are not the behaviours, but their products. We do not assess competences, but “visible” traces of these competences⁴, which are performances. The attempt to separate a product from the process of making that product can lead to praxiological aporias, as well as of methodological, epistemological and axiological ones. Firstly, due to the fact that we cannot understand or measure the product in a “pure” form, we are unable to separate it from the means that lead to the product. Secondly, because the possibility of

³ Tom Nichols, *Sfârșitul competenței. Discreditarea experților și campania împotriva cunoașterii tradiționale*. (Iași: Polirom, 2019), 28.

⁴ Genevieve Mayer, *De ce și cum evaluăm* (Iași: Polirom, 2000), 47.

doing something and the actual doing are not always relevant in the teaching process, the assessment also has a predictive power, anticipating desirable conduct (I do things better when I know that I will be controlled or assessed). Thirdly, the instruments for the measurement of the two realities (products and processes) are different, uncorrelated, implying distinct benchmarks in report to the specific character of the aspects evaluated (actions and qualities). Skill and performance are dynamic and continuous realities, hard to measure. When can we say that someone has painting skills? Or teaching skills? What is the threshold where we can call one's talent to paint or teach? Every skill is somehow virtual, poli-functional and open. It also involves an invisible or "mysterious" aspect. It can be a cultural product or the result of an opinion, depiction or personal "conquest". Teachers, in reference to their students but also to their capacity, sometimes count on working theories, representations, approximation of competencies having as referential a possible materialization of competence. As Perrenoud writes, competence is a matter of conformism and habit⁵. We cannot certify that a competence has been fully acquired and turned into a permanent performance. The times to come can change the level and capacity of performing.

Returning to teaching competence, it can be described in two ways:

a) on a larger scale – as the capacity of an educator to decide over a teaching problem by knowing in depth the law and determining the teaching circumstances.

b) on a narrow scale – as a person's ability to fulfil, at a certain level of performance, all the task required for the teaching profession.

The concept of "teaching competency" tends to be used nowadays as a middle, general professional standard, often specified by the law, and which a person must achieve while doing teaching related tasks, so that the society is safe from having unprepared individuals for the job. It is a form of delegation of attributes based on conventions, procedures and clear rules that are redrawn from time to time.

Even though teaching has a social, cultural and historical dimension, - extremely powerful and handed down through traditions, intuition and other representations, which does not imply just the activation of knowledge and skills, but also of attitudes, values, ethos, calling, talent, currently there is a strong tendency of formalization, "technologization" and "procedure-making", by initializing the process of making and describing professional standards,

⁵ Philippe Perrenoud, *L'évaluation des élèves, De la fabrication de l'excellence à la régulation des apprentissages. Entre deux logiques* (Paris, Bruxelles: De Boeck Université, 1998), 49.

more and more precise, focused, algorithmicised and “mechanised”⁶. For instance, E. Păun⁷ sees the professionalization of the teaching staff as a process of creating a set of abilities and competences in a given field, based on the acquisition of a set of knowledge (in theory and practice), process deductively controlled by a model of that job”. Professionalization involves several different cumulative stages: a) the delineation of professional identity through the creation of professional standards in the system; b) the authorisation of teaching in the society through material or symbolic support (financial aid, resource allotment, increases in salaries; c) structuring objective assessment systems that states and monitors professional progress, focused on real, measurable skills, that do not lead to perverse effects. With the standards of competences, often mentioned, other concepts can also be highlighted. Professor Nicolae Mitrofan promotes a connected term, that of teaching aptitude, which focuses on basic structures, fundamentals of personality and that refer on “complex psychological system, that relies on a certain level of organization and functioning of the psychical functions – formed as a system and internalized operations, genetically created following the external pattern of the educational activity – and support the efficient behaviour of the teacher through adaptive operationalization of its entire personality⁸”. Of course, such a “starting” structure allows adjustments, but in accordance with certain possibilities or predispositions that exist in the in-depth structure of the personality.

In some Romanian specialists’ opinion, concerned about the setting up of teaching standards⁹, the fact that a professional standard has a complex structure, with at least five elements or dimensions is brought up.

- the kind of activities people expect the teacher to do (mentioning the type of necessary activities).
- the standards these activities must meet in order to be perceived as raising at the required level of quality accepted by the society (description of activities).
- the reason why these actions are necessary (the reason for doing them).

⁶ See Roxana Criu, *Competență și calitate. Repere ale evaluării profesorului*, (Iași: Editura Universității „Al. I. Cuza”, 2013).

⁷ Emil Păun, „Profesionalizarea activității didactice” în *Standarde profesionale pentru profesia didactică* ed. by Lucia Gliga, Ministerul Educației și Cercetării, Consiliul Național pentru pregătirea profesorilor (Sibiu: Editura POLSIB SA., 2002).

⁸ Nicolae Mitrofan, *Aptitudinea pedagogică*, (București: Editura Academiei, 1988), 56.

⁹ Lucia Gliga, ed., *Standarde profesionale pentru profesia didactică*, Ministerul Educației și Cercetării, Consiliul Național pentru pregătirea profesorilor (Sibiu: Editura POLSIB SA.,2002) Sibiu.

- the criteria used for evaluating the quality of the demanded activities (behaviour that can be observed and measured and that highlights the success of the activities, at a socially accepted level of quality).
- how the required activities will be appreciated (means of assessment used).

We have to admit that a model of teaching must refer to standardizable dimensions (that can be observed, measured and assessed), as well as to the conducts that are not standardizable, but open, creative (personalized, contextualized etc.). In the first category we can include “technical” skills, of methodology and that can be programmed, which can be learned (about the pedagogic analysis of content, school documentation, assessment procedures etc.), and the second category can include the capacity to rapport with the student, with the class, with their parents or with the management staff, the argumentative-discursive style, or aptitudes that cannot be fully measured, but have an impact through grace, talent, calling. For example, the teaching call can have a formal dimension, required by status and the fulfilment of some skills (through professionalization, validation, certification), but also a real dimension through actual performances, individual, shown through everyday practice (through giving, availability, love for the children).

With technology becoming more and more important for fulfilling educational scopes, more and more authors connect the teachers’ teaching skill with their ability to integrate these aids in the teaching process. Teachers’ relation with technology is changing, is contextual, but an excessive use is to be avoided. “More often than not, teaching staff have an unproductive dichotomous perspective: either they do not use technology, or they believe that it could replace their job as a teacher. None of these perspectives is correct: not using technology means not benefiting from the extra value that this can bring to the lesson. Relying only on technology in the teaching process can lead to superficial work from the teacher; on the contrary, teachers must think about age-appropriate psychology, how to enforce motivation, to establish objectives and how to adjust the models to the class, and only then to think about how technology can help these aspects”¹⁰. After all, “digital teaching – does not refer to technology, but to teaching”, meaning all those means that relate to creative intuition, grace, balance, intelligent moderation.

¹⁰ Ion Ovidiu Pânișoară, *Procesul de învățământ în perspectiva digitalizării*, In Ciprian Ceobanu, Constantin Cucuș, Olimpius Istrate, Ion Ovidiu Pânișoară eds., *Educația digitală* (Iași: Editura Polirom, 2020).

4. The competence standard specific for the religious education teacher

What does it mean to be skilled in training and teaching others? Which are the generic competences required by this noble job (and call)? What dynamic should the set of abilities have, considering the evolution of the trainee, whose personality becomes more complex, as well as the worrying incitement, of different intensity, that arouse from a social cultural context.

Of course, these abilities can be emphasised through psychological testing, or by testing knowledge (unfortunately, not practiced in our case, through a transparent, institutionalised and based on merit selection). If the two types of predispositions are easily perceivable, morality, intra-psychical coherence, pro-social conduct etc. are more difficult to measure and estimate, but become, as seen in practice, the real test and even “the Achilles’ heel” of the Paideia work.

Focusing on the religious education teacher, the general skills are:

a) Scientific, academic skill. Good religious education teachers must have a vast scientific knowledge of the field they represent – the doctrinaire-cult specific character of the religion represented, the categories and principles of theological knowledge, the evolution and dynamic of religious phenomenology etc., to be updated in terms of new and relevant information of the subject taught.

b) Teaching, psychopedagogical skill. Religious education teachers are not just someone who is epistemologically able or who generates a specific knowledge, but also someone who is capable of communicating his knowledge, who processes and interprets it. This means knowing to choose, prepare and explain knowledge, to count on and make the most out of a child’s practical and religious experience, even on an integrating intradisciplinary path¹¹, so that these become permissive, understandable, an asset to be shared.

c) Psychological relational skill. Teaching involves opening and permeability towards one’s self, helping and counselling the students in both a didactic way as well as in an emotional, motivational, developmental, correctional and projective way. The teacher does not only communicate, but turns oneself into a model of understanding, socialization and affability. Creating a communication environment, to stimulate students to positively connect supports the appreciation of others, it increases one’s own dignity, while also turning into a factor for making learning maximal and efficient.

¹¹ Louis-Leon Christians, *Philosophie ou religion à l’école publique*, In *Religions, morales et philosophie à l’école: comment penser ensemble*, (Louvain: Presses universitaires de Louvain, 2004), 15-23.

d) Collaborative and creating partnerships skill. Teaching is more than an individual process, as it involves cooperation with other trainers, dialogue or negotiation with various partners involved in the teaching activity. A good teacher also activates other training factors, like the family, the church, local institutions, different associations and joints them with the school's efforts to achieve the school's cultural objectives.

e) Knowing and including new information technologies in teaching skill. Informational technologies have a direct impact over the teaching process (for students and teachers likewise) and must be turned into direct or complementary means of acquiring and transmitting experience. The Cyberspace has many complicated spiritual threats and can become an educogenous "field" that has to be explored for teaching purposes, as a source of knowledge, as an aid in transmitting and denoting the values. Even more new beneficial perspectives arouse when it comes to delivering religious lessons/activities on informatic platforms, as well as for the integration of digital teaching support.

f) Self-reflexive, critical skill, regarding one's own teaching activity. The authentic teacher must monitor the teaching activity, to develop meta-cognitive resources so that the teaching path improves. At the same time, he becomes responsible of his own professional evolution, that has to be in a logical permanent development.

g) Conflict management skill. Religious education teachers act on a socio-cultural stage that is more and more complicated, more tense, where he must prevent and improve the conflicts, fights, adversities, based on different spiritual origins, that can appear between various stakeholders (students, parents, managers, colleagues etc.). Thus, religious education teachers, even though they are part of a cult, in our case Christian-Orthodox, can become a mediator, counsellor for stability and credibility.

h) The skill of communicating efficiently (with parents, mass media, school administration, local administration, etc.). The psycho-social context can become a challenging one, which will force the religious education teachers to be explicit, intelligent and responsible towards their own status, objective, professional identity. They must show credibility, positivity and ethos to those around them, to defend epistemological and axiological dignity of their subject, to exert their rights and obligations in full knowledge of the facts.

If we focus on specific competences for religious education, we have to focus on the following:

a) Teachers' value competence, through their own behaviour as models. Religious education teachers have to assume the status of delegate from the religious community they represent, and that will carry a system of specific

values; they no longer represent themselves but become the representatives of a spiritual mark, showing to the successors what the predecessors or the contemporaries have created, validated, credited: spiritual ideas and views, expressive forms, significant experiences, desirable behaviour at a given time. The example of self becomes a reference point as it proposes, through contagion, values that are not just claimed, but also interiorized, incorporated, experienced.

1. Valorization and teaching integration of children's proximal experience. Religious education teachers have to start with children's concrete ways, from their psycho-genetic or cultural repertory, from opportunities or deficits, from more or less relevant, authentic spiritual circumstances or experiences. Students have different religious pre-acquisitions, as these depend on the families, groups or society they come from. Moreover, the integrating and interdisciplinary perspective, in relation to knowledge, culture, practice has to be taken as a teaching principle. The student must be seen as a partner and has to be valued and integrated in the teaching exercise¹². Such "anchors" have to be taken into consideration in order to connect students to the religious education curriculum. This does not exclude a filter for values, a personalization, inclusively in relation to the curricular documents (approved curricula and school manuals etc.). Like any other teacher, they can choose and show casuistry, examples, relevant events for their objectives.

b) Fidelity and correlation with the fundamental principles and axioms that defined the religion they represent. Given the fact that the organization and the Religious education curriculum is defined under a certain religious confession (Christian Orthodox in our case) become an apologist or missionary of our religion, activating, contextualizing and emphasising the appropriate values of belief. Religious education teachers are not just information broadcasters, as they have to become a "believer", who lives and preaches the values he teaches. Just like the physics teacher, for instance, when they teach a certain theory (for example the theory of relativity), pleads and suggests that the theory mentioned is valid, the religious education teacher has to show a visible attachment, through what he says and does, towards the values transmitted.

c) Patience and empathy for students/ increasing and maturing faith. Such a subject involves elements of knowledge (historical, religious, of value, of behaviour) on the one hand, and of attitude, values, belief, on the other hand. If the dimension of knowledge is carried by the content of the subject and subdued to validation through clear didactic practices, the attitude and

¹² See Henri Derroitte, *Donner cours de Religion Catholique, Comprendre le Programme du Secondair*, (Bruxelles: Editions De Boeck et Lumen Vitae, 2009), 143-156.

values depend on the choice of the trainee. The ambition, through this subject, to make rapid changes (eventually through marks) is counterproductive and naïve. Thus, action should be taken as our Saviour Jesus Christ teaches us: *“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me”*. (Rev. 3:20). The “seed” of faith has to be given now, but the “sprouting” and “growth” can come later, as the teacher is a benevolent companion and facilitator on this path.

Conclusions

Surely, the skills reference above mentioned allows multiplications, specifications and reordering with the possible evolution and the actual teaching situations. It cannot be activated all at once, but through a permanent and constant commitment of the religious education teacher, through self-monitorization, strategic adjustment and a will for improvement. These skills must allow measurement, assessment and a recognition of their levels, through certain objective indicators and not to generate perverse effects (chasing certifications, points, credits). Lastly, it is important the impact that these skills have, their effect, whether direct or indirect, immediate or apart, on the ones being educated. After all, the religious education teacher’s skill is a variable that is transmitted and lies permanently in what the student knows, becomes or is at a certain time. The skill’s viability stands not in what the teacher shows that has at a certain point (through certificates, documents, folders), but through the effects that this has, in time and throughout time, on the former students. The teacher – in general as well as the religious education one in particular – works on the long run and even in reference to forever: “the seed” of knowledge etc. can give crops not necessarily in a concrete, quantifiable and immediate way but in a diffused, non-measurable and distant in time manner.

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