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## **The Dialogue between Religious Educational Tradition and Scientific Pedagogy of Morality: Cognitive Schemas in the Logic of Similarities and Differences**

*Dialog med religioznim vzgojnim izročilom in znanstveno pedagogiko morale: kognitivni vzorci v okviru logike podobnosti in razlik*

*Abstract:* The purpose of this article is to search for correlations that would be meaningfully verified and logically justified, such as pedagogical description of an individual's social behavior, which would be focused on a priori personal recognition of the religious form as the standard of building individual moral intentions and their social embodiment, and social behavior, emphasizing the conscious derivation of moral principles from non-religious human values and secular ethics. The authors substantiate the essential difference between religious and traditional scientific interpretation of the basic principles of moral behavior related to the degree and methods of individual's comprehension of the moral 'proto-form'. It is substantiated that the religious form of moral behavior is characterized by a significant degree of inclusion of apriorism, which frees the individual from the need to independently seek the basic moral principles, confining him/herself to *a priori* faith in 'religious maxims'. It is shown that the traditional scholarly intentional-and-semantic representation of morality presupposes 1) the 'withdrawal' of moral positions from religious content by means of empirical, conceptual-and-theoretical and contextual 'tools' and the resulting 2) independent construction by the individual of a moral improvement roadmap, which would enable non-religious multi-aspect reflection. This conclusion is supplemented by the identification of the correlation of religious and scholarly pedagogical interpretation of the concept of 'tolerance'.

*Key words:* moral reflection, scientific pedagogy, religious tradition of worldview, authoritarian conscience, tolerance, logic of similarities and differences

*Povzetek:* Cilj tega članka je poiskati utemeljeno preverjene in logično upravičene korelacije (kakor denimo pedagoški opis posameznikovega obnašanja v družbi), ki so osredotočene na apriorno osebno prepoznavanje religijskih oblik kot merila za vzpostavljanje posameznikovih moralnih namenov in njihovega družbenega uveljavljanja ter na obnašanje v družbi ob poudarjanju zavestnega izpeljevanja moralnih načel iz nereligioznih človeških vrednot in sekularne etike. Avtorji jedrnato prikazujejo bistveno razliko med religiozno in tradicionalno znanstveno interpretacijo temeljnih načel moralnega ravnanja v razmerju do stopenj in metod posameznikovega razumevanja moralne ‚praoblike‘. Ključna ugotovitev je, da je religiozna oblika moralnega ravnanja zaznamovana z očitno mero vključevanja vnaprejšnjih prepričanj, ki posameznika osvobajajo potrebe po samostojnem iskanju temeljnih moralnih načel in ga potrjujejo v vnaprejšnji veri v ‚religiozne maksime‘. Članek prikazuje, da tradicionalna znanstvena (intencionalna in semantična) predstava o morali predpostavlja: 1. ‚umik‘ moralnih stališč iz religioznih vsebin s pomočjo empiričnih, konceptualno-teoretičnih in kontekstualnih ‚orodij‘; 2. posledično posameznikovo oblikovanje načrta za moralno izboljšanje, ki omogoča nereligiozno in večplastno refleksijo. Omenjeni zaključek je dopolnjen s prepoznavanjem korelacije med religiozno in znanstveno pedagoško interpretacijo koncepta ‚strpnosti‘.

*Ključne besede:* moralna refleksija, znanstvena pedagogika, religiozno svetovnonazorsko izročilo, avtoritarna zavest, strpnost, logika podobnosti in razlik

## 1. Introduction

Just like in our recent memory, today religion claims the right to exert full-fledged pedagogical influence on the emerging society, somehow entering into competitive interaction with scientific secular pedagogy. Under such circumstances, the mentioned religious challenge in respect to the right of pedagogical influence on society should receive a verified correct response of the scientific and pedagogical community. This, at least, requires a deep understanding and reflection on the degree to which the cognitive forms and schemes attributing religious worldview are compatible with traditional scientific and pedagogical perception of the problems ‚prescribed‘ to pedagogical resolution by the social order and humanitarian scholarly community.

Attempts to build the content of pedagogy and methods of its research around the religious worldview have a solid historical background. Western philosophy teachers, propagandizing the ideas of pedagogy and its methodology in a religious format, formed two groups: monoconfessionals advocating the use of the views of one particular denomination in pedagogical and methodological knowledge, and polyconfessionals standing outside a certain religious ideology. The first group is associated with the neotomists, including such French philosophers as A. E. Burt (1939), F. Brunetière (1916), and J. Maritain (1999), the American theologians R. M. Hutchins (1956) and A. Mortimer (2015), as well as the German phi-

osopher F. W. Foerster (2010). The second group can be personified by the names of A. N. Whitehead (1990) (UK), R. Steiner (2005) and M. Buber (1995) (Austria) and several others. The neotomists compared the educational process with the road predetermined by God, along which the student moves to perfection, facilitated by the teacher, and the options of the interpretation of faith aligned it with the pedagogical teaching. The duality of the pupil's personality (God- and Devil-inspired) noted by F.W. Foerster (2010) can be overcome by the imposed requirements of discipline and obedience; the idea of Christian philanthropy, introduced into the consciousness of the pupil by the mentor, belongs to J. Maritain (1999). The idea of a person 'meeting' the surrounding divine world, initially detached from him/her, which is supposed to gradually become significant and interesting for the fostered personality, was developed by M. Buber (1995). The anti-confessional mystical-and-anthropological theory of R. Steiner (2005), the closest one to pedagogy in the above list, stated that the school should focus on a deep understanding of the pupil's personality along with the search for ways to form a humane emotionally and aesthetically developed personality (Steiner 2005).

The modern stage of pedagogy development is characterized by the return of Christian teachings to its scientific landscape, claiming to regain as many supporters as possible, and this poses the task of a deep understanding of the links between scientific and religious worldview, especially in the perspective of approaches to moral education. Therefore, possible reflexive content in this regard may include understanding of the overlap of the regulatory, in the field of morality, function of religion and the similar function of scientific pedagogy. Primarily, it refers to the development of a system of norms and values that determine religious behavior and govern other forms of human life, such as culture, marriage, family, daily routine, etc. The latter directly falls within the scope of the functions of scientific pedagogy, which fulfills social order in the field of education and the content of the individual's personal development. This is the first substantiating conclusion regarding the relevance of the topic of this article.

## 2. Literature review

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The relevance of the topic is also proved by the polemics between science and religion in the social and humanitarian knowledge domains, which is indicated in the works of P. A. Alexander (2017), B. J. Barczyński and R. M. Kalina (2015), B. Magolda (2004), and W. Brezinka (2012). In this regard, the essence of the problem is limited to the authors' statement, on the one hand, of the need for methodological and meaningful separation of religious and scientific description of educational reality, and, on the other hand, the feasibility of searching ways of productive synthesis of religious and pedagogical ideas in the area of moral education and behavior. Revealing the duality mentioned, we consider it necessary to note that in recent decades some works have appeared in the field of pedagogical knowledge that demonstrate the possibility and feasibility of 'scientific and

religious synthesis', revealing a positively valuable educational role of religion both in the historical past and at the current stage (Bauer 1988; Koskinen 2018; Shepperd 2016; Nuno 2014; Ceccarell 2012; Gregory 2016). The reasons given by their authors cannot be ignored by scientific pedagogy and its methodology.

This situation is complicated by the fact that despite the progress in the development of logical and epistemological structure of modern humanitarian knowledge, pedagogy still often fails to present its findings in an evidence-based format, resorting only to descriptive declarations, and therefore it looks like a set of sermons one must blindly believe in. It involuntarily provokes a wrong, in our opinion, point of view that the pedagogical and religious knowledge are identical. These circumstances, on top of what is justified above, make us consider the topic stated in the title relevant.

Today, some foreign researches contain a wide range of opinions that the pedagogical knowledge pertains to the field of Arts and Humanities ('high art', including, in particular, ways of representation following the pattern of the religious doctrine) and that it cannot be presented in the scientific and theoretical form. Such conclusions are presented in detail in the works of domestic and foreign philosophy, methodology of science, and pedagogical science researchers (Anderson 1961; Bauer 1988; Brezinka 2012; Billig and Waterman 2014; Shirish 2013). However, the analysis of other academic sources has confirmed our conclusion that even within the social studies and humanities the 'weak epistemological version' should be presented in a theoretical form, which is practically incompatible with religious tradition (Coney 2014; Gardiner 2015; Hanan 2016; Wettersten 1987). Even today a number of logical and epistemological components identified by science studies that sharply contrast with the theistic discourse are manifested in one way or another in the pedagogical knowledge and the process of its production (Wettersten 1987, Lundie 2015, Leś 2017, Mallaband et al. 2017). The need to seek a way to present pedagogy and educology in a theoretical format, focused on the basics of logic and epistemology, is clearly indicated in the books and articles by A. A. Kornienko (2015), B. J. Barczyński and R. M. Kalina (2015), B. Mallaband et al. (2017). The necessity of projecting the logical-and-epistemological field of pedagogical research onto the context of philosophy and psychology of understanding is highlighted by the authors (Wettersten 1987, Kornienko 2015, Foucault 2007) – this also contradicts the approaches and methods of religious-and-pedagogical perspective, especially in terms of interpreting the phenomenon of understanding, although even in scientific pedagogy, this phenomenon hardly fits into the correct methodological framework.

Despite the very broadly presented content of the works on the methodological aspect of pedagogy and educology, many topics are presented and covered polyphonically, and the problem of understanding the theoretical (and in particular, logical-and-epistemological) horizons of pedagogical knowledge and search remains unresolved – this is confirmed by the findings in the works dedicated to methodological-and-pedagogical reflection: B. Magolda (2004), G. Gardiner 2015, D. Lundie (2015), and D. Pritchard (2013), whose studies are connected with the

idea that in the modern environment critical discourse continues to be relevant in the discussion around building a generalized pedagogical knowledge, claiming to fit into the scientific-and-theoretical humanitarian norm.

The whole range of covered publications enables us to conclude that the problem of connection between religious tradition of education and scientific pedagogy is represented by three groups of authors: a) denying the presence of religion in the pedagogical scientific field; b) implicitly connecting scientific pedagogy with religious tradition and sometimes even completely embedding the former in the religious discourse because the scientific character the pedagogy is not recognized; c) assimilating religious forms into scientific pedagogy, where the latter communicates its conclusions in a very vague fashion. Such a polyphony makes it difficult to address the issue – which is topical nowadays – of the possibility of combining the efforts of scientific secular pedagogy and religious community in the field of education.

Stating the research problem, we would like to emphasize that the claims of religious tradition to dominate over scientific pedagogy in terms of the influence on the right to determine the conceptual foundations of education and pedagogical practices arising therefrom do not correspond to the modern level of social development. The same is true for the standpoint opposing scientific and religious moral pedagogy and denying religious tradition. The analysis of quite a broad publication content allows for the conclusion that the scientific pedagogical community, as well as the practical education it prescribes, requires such a study of the problem, which, first, would explore it in the perspective of a correct scientific dialogue (scientific pedagogy – religious and religious-and-pedagogical tradition) and, second, would bring this dialogue to a number of specific and substantiated conclusions.

### **3. Results and discussion**

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#### **3.1 Moral behavior in terms of religious norms and scientific-and-humanitarian conditionality**

Moral behavior is an integral component of the religious glossary and an attribute of the religious worldview, transmitted to the community of believers as an absolute norm of social and intra-family behavior, and any deviations therefrom are viewed as highly negative. This is reflected in the Russian Synodal Bible in the form of ten commandments that include such moral taboos as »you shall not make for yourself an idol«, »honor thy father and thy mother«, »thou shalt not kill«, »thou shalt not steal«, »thou shalt not commit adultery«, »do not plan evil against your neighbor«, »thou shalt not bear false witness« and some others. In contrast, the religious format displays sins, such as pride, envy, wrath, greed, gluttony and lust. Normative theonomic ethics explores these phenomena, revealing the highest degree of the ideal, absolute norms, feasible and explicable in the

recognition by the individual that the world is the creation of Almighty God – the way it conforms to the Christian worldview.

At the same time, it should be noted that the requirements of Christian normative ethics can neither be scientifically proved nor justified, of course, if we base on sensory or empirical experience or mathematical processing of the result. Justification is possible only at the level of intellectual intuition, which takes roots in axiological experience, which is, in a sense, the immediate perception of absolute objective values, and increased intentional orientation of the individual towards them. The foundations of the conceptual representation of such experience are shown by the author we have quoted based on the works of N. O. Lossky (1991), S. H. Billig and A. S. Waterman (2014) in which all types of axiological experience are linked to the moral experience, which initiates the individual into the requirements of the absolute ideal and conformity to the latter, expressed by the word ‚perfection‘. The significant maturity of the components of axiological and moral experience is inevitably accompanied by religious experience, in which God as the highest value is revealed to the individual. Theonomic ethics with all forms of experience,

»supplemented by Revelation, states that this is sufficient to guide the individual's moral conduct. That said, the Revelation that tells about the Trinitarian nature of God, the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity, the Transfiguration, and the Kingdom of God enables in-depth understanding of the moral ideal and ways of its implementation in the life.« (Lossky 1991)

At the same time, it should be recognized that theonomic ethics is based on truths that cannot be substantiated by scientific sources of knowledge and scientific tools.

Let us substantiate the scientific unprovability of theonomic ethics by the example of the interpretation of the ‚Divine Scourge‘ concept by Christian preachers. All kinds of derivative evil, such as disease, death or natural disasters, are natural punishments for the moral evil of egoism that arise as a natural consequence of the detachments and antagonisms inherent in the realm of human existence. However, all these disasters are not directly connected with the bad deeds marked with certain time and space, and Christian interpreters argue that Providence helps align circumstances in such a way that disasters and catastrophes, that are natural in ordinary consciousness, act as punishment for individual bad deeds and encourage the sinner to reconsider his/her life and repent. In opposition to this theory, ordinary consciousness observes that the most ‚sinful‘ egoists and villains have a relatively happy life without being subjected to any punishment. Along with that, however, there is a popular saying in the national consciousness: »God sees the truth, but waits« (equivalent of »The mills of God grind slowly«).

When asked why the God's judgment often comes late after the time of committing ‚sin‘, Christian preachers answer very vaguely: inscrutable are the ways of

the Lord, and the providence of God inflicts vengeance only in cases when the individual committing a sinful deed has a sufficient degree of moral maturity to ,hear' the voice of God. »Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline«, the Holy Scripture says, which means that the unpunished villain is less lucky than a punished one. Since punishment is a means of restoring justice and correcting the ,sinner', delayed vengeance aggravates the situation of the individual awaiting punishment. At the same time, a person who has embarked upon the path of good and virtue is subjected to increasingly sophisticated tests and constantly finds him/herself in such situations where no wrong step can be hidden.

Here we would like to express and justify our reflexive position, which is determined by the author's affiliation to scientific pedagogy, on these religious interpretations of the ,morality' concept. From the standpoint of scientific pedagogy, which has inherently absorbed logical-and-epistemological attributes, for example, ,delayed punishment' discussed above falls under the category of ,quantity' (which, according to Kant, is associated with the concept of size or value, i.e. something that can be increased or decreased), and, therefore, the statement about the duration inevitably triggers associations with the measurement of time intervals between the commitment of a bad deed and vengeance inflicted by the Supreme Power.

Moreover, such measurements should be associated not with one individual, but rather have a statistical nature, with a large number of people in the studied sample. The second thing, which should be mentioned from the point of view of scientific pedagogy, is associated with the measurement of the degree, to which the mentioned above tests are sophisticated: the statement of Christian interpreters that the most sophisticated and intricate challenges are sent by God to the former sinner, who has reformed and embarked upon the path of good, requires substantiations that are called empirical in the scientific language of logic and epistemology. Otherwise such a maxim expressed by Christian preachers looks speculative: how to evaluate and identify, at least in a qualitative comparative format, the challenges inflicted by the ,tester' upon the individual who has embarked on the path of good, subjecting the sinner who has reformed earlier to a moral maturity test.

### **3.2 Reflexive moral position of the individual in the religious and scientific-and-pedagogical traditions**

The next difference between religious and classical scientific-and-pedagogical moral maxims is a much greater degree of representation and breadth of the reflective palette in the latter. Moral reflection in religious and scientific pedagogy is associated with the concept of ,conscience' – this is the primary and primordial property of man, inherent in the individual as a substantial figure, whose being-for-self contains his/her individual normative idea, which serves as a criterion and guide for assessing the individual's behavior. Thus, the basis of conscience, i.e. individual normative idea, in religious tradition is the principle which is so primal and detached from miserable earthly life that it cannot be clearly identified

in the earthly realm – this is how Christian preachers justify the appeal to the Almighty as the only possibility to ‚bring the conscience into play‘.

Scientific pedagogy ‚brings‘ the conscience into play by projecting this content into the field of value-based reflection. Thus, scientific pedagogy somehow presents the hierarchy of values to society and provides the individual with the right to comprehend and recognize values with the same degree of certainty as the existence of colors or sounds, as a scientific fact, along with its causal and conditional formality.

In contrast to scientific pedagogy, the religious tradition exposes values to society in the form of imperatives or a kind of orders (here it would be fair to remember Kant’s maxim »If you must, then you can!«), supplemented by regulations in the form of various kinds of abstention (Christian fasts, prohibiting consumption of a particular food, drinks, etc. during strict or relatively non-strict fasting), rites of appeal to the Almighty in the form of prayers, appeals to the priest with a confession about the bad deeds committed and the desire for repentance and redemption. Non-observance of such regulations imposed by the religious form can be considered just a similar deviation from the norm of morality as any bad deed that inflicted evil on someone. A planetary-scale adherent to religious morality, L. Tolstoy (1937) by all means emphasizes the moral indisputable imperative of the ‚movement‘ of the individual’s consciousness to the true faith, which enables a person to feel part of the Universe and realize the meaning of his/her own being. In addition, Tolstoy emphasizes that human life is governed by two principles: the power of animal nature and the power of awareness of ‚sonship to God‘; the thinker also argues that man has power over himself only in the pursuit of awareness of his engagement with the Divine Nature L. Tolstoy (1937). The moral code and affiliation with the community of believers in the religious worldview are inseparable.

In contrast, we focus on the fact that scientific pedagogy provides the individual with a wider field of moral reflection, which is described by philosophers and psychologists through such components as detachment, stopping, fixation, and retrospection. Detachment is represented by attempts to see yourself through the eyes of relatives and colleagues, for example, through the orientation towards the maxim »Do not do unto others what you would not have done unto you«. Stopping can be defined as an individual’s recognition of the need to artificially interrupt the ‚forward movement‘ in life and in the profession in order to understand the degree of conformity of actions and intentions to the moral code, of course, for the purpose of correcting further movement. We understand retrospection as an initial effort to make a judgement about the life journey passed, the estimation of the ‚milestones of reflection‘ and ways of its implementation. Fixation is a product of ‚crystallized‘ answers to questions, identification of reference points of the route that would be the benchmarks in making judgements, as well as the ‚coordinate systems‘, in which these judgements are made, ‚photographing‘ of fragments of the past life, and walking through the individual’s own (facing the truth all alone) and external reactions to some certain actions. That



said, unlike in the religious tradition, the choice of reflection milestones shifts from a very narrow and limited by religious dogma ‚affiliation‘ with the Supreme Power to a wider morally-and-ethically verified content, accompanied by such fragments of internal speech of the reflecting individual as »I do not do unto others what I would not like others to do onto me« (the format of analogy, widely represented in scientific pedagogy), »I do not try to influence the opinion of others, if they are strongly convinced in it and the social implementation of their views does not violate moral principles« (the format used in scientific pedagogy that shows the limits of applicability of pedagogical principles, expressed in the particular educational technique), as well as a number of other similar fragments.

Content-wise, this scientific reflection, unlike in the religious tradition, provides the individual with the opportunity to choose a moral route, the right to present his/her moral position to society and the way of manifesting him/herself in the world (Foucault 2007).

### **3.3 The concept of ‚tolerance‘ in the religious and scientific-and-pedagogical tradition and the conclusions arising from various interpretations thereof**

Discussing the differences between religious and classical scientific-and-pedagogical moral principles, we now refer to the concept of ‚tolerance‘ (Petkovšek 2014; Žalec 2018). In the religious tradition, this phenomenon, widely represented in the Western society, is quite strongly associated with humility.

Here, we again refer to the idea discussed in the previous paragraph about curing spiritual illnesses and complexes discovered by Freud through the rejection of ‚self‘ as a source of thoughts and feelings arising in connection with the success or failure, as well as a manifestation of vanity or selfishness (Pavlíkova and Žalec 2019), that must be replaced by ‚self-rejection‘ and the appeal to God as a perfect moral being, insulted by a vicious self-aggrandizing focus of the individual on him/herself. This is briefly manifested through the idea of Christian humility as a radical remedy for the believer’s soul, which would destroy the primal cause of its ‚ills‘, such as egoism, pride, vanity, and everything that exalts the self in the eyes of the individual (Petkovšek 2019). The idea of Christian suffering as the highest value comes to the fore (we have already mentioned in the first paragraph that the former sinner who has embarked on the path of good is subjected to quite sophisticated challenges by the Supreme Power). In contrast to the religious tradition, scholarly secular pedagogy provides the individual with a right to poly-aspect moral reflection of his/her ‚self‘, allowing to recognize the latter not only as a moral sin of undue self-aggrandizement, but also as a morally justified form of positively valuable self-manifestation, which does not violate the interests of others and even helps bring goodness and virtue to others for the individual’s own satisfaction.

Unlike the religious imperative tradition, scientific pedagogy considers tolerance as a form of the individual’s search for a certain degree of concordance with

the opinion opposite to his/her own without violating morality, the inclusion of the opponent's right to express a point of view different from his/her own in the moral content, and the initiation of a correct dialogue of two discrepancies. To continue identifying the differences between tolerance in the religious discourse and tolerance in the scientific pedagogy coordinates, we come across the need to resort to the idea of the pedagogy's immanent inclusion in the segment of social order and the dialogue of morality, as it is understood in the religious context, and state power (Kardis and Valčo 2018). For example, a pro-religious writer L. Tolstoy, rejecting the idea of the unity of society and personality, ended up with the denial of Orthodox statehood, supported by the majority of Slavophiles. The thinker believed Christianity and the state are incompatible: »To understand the Christian truth people should free themselves not only from the false forms of perverted Christianity, but also from the belief in the necessity of a social state founded on the false religion of the Church.« (Tolstoy 1937, 17) Scientific pedagogy cannot accept such a detachment from the state, since immanently, by virtue of its very purpose, it is embedded into the social order, which imposes onto pedagogy the function of communicating the spiritual and intellectual potential of the nation (Žalec 2019).

Getting back to tolerance in the context of moral reflection in scientific pedagogy, we would like also to note the research conducted in the proper humanitarian scholarly format of studying the forms of pedagogical suppression of the aggressive nature emanating from the biological nature of man. Such studies include the book of E. Fromm (2017, 40–41) *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, which provides a comparative analysis of the psychology reflected in the works of instinctivists and neo-behaviorists, referring to a number of personalities. Fromm focuses on the achievements of modern neurophysiology and thoroughly, analyzes the causes and mechanisms of human aggression and destructive behavior, and most importantly, attempts to identify the pedagogical possibilities of reducing such negative forms of human manifestation. Combining the ideas of humanistic enlightenment and pedagogical influence, Fromm states that the main defect of authoritarian religious ethics is that it declares obedience to be the main virtue, and deviation from obedience to be the main vice, which shall be inevitably punished by the Supreme Power. Fromm criticizes religious ethics for the denial of the individual's psychoanalytic attempts to build his/her moral behavior and thoroughly reflects on the works of psychoanalysis researchers, eventually arriving at the maxim about the incapacity of modern religious and moral culture, which promotes the suppression of human egoistic thoughts in the context of the individual's self-perception only as an instrument of God's Providence (Kardis 2019). Fromm substantiates the idea that an authoritarian conscience is a bad adviser, and a person who unconditionally follows the 'orders' of an authoritarian conscience naturally diminishes him/herself and becomes an irresponsible being, in fact turning into a puppet, an executor of the authority's will. In contrast to religious and moral obedience, Fromm puts forward the idea that the individual's main task is to learn to 'hear' his/her inner voice and develop not an irrational

faith, but rather a rational one, based on productive intellectual and emotional activity, thus, in fact, fitting into the scientific and pedagogical idea that moral behavior is the product of the individual's deep reflection on his/her spiritual and mental nature that are based on a scientific approach to exploring all components of the individual's own 'ego'. According to Fromm, such an exploration eventually leads the individual to the reflexive conclusion that his/her life is the product of his/her own efforts, a creative process described by the metaphor »life is a piece of work«, the embodiment of one's creative morally verified plans.

#### 4. Conclusion

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The proper comparison of the religious moral educational tradition and the principles of pedagogical science helps to present the problem in the dialectical unity of categories of similarity and difference, as opposed to their uncritical opposition, that can be displayed as a set of the following theses.

1. The substantive component of scientific pedagogy, in contrast to the methodological one, meaningfully correlates with the religious worldview in terms of the 'moral imperative' concept. The return of Christian teachings to the scientific pedagogy landscape is associated, in particular, with the recognition of the similarity between scholarly ideas of humane pedagogy and religious commandments that set standards of moral behavior and determine psychologically careful attitude of the teaching mentor to the pupil and of the religious confessor to the believer who makes confession and asks for advice. This is explained by the similarity of religious and scholarly-and-humanistic 'proto-form of morality', as well as the original interpretation of such concepts as 'good', 'virtue', 'justice', 'moral value', 'nobility' and a number of related concepts. At the same time, the examples used in the article illustrate also that religious benchmarks, rules and models of moral behavior in many respects cannot be substantiated from the standpoint of logic and epistemology and thus shall be inevitably included in the content of dogmatics.
2. That said, a significant difference between the classical scientific-and-pedagogical and religious traditions is manifested in the field of moral reflection; thus, in contrast to religious pedagogy, scientific pedagogy offers the individual a much wider range of reflexive practices implemented in the format of logical-and-epistemological attribution (in comparison with the feeling of the degree of affiliation with the Supreme Power and the illegality of deviations from religious principles considered as an insult to the Creator). This brings into the reflexive field such categories as 'following', 'mediation', 'meaningful and logical validity of conclusions', as well as 'the use of empirical, ethical-and-theoretical and contextual extra-religious justifications'.
3. A significant difference between religious and scientific pedagogical tradition is manifested in the segment of a social and scientific concept of 'tolerance':

- a. in contrast to religious tolerance, scientifically and pedagogically grounded tolerance provides the individuals with a wider range of productive comprehension of various aspects of reality projected onto their own behavior, as well as correct intentional challenges to society, combining the interests of the individual's self-manifestation and his/her positive involvement in the life of society – it does not violate the norms and rules of universal human morality (Nguyen and Vo 2019);
- b. the ideas of the Russian Christian maxim widely known in the West, which detaches moral behavior from authorities in case that the latter are not recognized as complying with the moral ideal, are reinterpreted in scientific pedagogy into the format of a correct scientific dialogue; otherwise pedagogy is unable to fulfill the social order and communicate the spiritual potential of the nation from generation to generation;
- c. despite all the significant differences from the religious tradition of influencing society, scientific pedagogy does not reject the latter as the opposite; on the contrary, by all means it demonstrates readiness for a constructive dialogue with religion (Valčo 2017; 2018).

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