Andrea Lehner-Hartmann
University of Vienna
Department of Practical Theology Center for Teacher Education
andrea.lehner-hartmann@univie.ac.at

When nothing seems to be questionable anymore. Tracking the political implications of (religious) "Bildung"[1]

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE: The aim of the paper is to go into some questionable matters pertaining to "Bildung" and especially religious "Bildung," and question their political implications.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODS: Developments in society, especially economical developments have a great influence to the area of "Bildung" as well as to the area of religious "Bildung." Current concepts should be analysed. Reflections in philosophy of education and in religious education help to work out the failure of current developments.

THE PROCESS OF ARGUMENTATION: The paper starts with the question about how the concept of "Bildung" occurs in current discourses. Afterwards alternative models of "Bildung" and religious "Bildung" are discussed. It is then put into questions which intentions and implications prevailing concepts contain, who and what they disregard and how they collaborate towards the reproduction of social injustice and processes of exclusion.

---

[1] The concept "Bildung" as it is used in German does not have an adequate equivalent, and therefore remains untranslated throughout this contribution. According to Jürgen Oelkers "the German term 'Bildung' is not only hard explain, but also nearly untranslatable. 'Bildung' has a more extensive range of meanings than education, implying the cultivation of a profound intellectual culture, and is often rendered in English as 'self-cultivation.' The term originated from the European philosophy of Neo-Platonism in 17th century and referred to what is called the 'inward from' of the soul. Humboldt's concept echoes this tradition even though Humboldt was not a Platonist. But 'Bildung' was the key concept of German humanism and was backed by famous philosophers like Herder and Hegel as well as classical writers like Goethe or Schiller. The German 'Bildungsroman' – novel of Bildung – shows how 'Bildung' should work, i.e. experiencing the world in a free and personal way without formal schooling" (Oelkers, 2011, p. 1). See also footnote 11 below.

RESEARCH RESULTS: Religious "Bildung" as a part of general education is effected by societal developments und has to be aware of that. Presuppositions of Religious Education and Didactics of Religion has to scrutinize themselves if and in what way they do possibly promote injustice and which conclusions for future concepts could be drawn.

CONCLUSIONS, INNOVATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: "Bildung," especially religious "Bildung" are challenged by societal developments, e.g. migration, but should not just adapt to political or oeconomical desires. Rather they should not waive for their normative requirements so that they can question for social injustice in the societal developments as well as in their own concepts.

→ **KEYWORDS: "BILDUNG," INJUSTICE, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, TRANSFORMATION**

When nothing is worth questioning anymore, "Bildung" has reached its end. Questions actually identify themselves as the incentives behind educational processes, because they promote new knowledge. As such, one should then give preference to questions rather than to whatever well-chosen answers there may be. This also applies to dealing with educational concepts, because one should ask whether these concepts promote injustices or help to minimise them. I would like to go into some questionable matters pertaining to "Bildung" and especially religious "Bildung," and question their political implications.

1. Questionable matter: How does "Bildung" feature in society?

Nowadays, the widespread view is literally that one can manage the most important issues of our time with "Bildung:" poverty, violence, social crises, competitiveness and sustainability. The quest for purpose and value has priority in this regard. The idea of the applicability of "Bildung," which in the final instance cannot be conveyed through qualifications and certificates, eclipses the question about the type of "Bildung" that is then promoted here. The question of how to achieve the targeted goals is of paramount importance.[2]

---

[2] Of great importance are the goals, with regard to PISA, to get a better slice in comparison with other Bundesländer, or to obtain a better place in the ranking of universities, or acquire more competitiveness and monetary power.

Developments in society have also influenced the area of religious "Bildung." In the last couple of years, there has been a keen interest in the question of how religious "Bildung" can remain compatible with educational-political developments within the context of schools. Therefore, Religious Education as a scientific discipline has been strongly engaged in positioning itself towards acquiring output-oriented, measurable and verifiable competencies – sometimes even in pre-emptive obedience.[3]

Although the implications of these developments are highly political (with reference to the socio-political educational debate and the more specific discourse on religious "Bildung"), Judith Könemann and Norbert Mette claim that the "ideological-critical and political dimension" of religious "Bildung" has in recent years increasingly disappeared from Religious Education in its thinking about the question of what religious education is and should be (Könemann & Mette, 2013). Their statement is not fully unsubstantiated, as can be seen by Stefan Altmeyer's illuminating empirical corpus-linguistic research, where he states that he could not find the word "justice" in a relevant meaning in scientific articles; he also only sporadically encountered the concept "society" (Altmeyer, 2011). In addition, people love to use "learning" as a synonym for "Bildung" in Religious Education, because of a functional orientation from which, however, an education-theoretical basis for learning is often missing. The question of how one should learn eclipses the question of what one should learn. Therefore – to mention one example – the document on the "kompetenzorientierten Reifeprüfung aus Religion" ("competence-oriented school-leaving examinations for religion") only mentions the concept of "Bildung" once – and that only in a quotation.[4] The concept of learning used in that document is strongly orientated towards performance and solution, and it follows an accumulative building-up of knowledge – which points to having its origins in the area of mathematics. It lacks, however, an educational-theoretical structure and a critical engagement with that structure. The indication that one of the specific features of religious education is "open-endedness, and that, alongside content which can be

---

[3] In addition, because of the decline in primary religious socialisation in families, there was serious engagement with the questions of how one could introduce basic knowledge about faith into religious education and what religious identity formation should look like (Könemann & Mette, 2013). Critical on the focus on output orientation is, e.g., Scharer (2010).

[4] "In welchen gegenwärtigen und zukünftigen Situationen des individuellen und gesellschaftlichen Lebens benötigen SchülerInnen welche Kompetenzen religiöser Bildung?" (BMUKK, 2012, p. 19) – "In what contemporary and future situations of their individual and social lives do students need what types of competencies in religious 'Bildung'?" (Competence-oriented school-leaving examination for religion).

defined and testable, it allows for learning processes which cannot be tested and are ultimately beyond quantification," is probably too weak to achieve (BMUKK, 2012, p. 9). One can therefore concur with Karl-Ernst Nipkow that when a society seeks to define pedagogical concepts such as "learning" and "knowledge" and tries to capture the significance of "Bildung" from these concepts, the role of educational institutions and qualifications is, on the one hand, appreciated more but, on the other hand, "Bildung" itself remains underdefined (Nipkow, 2005, p. 9). This is not without effect on religious "Bildung;" on the contrary: its mere significance is/will be challenged, as can be seen in the debates on having schools without religious instruction (Goebel, 2015). The fact that the unquestioned priority given to the Catholic Church comes into focus in these discussions, may be a valid question. The demand for making entire areas in society (such as schools) free of religion, points to a completely one-dimensional concept of "Bildung." Should an educational institution not rather have the duty to allow for those existential questions that also relate to the significance of religion for individual people, and to empower people towards engaging critically with religion and worldviews, so that they can distinguish between life-impairing and life-enhancing forms of life? How can one understand "Bildung" when one omits religion as an essential existential realm?

2. Questionable matter: What can one understand under "Bildung"?

I adopt a transformative understanding of "Bildung," as can be found in different ways in Rainer Kokemohr (2007), Käte Meyer-Drawe (2001) and Ludwig Pongratz (2010). According to Rainer Kokemohr, one can understand "Bildung" as a process of transformation in which a particular understanding of the world and of the self undergoes extensive changes through new challenges. These challenges form a sort of crisis experience that unsettles the former understanding of the world and the self. Kokemohr believes that one can understand "Bildung" as a process that is challenged by "unknown demands." This assumption rests on the notion that processes of "Bildung" become necessary where subjects cannot integrate experiences into the basic setup of their "constructed autobiographical system" which guides their everyday interpretations (Kokemohr, 2007, p. 14). This involves experiences that they cannot incorporate into their former points of view. The opposite, however, is not true, namely, that each experience that is resistant to subsumption initiates a process of

"Bildung" – as may pertain, for example, to experiences of trauma. When one speaks here of challenges as a type of crisis experience which unsettles previous understanding, one should not only think of crises in terms of negative connotations. Crises equally encompass those experiences of friendship, love or spiritual experiences, of being touched or moved; this can be triggered by music, works of art, etc., and can change one's perception of the world and the self. Whoever has at some stage stood in the Alhambra and could take in the history and beauty of the setting there, and was not only edged through as a tourist, probably has not left the place without being moved.

Kokemohr's key position is that he emphasises the process-like nature of "Bildung" and views the unknown/the Other as an essential category of the processes in "Bildung." Likewise, Ludwig Pongratz also points out that "Bildung" does not only open up via the subject, but the opposite is also true: no "Bildung" without "recognition of the Other" (Meyer-Drawe, 2001), without the willingness to "expose oneself to the strangeness of the world" (Pongratz, 2010, p. 27). "Bildung" is not the self-affirmation or the affirmation of that which has always been trusted, but it mainly originates through encounters with the Other, which calls for the ability of viewing things from a different perspective.

In this understanding of "Bildung," religion itself can be that which is unfamiliar or Other. Consequently, religious "Bildung" does not characterise itself as a special area of "Bildung," but it views itself as a part of "Bildung" in general. This means that general "Bildung" is impossible without religion. To omit religion as a dimension that existentially shapes many people is to amputate an important part of "Bildung:" the quest for God, for the whence and the whither in one's own existence, the search for the meaning of worldviews and one's engagement with these aspects.[5]

A transformative understanding is completely different from one that reduces "Bildung" to a specific canon of knowledge or civil behaviour and lifestyles, or to competencies and qualifications. Marotzki, Nohl & Ortlepp take processes of "Bildung" to be pivotally linked to the creation of certainty and the facilitation of uncertainty (Marotzki, Nohl & Ortlepp, 2005). Especially the idea of facilitating uncertainty is important for enabling orientation in highly complex societies. This means in the first instance

---

[5] In this sense, the question whether religion or ethics should receive priority in schools should not be answered with "either-or" but rather only with "as well as." Ethics as an alternative subject takes away their own dignity because it doesn't get absorbed in a in a secular discourse of transcendental questions or questions about ways of life. One should rather view both these subjects as two essential perspectives which one can distinguish from each other and which engage in reflection on meaning, values, ways of life, worldviews, etc.

that one has to disengage oneself from the notion that one should always immediately convert uncertainties into certainties.[6] Factual knowledge that generates certainty is necessary, but not sufficient to answer all questions, especially not the existentially pressing ones. Uncertainties have to obtain some place in our thought in order to open up our access to ambiguities and to detectable plurality, and not block the process of "Bildung". "Bildung" in the mode of certainty is "Bildung" that is potentially at risk, when it is an expression of theoretical thinking on identity. "Bildung" in the sense of uncertainty is self-fulfilling as an expression of thinking from a theoretical perspective of difference (Marotzki, Nohl & Ortlepp, 2005). An example of a teacher of religion may illustrate this, when she records the following in retrospect of her studies:

> I very often experienced this during my studies in theology: It always started so grippingly with a question, and then there were so many answers, and the answers were often much more conceited in comparison to the questions (Lehner-Hartmann, 2014, p. 231, Fig. C6; as cited in: "Religiöses Lernen", lines 388-391).

3. Questionable matter: How can one conceive of religious "Bildung"?

Norbert Mette also identifies the contribution of religious "Bildung" as being "life-long and transformative" (Mette, 2002, p. 34). Life-long in the first instance, because in the context of individualisation the biography has obtained important significance for individuals and it constitutes a place where human beings can experience themselves as unique and distinct; therefore, the search for meaning comes up all the time. To Rudolf Englert the biography even represents the emergency of "Bildung" (Englert, 2007). Whereas all possible forms of learning have to prove themselves functionally, "Bildung" has to prove itself in life as a whole. Especially in view of experiences of failure,[7] religious "Bildung" has the task of embedding

---

[6] These considerations remind us of Socratic thinking on the relationship between knowledge and ignorance. Ignorance should be converted into knowledge, whereby this knowledge also includes not-knowing – in the sense of knowing what one does not know. Here, also, the tension remains especially between knowledge that one can transform into conscious knowledge and knowledge that displays consciousness about that which one does not know. One should not view not-knowing as identical to ignorance, but the point is that ignorance in the form of mere opinions is transformed into not-knowing (Sander, 2009).

[7] Cf. also Henning Luther for the "distress" and "desire" to which the forgotten parts in the process of "Bildung" refer (Luther, 1992, p. 255).

individual experiences into a larger context that presents experiences from other personal histories, be they biblical stories, other literary and biographical traditions or contemporary encounters and the possible experiences of God within them.[8] This historical-social positioning of the individual biography may encourage people to take the next step into the unknown. Apart from this life-long aspect, one can conceptualise religious "Bildung" as transformative to the extent that it does not involve a "learning process in the sense of increasing accumulation of knowledge and improvement of skills." Rather, it is prompted by "existential experiences which cannot be dealt with within the framework of previously acquired orientations and behaviours, but rather by breaking them down and necessitating a new level of dealing with reality and the own self-conception (in biblical terms: conversion)" (Mette, 2002, p. 34f.).

Whoever already knows who they are as Christians, and what one should think of God, and whoever approaches learners with the inclination to power of control over reasoning and thinking about God, blocks religious "Bildung." One cannot reduce religious "Bildung" to knowledge; instead, it supports activities of searching. Dietrich Zilleßen consequently detects a great temptation in Religious Education, which is the desire to spare the learners an encounter with that which is resistant and to offer them a lighter, understandable gateway to reality. He objects to this:

> Whoever is being led in Religious Education by interests in unambiguity and that which is simple, clear and precise, and avoids everything that is complex, ambivalent and contradictory, or tries to eliminate these as disturbances, has to immunise themselves against the world (Zilleßen, 2003, p. 77).[9]

Instead, the task of religious "Bildung" also consists in critically raising objections wherever totalitarian claims are made, i.e., when uncertainty is regarded as a weakness, as indecisiveness or as jeopardising faith and experienced as threatening identity.[10] Religious "Bildung" does

---

[8] One can find similar considerations in Feige, Dressler & Tzscheetzsch, when they claim two things that are unavoidable in modern process of "Bildung:" teaching that only concerns cognitively obtainable "content" of religion and values based on religion is not sufficient. Religious "Bildung" also has to involve the dimensions of a lived religious practice (Feige, Dressler & Tzscheetzsch, 2006). For them, this implies that "lived religion" has to be reconstructed in the biographical relationships in the study courses of teachers of religion. This is in contradistinction to "learned religion" as the concept of teaching reported by the teachers (Feige, Dressler & Tzscheetzsch, 2006).

[9] Cf. more extensively on this also Lehner-Hartmann (2013).

[10] Viewed historically, this has always led to dissociation and exclusion of those with other opinions and different religions. One cannot reconcile certainty of faith with doubt.

not deny and dispose of uncertainty, but consciously targets it and practises to deal with it. This practising does not strive to lose the certainty of faith, but tests it on the one hand, and on the other hand promotes the search for "more" (Werbick, 2011, p. 272f). Transformative religious "Bildung" therefore does not strive to reduce complexity (Luhmann, 1996), but to approach complexity and deal with complexity; this is only successful when one enables uncertainties.

In this regard, Norbert Mettes' concept of religious "Bildung" does not remain limited to the individual. Alongside this lifelong-transformative notion, Mette locates the "critical-solidary" task of religious "Bildung" on the level of society. This consists in getting involved in a "struggle for understanding God" in view of countless false gods, and finding one's way into a practice of mutual recognition and joint agreement in the search for the truly divine, because one recognises brothers and sisters in the Other, and not opponents. Taking the side of victims receives special attention in this regard. He furthermore describes the contribution of religious education and "Bildung" in the area of religion and church as "ecumenical-conciliatory," so that churches and parishes become "learning communities" which undergo a continuous process of renewal through the message of the gospel (Mette, 2002, p. 35).

In my opinion, a critical-solidary task essentially entails that religious "Bildung" – precisely because it also forms part of general "Bildung" – should get involved in the debates and the struggle for understanding "Bildung" and the conditions for "Bildung."

4. Questionable matter: Which false gods do prevailing concepts of "Bildung" serve, and who and what do they therefore disregard?

Firstly, we encounter a concept of learning and "Bildung" which, oriented towards economical viewpoints, regards "Bildung" as an increase in knowledge in order to remain competitive in a globalised world. The focus

---

"Bildung" seems to oppose religious conviction, because it always also asks about alternatives. According to Werbick, this could lead to scepticism about "Bildung." Frequently, the flipside of scepticism about "Bildung" is fundamentalist enforcement of assuredness – or the apotheosis of the decisive instance that takes away uncertainty (Werbick, 2011). He answers the question of how certainty of faith can tolerate the relativisation of all certainties in the processes of "Bildung" with a counter question: But could it not be a symptom of (religious) "Bildung" that it searches for "more" certainty of faith, wherever this may be possible, so that one can deal better with the unavoidable uncertainties (Werbick, 2011)?

on competition-oriented performance places less emphasis on coopera-tion and rather promotes working against one another, and wanting to be, or having to be, better than others. Rudolf Englert warns that one should not underestimate these conditions: as long as "outsiders" can often only survive under targeted competitive pressure, and when weak persons are "kicked away," one should not speak carelessly and naively about "Bildung" for solidarity and human dignity in schools (Englert, 2007, p. 169f.). Competition-oriented performance is already well-established in the structure of our schools and tertiary institutions. By way of contrast, one should maintain that "Bildung" should have more in mind. In line with Karl-Ernst Nipkow, one can point to the fact that there are "situations in life which are of a completely different nature (failure, guilt, suffering, dis-ability, but also leisure, art appreciation, play) in which a performance-oriented and success-oriented model of life is anthropologically inappro-priate" (Nipkow, 2005, p. 134).[11]

However, also within an idealistic concept of "Bildung" which proceeds from a liberating capability of self-determination by the subject, there is often a lack of reflection about the conditions for materialising free-dom in view of actual obstacles (Biehl, 1991). Gerd Brenner shows that "especially adolescent subjects are exposed to strategies of absorption of competing societal subsystems which do not have much to do with 'Bildung', and much less with emancipatory 'Bildung' which liberates and develops the subject" (Brenner, 2005, p. 232).[12] Instead, we have to do here with the "depriving power of relationships," the "depriving nature of approaches to life," because

> not only that which is written into the curriculum is formative, but that which surrounds the individual is also formative, or perhaps not formative but perhaps even more influential: things that one can make oneself over aga-inst electronic toys without any stimulation; buildings with character over against hostile functional buildings; consciously created living spaces over against chaotically littered housing complexes (Englert, 2010, p. 129).

These things also significantly shape the values, ways of interaction and survival techniques that learners bring with them.

---

[11] "Bildung" should empower people to take responsibility for their actions, to organise their lives and relationships in an autonomous way, to be able to recognise conditions that threat these aspects and to reflect on questions about meaning, faith, worldviews and values.

[12] Cf. for this also extensively Pongratz (2005, especially pp. 30-36). An area that is wort-hwhile pursuing is what Brenner calls "creativation" (Kreativierung) (Brenner, 2005, p. 235ff.).

A serious obstacle for "Bildung" which is particularly noticeable in the Austrian school system (Bruneforth & Lassnigg, 2012, pp. 124-127, here: p. 124; OECD, 2015, p. 97, Fig. A4.1) is the highly selective approach that already starts early on – long before children enter school – and primarily operates via attributions (migration background, social disadvantage, developmental delay, gender) and then continues in the school with regard to the judgement of the achievements (marks) and behaviour. Children and adolescents are "marginalised" because they do not receive the necessary support and fostering. Here, also the confessional private schools have to ask themselves to what extent they collaborate towards the reproduction of social injustice – even when they try to bring about humanitarianism within the system.[13] Selection as a structural feature in a system shows its permanent impact through the fact that one does not even realise, or one takes it for unquestionably normal, that only learners from a specific social group attend the school. Therefore, schools who can select their learners also do not ask the question of what happens to those marginalised children. The possibility for selection prevents the schools – especially the "gymnasium" and different upper secondary schools – from reflecting on their educational task.

This empirical fact, namely, that higher education is primarily only accessible to a specific social group in which it appears to be quite natural, is in line with the social denial to acknowledge that socially disadvantaged groups also have "Bildung." Without doubt, marginalised groups often only have very limited possibilities to access and participate in economic, cultural and social capital. According to Bourdieu, however, one cannot draw the conclusion that

> the lower groups do not have anything. They do have something and they are something; they have their tastes and their preferences. These are only not often expressed; and when they are expressed, they are immediately objectively depreciated. One can immediately detect this on the educational market. As soon as the representatives of the lower classes offer their language there, they receive bad marks; they do not have the correct pronunciation, the correct syntax, etc. Therefore, there is a popular culture in the ethnological sense, but as "Bildung" this culture is worthless (Zimmermann, 1997, p. 212).

---

[13] At present, one can see this in the reaction of parents who, in view of the integration of a few refugees' children in Catholic private schools, react completely unsympathetically and unambiguously articulate that they particularly send their children to these private schools so that they will not have contact with aliens.

With this, the question arises of who may claim the label "educated" and to whom is this label denied. A transformative notion does not allow for the drawing of borders along the lines of affiliation, but rather in accordance with the willingness to allow for questions about oneself and one's worldview.

Another, often neglected, topic in our educational institutions is the attention to cultural and religious differences. This is primarily noticeable in the area of elementary education, where religion with reference to a neutral worldview should not be an issue. Often, however, it comes in again without thinking, as it were through the backdoor, with topics like "cultural customs," such as the use of an Advent wreath, ceremonial events during Christmas, i.e., about customs relating to Christianity. The problem with that is that it excludes others with other traditions. Because religion is officially not available, the learners cannot access the implied experiences. Not experiencing religion does not lead to dealing with it in a neutral way, but it rather leads to disregarding conflicts and opportunities for "Bildung." Here, one should not offer religion through confessional reasoning, but rather with educational-theoretical arguments, because pedagogical action that feels an obligation towards the particular subjects, namely the learners, can and should not exclude existential dimensions that are essential to the learners.

One can sum up the preceding deliberations by drawing on Rudolf Englert's two crucial questions that refer to the political implications of "Bildung" and therefore also of religious "Bildung:" "On the one hand, one should enquire into the formative power of the lived life. (...) On the other hand, one should specifically enquire into the 'Bildung' of those who struggle to develop themselves towards the information society" (Englert, 2007, p. 169).[14] On the one hand, so that people are not forced into the role of a spectator and forget how to take their lives into their own hands, and on the other hand, to recognise their "Bildung," which can be completely different regarding habits and content. According to Englert, the contribution of a religious "Bildung" by Christians could consist in emphasising the idea of equal dignity and different vocations that people have. Dignity is not a variable of social success; the value of a vocation does not depend on the availability of skills (Englert, 2007, p. 170). By emphasising vocation and dignity (which, after all, is derived from the fact that we are all created in the image of God and which does not depend on someone's accomplishments), people can be encouraged to take up their places in society, discover and deploy

---

[14] Within the context of schools, this does not only refer to objective stipulations such as curricula etc., but essentially to the hidden agendas brought along by learners from their environments, with the rules and demands governing these.

their talents and be supported in this, and take their ways of life into their own hands. In this regard, the ideological-critical point of view is not only located in the individual teachers, but in Religious Education and theology as a whole.

5. Questionable matter: Which presuppositions do concepts of Religious Education and the Didactics of Religion have, and in what way do they possibly promote injustices?

Firstly, one should express the statement that the discipline of Religious Education brings along certain blindness to the environment. Located in the civil sector of "Bildung," its enquiry remains strongly oriented towards the addressees of general school education, as it manifests itself especially in the grammar school setup. In the past years, Religious Education has given rather scant attention to reflection on elementary pedagogy, on inclusive teaching in religion and on conditions for and possibilities of so-called educationally alienated environments. Only recently, a certain measure of attention to inclusion has added new impulses into didactic conceptions.[15]

To learn to see things from the perspective of disadvantaged parties, as was called for by Mette, is not only something that should lead actions in religious teaching and in which it should give guidance, but it is also something that the discipline of Religious Education should practise itself. This would mean in concrete terms, for example, to establish whether the notions in the didactics of religion – in their elation about the active, autonomously "mature" subject, and in their performative-aesthetically oriented approaches ranging from children's theology to constructivist approaches – do not perhaps follow the ideal of a subject that one cannot apply to all children, adolescents and adults. Because people are not only the *producers* of their individual mindscapes, but also products of the living environments (Englert, 2010) that are presented to them, an idealistic notion of a subject who is unaware of this Janus-faced nature (Brenner, 2005) once again will only motivate competent people and leave behind the "passive," "voiceless" and "dispirited;" once again confirmed

---

[15] As examples: Habringer-Hagleitner, 2006; Möller & Pithan, 2014; Kammmeyer, Zonne & Pithan, 2014; Schambeck & Pemsel-Maier, 2014; Könemann & Mette, 2013; Altmeyer & Grümme, 2014.

in their experience of not being good enough, not belonging, not being understood and finally only getting the role of spectators in this world.

One should address a further enquiry to the fact that in the teaching of religion crucial work often takes place by using examples. In this regard, many teachers of religion claim that they themselves want to act as a model for their learners. Because the teacher-learner relationship is hierarchical in nature, the example of the teacher has a great normative influence, even though the influence of the peers may be greater and there may be a strong tendency in different phases of life to dissociate from adults as models. One can also question the incorporation of examples into the content, be it in the form of saints or "local heroes," as Hans Mendl (2015, pp. 93-126) tries to do, as to their normative impact. Which areas of life and social groups do they represent and what kind of messages hide in their exemplary deeds? One danger that presents itself is that not only may the examples that are given be unsuccessful, but also that orientation towards idealised, mostly conventionalised heroes may bring about or reinforce asymmetric messages that may block access to the liberating message. Imitating examples could prevent learners from discovering their own uniqueness, the fact that God has addressed them and singled them out, in order to have their own humanisation fulfilled. According to Ammicht Quinn, one could possibly link the following features to a destructive mode of operation: religious masochism, normatively fixed gender roles and totalitarianism in the examples. The ambivalence of images, as expressed by the biblical prohibition of images, also applies to examples and, according to Ammicht Quinn, one should submit them to a critique of power, because no worldly ruler may rule in the name of God or as a god. One should always examine examples critically. This is not the task of the children who "let themselves be carried away by a *hero*;" (religious) education has the task to "gradually build up such a critical tool in children." According to the interpretation of the prohibition of images as critique of power, one should critically examine examples mainly in one regard, namely, "the extent to which they are embedded into discourses of power" (Ammicht Quinn, 2008, p. 71). An example should therefore not be presented as a final product that disregards the individuality of the learners, but rather as one that creates space for the Other: enabling humanisation.

These examples refer to the fact that the discipline of Religious Education should ultimately also submit their normative implications to a critique of power, through the new challenges presenting themselves in migration movements. Because, within Religious Education,

it looks as though justice in "Bildung" has not, at least not explicitly, found its way into individual normative orientations and options. The radical changes in educational politics in the past five years, however, necessitate that one will incorporate the question of social justice in educational processes, especially pertaining to access to education and closely linked to this questions about social relationships, as a genuine topic in Religious Education. Not only in the deliberations about didactic communication processes, but especially also in the self-assurance inherent in the discipline (Könemann, 2013, p. 39).

These outlines should have made it clear that, for the knowledge of the reality of God, Religious Education definitely can and should ground itself in giving attention to those ways of understanding and those processes when they work towards the possibility of "Bildung" for children, adolescents and adults. For the teaching of religion, one can therefore demand with Dietrich Zilleßen that it should be more specifically a place where one can practise to interrupt discourses in an ideological-critical way. The right to interrupt, the right to query the experiences of others, to "ask *critical questions* in order to unsettle those who govern the economic, political and social processes" (Zilleßen, 1995, p. 331), may only be taken into the hands of those who do not have ready-made answers – therefore, those who have not made questionable matters disappear.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Altmeyer, S. (2011). "Deine Sprache verrät dich". Schlüsselbegriffe der Religionspädagogik im Spiegel ihrer Wissenschaftssprache. *Religionspädagogische Beiträge*, *66*, 31-46.

Altmeyer, S., & Grümme, B. (2014). Gerechtigkeit durch religiöse Bildung. Drei Frage- und ein vorsichtiges Rufzeichen. *Theologisch-praktische Quartalschrift*, *162*, 314-324.

Ammicht Quinn, R. (2008). Risiken und Nebenwirkungen: Wann sind Vorbilder "gut"? Anthropologische und theologische Überlegungen. In C. Bizer, R. Englert, H. Kohler-Spiegel, N. Mette, F. Rickers, & F. Schweitzer (Eds.), *Sehnsucht nach Orientierung. Vorbilder im Religionsunterricht. Jahrbuch der Religionspädagogik, Bd. 24*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 65-75.

Biehl, P. (1991). *Erfahrung, Glaube und Bildung. Studien zu einer erfahrungsbezogenen Religionspädagogik*. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag.

Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur (BMUKK). (Ed.). (2012). *Die kompetenzorientierte Reifeprüfung aus Religion. Grundlagen, exemplarische Themenbereiche und Aufgabenstellungen.* Retrived from https://www.bmbf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/ba/reifepruefung_ahs_lfrel_22989.pdf?4k21fu (access: 18.12.2015).

Brenner, G. (2005). Bildung und Lernen. Anmerkungen zur Ambivalenz der Subjektorientierung. In B. Hafenegger (Ed.), *Subjektdiagnosen. Subjekt, Modernisierung und Bildung*. Schwalbach: Wochenschau-Verlag, 223-249.

Bruneforth, M., & Lassnigg, L. (Eds.). (2012). *Nationaler Bildungsbericht Österreich 2012, Band 1. Das Schulsystem im Spiegel von Daten und Indikatoren*. Graz: Leykam.

Englert, R. (2007). *Religionspädagogische Grundfragen. Anstöße zur Urteilsbildung*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

Englert, R. (2010). Vorsicht Schlagseite! Was im Bildungsdiskurs der Religionspädagogik gegenwärtig zu kurz kommt. *Theologisch-Praktische Quartalschrift*, *158*(2), 123-131.

Feige, A., Dressler, B., & Tzscheetzsch, W. (2006). Berufsbiografische Selbstbeschreibung katholischer und evangelischer ReligionslehrerInnen in religionssoziologischer und –pädagogischer Hermeneutik. Eine kurze methodische Grundlegung. In A. Feige, B. Dressler, & W. Tzscheetzsch (Eds.), *Religionslehrerin oder Religionslehrer werden. Zwölf Analysen berufsbiografischer Selbstwahrnehmungen*. Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 11-24.

Goebel, T. (2015, January 27). *Warum die Schule endlich ein religionsfreier Raum werden muss*. *Profilonline.* Retrived from: http://blog.profil.at/index.php/tinagoebel/warum-die-schule-endlich-ein-religionsfreier-raum-werden-muss (access: 18.12.2015).

Habringer-Hagleitner, S. (2006). *Zusammenleben im Kindergarten. Modelle religionspädagogischer Praxis*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

Kammeyer, K., Zonne, E., & Pithan, A. (Eds.). (2014). *Inklusion und Kindertheologie (Inklusion – Religion – Bildung. 1)*. Münster: Comenius-Institut.

Kokemohr, R. (2007). Bildung als Welt- und Selbstentwurf im Anspruch des Fremden. Eine theoretische-empirische Annäherung an eine Bildungsprozesstheorie. In H.-C. Koller, W. Marotzki, O. Sanders (Eds.), *Bildungsprozesse und Fremdheitserfahrung. Beiträge zu einer Theorie transformatorischer Bildungsprozesse*. Bielefeld: Transcript-Verlag, 13-68.

Könemann, J. (2013). Bildungsgerechtigkeit (k)ein Thema religiöser Bildung? Normative Orientierungen in der Religionspädagogik. In J. Könemann, & N. Mette (Eds.), *Bildung und Gerechtigkeit. Warum religiöse Bildung politisch sein muss*. Ostfildern: Grünewald, 37-52.

Könemann, J., & Mette, N. (2013). Bildung und Gerechtigkeit. Warum religiöse Bildung politisch sein muss. In J. Könemann, & N. Mette (Eds.), *Bildung und Gerechtigkeit. Warum religiöse Bildung politisch sein muss*. Ostfildern: Grünewald, 11-18.

Lehner-Hartmann, A. (2013). Dem Widerständigen Raum geben. (Religiöses) Lernen jenseits gesellschaftlicher Einpassung. In T. Krobath, A. Lehner-Hartmann, & R. Polak (Eds.), *Anerkennung in religiösen Bildungsprozessen. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven. Wiener Forum für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft, Bd. 8*. Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 165-176.

Lehner-Hartmann, A. (2014). *Religiöses Lernen. Subjektive Theorien von ReligionslehrerInnen*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

Luhmann, N. (4th ed.) (1996). *Funktion der Religion*. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

Luther, H. (1992). *Religion und Alltag: Bausteine zu einer praktischen Theologie des Subjekts (Identität und Fragment)*. Stuttgart: Radius-Verlag.

Marotzki, W., Nohl, A.-M., & Ortlepp, W. (2005). *Einführung in die Erziehungs-wissenschaft*. Wiesbaden: VS.

Mendl, H. (2015). *Modelle – Vorbilder – Leitfiguren. Lernen an außergewöhnlichen Biografien*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

Mette, N. (2002). Religiöse Bildung zwischen Subjekten und Strukturen. In G. Bitter, R. Englert, G. Miller, & K.E. Nipkow (Eds.), *Neues Handbuch religionspädagogischer Grundbegriffe 4*. München: Kösel, 31-35.

Möller, R., & Pithan, A. (2014). *Inklusive Religionslehrer_innenbildung : Module und Bausteine (Inklusion – Religion – Bildung. Bd 2)*. Münster: Comenius-Institut.

Nipkow, K.E. (2005). *Bildungsverständnis im Umbruch. Religionspädagogik im Lebenslauf. Elementarisierung. Pädagogik und Religionspädagogik zum neuen Jahrhundert, Bd. 1.* Gütersloh: Gütersloher-Verlag.

Oelkers, J. (2011). *The German Concept of* 'Bildung' *then and now*. Retrieved from http://www.ife.uzh.ch/research/emeriti/oelkersjuergen/vortraegeprofoelkers/englishlectures/LectureBerlindefdef.pdf abgerufen (access: 26.01.2016).

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (Ed.). (2015). *Bildung auf einen Blick. OECD-Indikatoren*. Retrieved from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/9615035e.pdf?expires=1450440478&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=BEA9D93E44561333E734DC6D8AFC8B12 (access: 18.12.2015).

Pongratz, L.A. (2010). *Sackgassen der Bildung. Pädagogik anders denken*. Paderborn.

Religiöses Lernen – Addendum Transcripts. Retrived from http://pt-ktf.univie.ac.at/uploads/media/Religi%C3%B6ses_LernenAnhangTranskripte_01.pdf (access: 18.12.2015).

Sander, W. (2009). Bildung und Perspektivität. Kontroversität und Indoktrinationsverbot als Grundsätze von Bildung und Wissenschaft. *Erwägen Wissen Ethik*, *20* (2), 239-248.

Schambeck, M., & Pemsel-Maier, S. (2014). *Inklusion!?: religionspädagogische Einwürfe*. Freiburg im Br.: Herder.

Scharer, M. (2010). Wenn das Herz am Output hängt. Kommunikativ-theologische und religionsdidaktische Überlegungen zu Bildungsstandards und Kompetenzorientierung in Religion. *Österreichisches Religionspädagogisches Forum*, *18*, 16-26.

Werbick, J. (2011). Religion und theologische Bildung: eine spannungsreiche Konstellation. Glaube braucht Bildung! Wirklich? In G. Bitter, & M. Blasberg-Kuhnke (Eds.), *Religion und Bildung in Kirche und Gesellschaft*. Würzburg: Echter, 266-274.

Zilleßen, D. (1995). Bildung und Didaktik im Religionsunterricht. *Katechetische Blätter*, *120*(5), 330-336.

Zilleßen, D. (2003). Raumbeschreitungen. Wie Didaktik der Religion bei Sinnen ist. In T. Klie, & S. Leonhard (Eds.), *Schauplatz Religion. Grundzüge einer Performativen Religionspädagogik*. Leipzig: Evang. Verl.-Anst, 67-91.

Zimmermann, H.D. (1997). Die feinen Unterschiede, oder: Die Abhängigkeit aller Lebensäußerungen vom sozialen Status. Ein Gespräch mit dem französischen Soziologen Pierre Bourdieu. In F. Baumgart (Ed.), *Theorien der Sozialisation: Erläuterungen – Texte – Arbeitsaufgaben*. Bad Heilbronn: Klinkhardt, 206-215.