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Oddrun M. H. Bråten

ABSTRACT

The question of how religion in different contexts, including history, impact (religious) education systems will be discussed, to set the scene for further exploration by contributors in this special issue. I present a hypothesis: that new social patterns reflecting the present plurality are not sufficiently accounted for in educational systems, as they rather reflect the traditional religious landscapes. Our focus is Religion and Education, but findings are relevant also for the broader field of Education because of the historic and even present close links between religion, state, and educational systems of different countries.

Background and framework

There is always a relationship between religion and society, but what that relationship is will change over time and be different from place to place. What is that relationship at a given time and place and why is it different or similar in other places?.[1]

In this special issue we set out to explore the impact of space and time through comparing between national education systems. We ask what the impact of context and history is for developments in nations where various kinds of studies of religion and worldviews in schools exists. Within the book *Toward a Methodology for Comparative Studies in Religious Education: A Study of England and Norway*, I suggested a three dimensional and four levels methodology which combines attention on processes that are supranational (global or transcending the national contexts) with a plea for thoroughness in exploring national history and local school systems.[2] In this special issue researchers with experience of comparative work join together in a comparative exploration of Religion and Education to consider how the role of space and time have impacted (religious-) educational systems, exploring comparative methodologies in doing so. The main

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research question is: *How has religion in different contexts, including in history, impacted (religious-) education systems?*

Specific Research questions that will be explored to illuminate the issue includes:

- How can "Statement Archaeology" be used to "unearth" ecumenical influences on education policy to provide new perspectives on the history of Religion Education in England and Norway?
- How were educational systems and religious education in the Visegrad Group of countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary) constructed in recent times? And what was the roles of religion in this reconstruction?
- What is the status of Church-State relations viz-a-viz forms of RE in Europe?
- How are decisions related to Religion and Education made by the European Court of Human Rights interpreted, and deployed in Turkey and England?
- What is the significance of "friction" in comparative work? How important is context for understanding core concepts like "religion" or "secular"?

In the following I will elaborate a bit more about the background and framework for this issue, and explain how each of these articles explore different sides of the question: *How has religion in different contexts, including in history, impacted (religious-) education systems?*

Comparative studies

My first comparative study showed, among other things, that specific similarities between English and Norwegian Religious Education (RE) were somewhat incidental. What mostly explained the changes toward and in inclusive RE models in England and Norway, was national processes:

> Norwegian RE must be understood in light of the Norwegian school system and its history and English RE too must be understood in relation to the English school system and its history. Major differences related to the different school systems and their different histories and ideologies.[3]

A similar point is observed by Alberts[4], who notes that "virtually incomparable understandings of the character of education exists". Indeed discourses of what education is, or ought to be, is a separate debate which also have both a national and supranational character (e.g., Kallo and Rinne).[5]

The dependence of the national context for what becomes possible seemingly runs contrary to ideas also inherent in the three dimensional and four levels methodology, that it was those same/similar supranational processes of secularization and pluralization of societies, that caused changes in England and Norway. When listening in on discourses in both countries, meeting challenges connected to especially pluralization was part of the explanation for the changes toward and in inclusive models. In England initiative came from local agreed syllabus committees in particular multicultural cities (e.g., Hull[6]), and in Norway a national committee was given the task to solve the issue that some children did not receive any education about religion, as they opted out of both the broad Christian Education subject and the alternative Secular Worldviews Education.[7] If however the case is that whether changes toward inclusive forms of RE could happen depended on nation specific factors, this prompts the question how and why it became possible in some places while not in others?

In further comparative work I foreground how the religious history of each country has shaped educational systems and formed structures that are still in place, even though they are also constantly evolving. The title "New social patterns, old structure? How the countries of Western Europe deal with religious plurality in education" reflects the main findings of the chapter.[8] I was considering information given in chapters about eight countries: Belgium, Netherlands, France, Luxembourg, Scotland, the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and England and Wales of the volume *Religious Education at schools in Europe: part 2: Western Europe*.[9] I presented comparative perspectives on aspects of RE by utilizing the three dimensional and four levels methodology presented earlier. Challenges for RE for each of the countries had some similarities, and often they could be described as transcending the national borders, like increased religious plurality in the population. Faced with new challenges which also included globalization; the media-centred reality of young people; increasing numbers of people claiming no religious affiliation; and people connected to religions other than the historical Christian majority denominations, it seems that these school systems resist adaptation to new social patterns.

Based on that chapter which examined: (1) What is the traditional religious landscape; (2) Of what does present plurality consist; and (3) Conceptions and tasks of RE in each system, I propose the *hypothesis* that the new societal patterns described in the part about present plurality is not sufficiently met in the educational systems, which rather reflect the traditional religious landscapes.

What factual current plurality looks like, which groups and how many, was described through statistics quoted in the chapters. This both documented a decline in adherence to traditional religions (in effect one or

several Christian denominations) and the fact that an increasing number of people identify as "not religious." It varies how many "none's" in each country, but the tendency in all of these countries was that the number was increasing. Now new research reveals more about realities behind this statistic (see below). This coincides with the expansion of religious groups such as Muslim or Hindu populations that are also carving a place for themselves in the social fabric. In addition social transition in a time of globalization is increased by a media reality which brings the far and near together. It is perhaps no wonder that these rapid social changes outrun structural changes, however this comparative exploration brings some important insights, and, I would argue, reveals patterns that transcend national contexts, i.e., they are supranational. The comparative explorations in this special issue offer nuances to this hypothesis of resistance to change and also insights into reasons for such resistance.

Religious education at schools in Europe

The book series *Religious Education at schools in Europe*[10] maps Religious Education in all European countries. Each of the central, nation-state based, chapters are arranged in the same way; the structure, with explanations, is set out clearly in the editor's preface and is applied consistently, with each chapter's writers following it closely.[11] The organization into 12 categories makes the chapters well suited for comparative analysis. What it exposes are striking differences when comparing European RE systems. However, controversies are often very similar, emerging around comparable issues, typically related to the challenges of "new" plurality in society. The ways in which such challenges are dealt with in each setting is however, again, very different. The response frequently depends on religious history, often described as "deep," cultural, and intersecting with the identity of the nation, national imaginary and/or its "cultural heritage" (Bråten[12], see below).

The series charts the histories of and debates concerning "religious education" in Europe, through the material gathered under the heading "Conceptions and tasks of religious education"; in each chapter the reader can really begin to get into the depth of how the nature and purpose of RE is understood and practised in different national contexts. A further aspect that emerges as central in understanding the differences and similarities between countries, is the importance of history in shaping the present. Appreciating the diversity of historical context not only helps make sense of what is happening now, it also affects what might happen.[13]

With "Statement Archaeology" Jonathan Doney[14] has proposed a methodology suited to dig out how something becomes possible. In his

contribution to this issue Doney gives an example of how "Statement Archaeology" can be used to reveal how statements arising from the supranational Christian Ecumenical movement were used to justify the expansion of English RE beyond the teaching of Christianity as a proselytizing activity. He argues that it was the Christian Ecumenical movement which ultimately even made the studies of non-Christian worldviews possible. He is using historiographical work from the English scene and expanding this to investigate if findings in one context (England) would reveal new insights about the next (Norway). He argues convincingly that it does, so here the comparative perspective brings to the light an issue which is really not on the agenda in Norway. With explicit comparison of England and Norway, he explores how the global ecumenical movement impacted educational policies in two national contexts.

In Norwegian RE research there is a strong interest in the history of religion vis-a-vis the school system and developments of forms of RE,[15] but the significance of the international ecumenical movement is not explored in any of them. This is possibly related to the (imagined) lack of denominational diversity in Norway. There is a tendency to overlook the fact that Christianity is not Norwegian, or that Christianity in one Norwegian form is not "Christianity" at large. Thus the varieties of forms of Christianity in Norway and in the world is under-explored in school education. Despite formally occupying half of the teaching time, Christianity is to a lesser degree explored openly in a religious studies "critical distance" style compared to "other" religions. Rather it is given a political role as linked to national identity;[16] an issue that several have discussed critically (e.g., Iversen, Skeie & Bråten, Andersland).[17] Doney's contribution reveals a blind spot here and thus illustrates the importance of considering how supranational processes impact national contexts.

A catechetical approach is typical of Eastern Europe, even though they are also a part of plural, globally connected web of societies today. Here the response has not been developments toward integrated forms of Religious Education as for instance in England and Norway. In countries where Catholic and Protestants engage in ecumenical cooperation, initiatives of inclusive forms of RE based on dialogical approaches has emerged.[18] This highlights a question: To what extent have religious, or perhaps secular, aspects contributed to structures that are seen as appropriate regarding the new social patterns?

In Martin Rothgangel's contribution to this special issue, he explores the significance of (ideas of) national history through a comparison of Religious Education of the Visegrad group of countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary).[19] These countries were all part of the Hapsburg empire. Consisting of ten nations this was a huge and culturally

diverse area, with some similarities to today's EU. Thus the Visegrad countries share some common history. Another shared past is the experience of a communist era. An important aspect that this article brings to attention is that borders sometimes shift. Further it reveals how religion gets a particular "role" in nation building, and that some parts of history are chosen for the tale of the nation, while others are left out. The tale of the shared past is significantly different between those nations.

A similarity is that in all of these countries today religious education is catechetical, so here inclusive RE similar to that of England or Norway, or ecumenical/dialogical models similar to models that can be found in some places in Germany for instance, did not become possible; something else did. In his article, Rothgangel explores why. For countries in this area it seems that the development has gone from plural toward monocultural "cultural imagination". At the same time we see also that today there are very different relationships between state and religion in these four countries. It may seem that here new structures are constructed as "old," lasting and "deep" in an attempt at strengthening the national identity, and that religion is given particular "roles" in this.

By way of further opportunities for comparison, it could be interesting to look at this in comparison to how Mette Buchardt has written about the role of religion (i.e., Protestantism) in the Nordic welfare states (E.g. Buchardt).[20] The role of religion in the formation of the ideas of a nation, in identity politics, seems very significant for how it becomes possible to teach about (from/into) religion in school subjects. And there are differences in the Nordic countries and the countries of the Visegard group in what could be described as ontological horizons, and at the same time there are also differences between the Nordic countries and between the countries of the Visegrad Group.

National imaginary

When history is described as "deep" and connected to religion, identity, culture, I have used the concept of "national imaginary" to describe this, and to catch the fact that the idea of the history is not identical to what really happened.[21] Benedict Anderson[22] has described "imagined communities, and Charles Taylor[23] refers to this when he writes about "modern social imaginaries." A country's religious history is often very particular and related to the idea of the nation. In his classical work Durkheim pointed out a connection between religion and society,[24] but with "Durkheimian dispensations" Taylor[25] is referring to different ways in which the relationships between religious and national identity are

imagined. He describes how in pre-modern times belonging to both religion and nation was tied up with loyalty to (divine) kings.

In the process of the Enlightenment, belonging to modern nations became bundled together with religions in different ways. During the second half of the twentieth century however, religion and national identity has become unbundled for a significant amount of people living in western countries. Andersland[26] uses a Norwegian minister with an Islamic background as an example of this. For individuals with other than the traditional (Christian) religion or no religion, national identity is not relevant when considering religious identity. Still, others living in the same country negotiate new ways of integrating religious and national identity. Based on Taylor's theory it can be expected that both integrated and separated ways of imagining the relationship between religious and national identity can be found in contemporary nation states today. Taylor[27] has also noted how many kinds of modernities coexists and is connected to divergent social imaginaries (see also Bråten).[28] The bundling and unbundling of religion and nation has however not been straightforward, and this becomes particularly visible when looking at debates and developments in school systems with regard to the teaching of religion and worldviews. Is religion to be taught? If so, for what reasons, and in what form?

The observed pattern that (religious-) education systems reflects the traditional religious landscapes, is of course also related to the fact that European educational systems often started from Church initiatives. "Education" later developed as Enlightenment projects toward, to various degrees, "secularized" educational systems. The solution in Belgium, the partition of the country into three regions with each their educational system and a constitutional right to educate children according to parents' worldviews preferences, relies heavily on religious conflicts of the past.[29] Inclusive RE has not yet become possible there. Even the choice of "secular humanism" is "confessional" in the sense that teaching is founded from an insider's perspective, aiming to nurture into that worldview.

A further example is in the Netherlands, where the particular religious history has led to the so-called pillarized system, where society, including schools, has been partitioned into Catholic, Protestant and secular, while now a fourth pillar might be appearing, as Islamic.[30] Today the plural nature of the Dutch population far exceeds those categories. This is likely the case even with the present Finish system with 13 options and possibilities to call for further options if parents and children ask for it;[31] neither this is sufficient to accommodate every need. Another example is Germany, where the two large Christian traditions of Catholics and Protestants dominate RE, leaving little room for "others" outside of the main categories. In the strict secular system in France, where religion for the most part is not

taught in a separate dedicated subject, religion does get a place in teaching in subjects such as history. In all these examples, there is a real danger that some pupils through their religious identity will be cast as "others." Alternative subjects such as secular ethics do exist with various conditions and aims to collect those who do not fit in the categories acknowledged in the formal structures. However, none of these solutions address the societal change reflected in statistics as well as in research into how the nature of the populations relationship to religion and worldviews have changed in recent years.

Church, state, and religion education in Europe

In her article "Church, State and RE: European Typology and future Exploration" Leni Franken explores the status of Church-State relations viz-a-viz forms of RE in Europe. It strengthens the hypothesis of old structures in place being insufficient to meet new challenges, and offer explains why these structures are hard to change. She brings attention to the fact that religion is a part of many nations' constitution, and so is schooling, which is a reason why RE is a highly politicized subject. Previously she has presented an overview of how diversity is handled in Educational systems in Europe.[32] She distinguishes between three main models of state-church relationship and subsequent "types" of RE in them: (1) States or established churches, (2) Cooperating systems where state and church are separate but cooperate about (religious-) education, and (3) Strict separation of state and church. An important point in the present article, is that whether churches is/have been an official state actor or not, is key. It seems that shifts toward inclusive models have happened first where the church has been a state actor, often Protestant state/established churches, e.g., Sweden, England. Lately shifts have happened in places like Switzerland and Luxembourg as well, which have traditionally had Catholic majorities. Often shifts requires constitutional amendments, but since these structures are hard to change, pragmatic shifts also happen with sometimes quite creative interpretations of constitutions. Franken's article and Rothgangel's on the Visegrad Group of Countries are complementary, as Franken excludes eastern Europe, where such a shift apparently is not on the agenda.

   Franken and others have characterized recent shifts toward inclusive models of RE across Europe as a paradigm shift (e.g., Franken and Loobuyck).[33] As part of that we also see tendencies that teachings about different worldviews and religions are converging, and happening in various models (e.g., Willaime, Schreiner).[34] However, in the process various pragmatic solutions appear, leading to inconsistencies between formal structures and practices, forms of teaching and pedagogical approaches.

The religion-state relationships are revealed as all-important for what is possible in terms of teaching, and this is the case also if we include perspectives from those countries discussed in Rothgangel's article.

In my study of English and Norwegian Religious Education I saw how the issue of tradition and cultural heritage and the role of religion in the "idea of the nation" was decisive for what became possible.[35] Later through a broadening of the comparative scope I could identify a pattern across educational systems. The issue of church(religion)-state-school relationship has a quality of "same but different" which is emerging from the fact that the religious history in each case, is very particular and unique. As religious history is so different, it is also different how they influenced educational systems, but they did, in every case that I have come across so far. It is (still) important for the idea of that nation, even if being "secular" is also part of the idea of that nation.

In Belgium where the right to choose school according to one's own worldview is stated in the constitution, it is very obvious that the school systems are structured based on religious history. Presently, plurality in Belgium is absolutely massive, but the schools are still predominantly Catholic, so there is clearly a gap between provision and the personal worldviews of citizens.[36] In Norway or Sweden, it might be less obvious especially for educationalists who are not religion experts, as the educational systems are now regarded as secular and have inclusive forms of RE. Here Scotland serves as an interesting example in comparison: In Scotland, the protestant Presbyterian tradition is dominating and identified as "cultural heritage," something the school aim to integrate into, quite similar to Norway and Sweden. However a historic Catholic minority has resisted integration, and there is still a parallel Catholic school system forming part of the educational system, as is also the case in England. In Norway, minorities issued law cases against the state after the introduction of the integrated subject, so even if there are no paralleled historic religious minorities, it may seem inclusive models creates concerns among minorities.

Even when societies are fast changing, it seems that the educational systems represent resistance to that change, though they are also evolving. It might seem that the traditional religions in many ways are holding their ground and perhaps even "fighting back." Or else the traditional religions now function as a kind of secularized religious culture, which is seen as shared even among the non-religious. Therefore it is necessary also to ask what good reasons might exist to resist changes. Religion and RE are often seen as contributing to societal cohesion, for instance, through the teaching of societal values.[37] However, the question of who then are cast as "others" is also pressing.[38]

Human rights issues

Considering the discrepancy between existing educational systems and recent societal developments when it comes to religion and worldviews, an interesting question is how the present systems in each case is justified. In all the cases that I looked at for the article called "New Social patterns, Old structures?" ensuring human rights was central:

> Ensuring human rights, especially the right to religious freedom, is central to the justification of current structures for the place of religion in schools in both France and Belgium. This is so despite the fact that these structures are almost diametrically opposite to each other. One could, however, ask whether this intention is being realised within the current structures, in the light of recent pluralisation, and in the face of globalisation.[39]

Here we encounter a rather extensive discourse about interpretations of international Human Rights in various national contexts. With regard to RE we find several verdicts in the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). One of them was concerning the inclusive Norwegian RE subject, were the claim was that parents right to decide the religious upbringing of their children was not sufficiently met, given the new inclusive subject in Norway introduced in 1997.[40] Another case was concerning the use of religious symbols in classrooms, where they determined that such symbols could be featured in Italian schools.[41]

We get into an interesting cross-disciplinary field of juridic and school politics, and in a recent study Hendek[42] found that supranational religious education policies are sometimes appropriated and used selectively by political actors to promote their desired religious education model. In this special issue Abdulrahman Hendek and Nigel Fancourt add to the discussion of justification of religious educational systems by referring to Human Rights, through looking at how decisions related to Religion and Education made by the European Court of Human Rights are interpreted and deployed in Turkey and England. These court cases bring to attention the situation for minorities, in different systems, and the issue of whether human rights and especially religious freedom, can be secured for all citizen. This article contributes to exploring the relationship between the national and the supranational on the policy level as they call to the attention the relationship between the national contexts where verdicts are interpreted vs. the formalized but supranational processes in the ECtHR. Further comparative studies could be called for, to explore the effects of ECtHR on National RE systems.

What "secular" are we talking about?

Many issues could be raised concerning the meaning and use of "secular," and indeed this has been done as well.[43,44] Accompanying the described

development of a growing gap between provision of religious education and the populations worldviews/relationship to religion, are studies that discuss fundamental shifts in the role of religion in society, and the populations relationship to religion. In schools' alternative subjects such as secular ethics, citizenship, and philosophy appear (an overview can be found in point 7 of the 12 categories in the Rel-Edu series). It is a possible scenario, for which some lobby, that these should replace studies of religions in schools. The fundamental question this raises is, what is the implication for religious education of the increasing number of people who now identify as "not religious"?

However, research into the worldviews of those who self-identify as "not religious" has shown that they hold a variety of different views and are not necessarily secular in the sense that they are lacking religious or spiritual beliefs (broadly understood), or a form of worldview, but rather reject or are not that familiar with the traditional organized (world) religions. The growing literature on "non-religion" has shown that the "nones" hold a variety of different (personal) worldviews that may or may not draw from religious traditions (e.g., Wallis, Lee, and Murphy).[45]

It is perhaps fair to say that in recent years the focus has been more on pluralization than on secularization in Religious Education. A development can be identified toward fostering an understanding of plural religions and worldviews in today's societies, while there has been less focus on whether there is also simultaneously a continued process of secularization, or of forms of, or conceptualisations of, secular; this is discussed in a recent book by Avest.[46] The history of Eastern Europe and the case of France also reminds us to ask to what extent secular or non-religious worldviews have contributed to structures seen as appropriate toward the new social patterns. In Eastern Europe "secular" is associated with the communist past, but how different was that experience in each individual nation? Regarding the meaning of "secular," the French case is useful for studying a particular elaborate debate about what secular means, but how does the meaning of "secular" depend on national contexts?[47]

In his article, Kristian Niemi takes stock of comparative research in Religious Education as such, before developing his own perspectives. He explores how important context is for understanding core concepts like "religion" and "secular" exploiting materials gained in studies of religious education in India to develop two analytical concepts: "mirroring" and "friction." He asks "What is the significance of 'friction' in comparative work? How important is context for understanding core concepts like 'religion' and 'secular'? Niemi reflects on how friction that appear can be used to fashion a mirror revealing particularities of his own Swedish context. He demonstrates that 'secular' in Sweden is nothing like 'secular' in India, displaying how the Swedish secular is clearly Lutheran" (see also Berglund).[48]

A famously early shift to inclusive and "secular" form of Religion Education became possible in Sweden, in 1969.[49] However, Niemi's process of studying teachings of religion in the Indian school system revealed compared phenomena named "secular" or "religion" to be incongruous.[50] While starting out presupposing shared meanings of terms, meanings turned out to be quite different. He even revealed differences in meanings of terms dependant on which level of education (as sketched in Bråtens model) he was looking at. While meanings where not that different on the institutional level, when he started to look at the instructional level of actual teaching, it became more complicated.

In Europe it is mostly Christian history that formed the old, or new, structures deemed to be appropriate for present day education. It is also appropriate to ask more particularly in which sense or to what extent *Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Islamic, Jewish* etc. traditions in Europe represent religious aspects that contributed to ("old") structures. For instance, in segregated models, we will find religious schools or, for instance Islamic Education in state schools. Jenny Berglund, Bill Gent and also Leni Franken have made significant contributions to mapping and comparing types of Islamic Education in Europe.[51] This displays even how politics vis-a-vis Islamic and Islam in Education varies in Europe.

When Berglund and Gent[52] started working together they discovered that Islamic Education had a distinct "English style" in England and "Swedish style" in Sweden and that knowing another context deepened the understanding of how Islamic Education is formed in specific "national styles". This is used by Niemi in his article here as an example of how mirroring one context in another reveals new insights into that which is known, the home context. This becomes an added argument for the value of doing comparative research. This is interesting from a methodological point of view and I see it as development of theory and methodology of comparative studies which combines experience from past research with new and original ideas, and thus has potential of bringing the field forwards.

Summary and conclusion

In this article I have discussed the question of how religion in different contexts, including in history, impact (religious) education systems, to set the scene for further exploration of this in the articles of this special issue. The hypothesis that new social patterns of new kinds of relationships to religion in today's societies are not sufficiently met in the existing educational systems, have been put into perspective through indicating how some of the traditional landscapes were formed in history. Comparative methodologies are presented, and based on previous work and the

framework for this issue, authors explore this further, relating on the following issues:

- How Statement Archaeology can be used to find out how something became possible in one place, while not in another.
- How religion in recent times played a role in the construction of educational systems in the Visegrad Group of countries.
- The significance of Church-State relations vis-à-vis forms of RE in Europe today.
- How decisions from the European Court of Human Rights with relevance to religious education are interpreted in two different national contexts; and
- The significance of "friction" in comparative work, exemplified by the importance of Sweden vs. India for understanding what is meant by core concepts, like "secular" and "religion".

In different ways the contributions elaborate about the issue in focus, how religion in different contexts, including in history, impacted (religious) educational systems. Putting "religious" in brackets indicates that even if our focus is on Religion this is also about Education as such. Seen together this also brings forwards the role of religion vis a vis education in history and also today. I therefore hope that this special issue will also be of interest for educational scholars whose primary interest is not religion. I hope that it can bring to attention to the fact that religion still has a role to play. Points for further exploration could thus be whether certain political debates about education are characterized by a lack of consciousness of, or lack of understanding, of the role of religion for education.[53]

Could certain controversial issues in educational policies today be linked to fundamentally different ontological horizons, where some still argue for an integrated religion and state identity while others imagine it as separated, in a secular state? If different ways of imagining the relationship between religious and national identity exists side by side in one nation, this might be causing "wicked problems," which are seemingly impossible to solve. And if, in addition, existing educational structures rather reflect conflicts related to religion in the past than the present, I would suggest that it is time to rethink Religion and Education - again. Preferably in my view, this should be done through systematic comparative efforts, as it is only then that patterning across national examples can be identified. This is needed in an increasingly globalized world, where debates do not stop at national borders. Niemi's point about "friction" has potential of opposing critics that comparison is too difficult or that incongruence between "comparandum" and "comparatum" are reasons to give this up. Seen together the articles of this special issue shows a possible way forward.

Notes

1. O. M. H. Bråten, *Towards a Methodology for Comparative Studies in Religious Education: A study of England and Norway* (Münster: Waxman, 2013), 21.
2. Bråten, *Towards a Methodology for Comparative Studies in Religious Education.*
3. Ibid., 113.
4. W. Alberts, *Integrative Religious Education in Europe: A Study-of-Religions Approach* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 360ff.
5. Bråten, *Towards a Methodology for Comparative Studies in Religious Education,* 29ff; J. Kallo and R. Rinne, Eds. *Supranational Regimes and National Education Policies: Encountering Challenge* (Turku: Finnish Educational Research Association, 2006).
6. J. M. Hull, "From Christian Nurture to Religious Education: The British Experience," *Religious Education* 73, no. 2 (1978): 124–43.
7. Norges Offentlige Utredninger (NOU) *9 Identitet og dialog. Kristendomskunnskap, livssynskunnskap og religionsundervisning (*Oslo: Kirke- og Utdanningsdepartementet, 1995), 9.
8. O. M. H. Bråten, "New Social Patterns: Old Structures? How the Countries of Western Europe Deal with Religious Plurality in Education?" In *Religious Education at Schools in Europe. Volume 2: Western Europe*, ed. M. Rothgangel, R. Jackson, and M. Jäggle (Göttingen: Vienna University, 2014), 288–313.
9. M. Rothgangel, M. Jäggle, and R. Jackson, Eds. *Religious education at schools in Europe Part 2 Western Europe* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2014).
10. The project "Religious Education at schools in Europe" (REL-EDU), is divided up into six volumes (Central Europe, Western Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe). It aims to research the situation regarding religious education in Europe. Project website: https://www.rel-edu.eu/. M. Rothgangel, M. Jäggle, and R. Jackson, Eds. *Religious Education at Schools in Europe Part 2 Western Europe* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2014); M. Rothgangel, M. Jäggle, and T. Schlag, Eds. *Religious Education at Schools in Europe Part 1: Central Europe* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2016); M. Rothgangel, G. Skeie, and M. Jäggle, Eds. *Religious education at schools in Europe Part 3 Northern Europe* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2014); M. Rothgangel, Y. Danilovich, and M. Jäggle, Eds. *Religious Education at Schools in Europe. Part 4: Eastern Europe* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2020); M. Rothgangel, E. Aslan, and M. Jäggle, Eds. *Religious Education at Schools in Europe. Part 5: South Eastern Europe* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2020); M. Rothgangel, D. Rechenmacher, and M. Jäggle, Eds. *Religious Education at Schools in Europe. Part 6: Southern Europe* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2020).
11. J. Doney, "Religious Education at Schools in Europe Part 2: Western Europe. Book Review," *British Journal of Religious Education* 38, no. 1 (2016): 101–4.
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