

# Confessional Religious Education or Ecumenical Religious Education?

Case Study of the Orthodox Confessional School from Cluj-Napoca

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*The present research undertakes matters concerning the religious education in Romania, by attempting to assess the contribution of such kind of education to the contemporary Romanian society. In addition, this research will define confessional religious education, as well as ecumenical religious education, thus justifying the option for a confessional religious education. The paper analyses not only the status of the religious education in Romania, as presented in a few educational laws, but also the concrete effects of the legislation, as captured in the history of the confessional orthodox school of Cluj-Napoca, presented as a case study. In the actual Romanian context, we opt for a confessional religious education, relying both on the theological principles that legitimate the participation of the Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement, and on the local particularities of the Romanian and Transylvanian orthodoxy in a multiethnic and multi-confessional space.*

**Keywords:** *confessional education, ecumenical education, Romanian Law of National Education, ecclesiology, religiosity, orthodox confessional school in Cluj-Napoca*

Confessional religious education in Romania after the fall of communism has faced constant transformations from the traditional Orthodox seminaries to religious education in public schools and theological higher education. All these forms of instruction are marked by a certain tension between the Church's need to prepare theologians for its own clerical organizations, on one hand, and the more general purpose of raising awareness for the social role played by the Church in society, by educating young people from various domains, other than those related to the ecclesiastical space. We think that a thorough examination of the contribution religious education can bring to the contemporary Romanian society is very much needed, together with the identification of the most appropriate form it should take: a confessional religious education or an ecumenical one.

“Non-confessional” or “ecumenical religious education” aims at forming young people's moral character, through a religious education that is

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