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Worldviews and Religious Education. Modelling a fairly New Relationship

Abstract

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE: This paper raises the question of how religious education may address the variety of worldviews.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODS: The concept of worldview seems to be able to reconcile religious education with a society that is both secular and religiously plural. Such education, however, is defined by its focus on religion. Even when religion is seen as sub-category of worldview, religious education still does not include secular worldviews.

THE PROCESS OF ARGUMENTATION: It therefore first clarifies the concept of worldview by relating it to the German term of "Weltanschauung". Worldviews represent a comprehensive perspective on the world that originates from an individual's aesthetic and intuitive understanding of daily life and gives meaning to this life. Then, it delineates the basic didactic characteristics of three models of religious education, namely the denominational, the pluralist-informative, and the interpretative-dialogical models. Based on these models, the paper finally discusses the challenges and obstacles of religious education which attempts to address the plurality of worldviews.

RESEARCH RESULTS: The analysis shows that none of the models is able to comprehensively grasp this plurality. The advantages and disadvantages of each of the three models, however, indicate that the main tasks of worldview-conscious religious education are to clarify the constitutive rationality of worldviews and to find a balanced representation of both organized and personal worldviews via classroom interaction.

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CONCLUSIONS, INNOVATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS:
The realization of these tasks is basically the job of the teacher and does not at all depend on the model of religious education itself.

Worldview is a fairly new concept in the discourse of religious education. In past decades, empirical studies on adolescents' religiosity have used this term to indicate the broad variety of individualized religious attitudes and styles (e.g. Helve, 1991; Savage et al., 2006; Ziebertz & Riegel, 2008). During the current decade, scholars have referred to this concept when critically assessing recent religious education (e.g. Riitaoja, Poulter & Kuusisto, 2011) and proposed it as term suitable for use when working with both religious and secular students in religious education (Barnes, 2015; Halafoff, 2015; van der Kooij et al., 2013; van der Kooij et al., 2017). Worldview is regarded as a concept that is able to reconcile religious education with a society that is both secular and religiously plural. The basic topic of religious education, however, is religion, and its educational goals relate primarily to this focus. What is more, the various forms of religious education across Europe present different conditions for addressing worldviews. For example, confessional religious education deals predominantly with one specific religious tradition, while non-confessional religious education concerns itself with a large variety of religions (Ferrari, 2013). Both of these aspects raise the question of how religious education may deal with worldviews. This article discusses this question in three steps. It first conceptualizes the term worldview by relating it to the German term *Weltanschauung*. It then describes three typical models of religious education, namely the denominational, the pluralist-informative, and the interpretative-dialogical models. In a final step, these three models form the background for a discussion of the opportunities and challenges of addressing worldviews in religious education.

THE CONCEPT OF WORLDVIEW

Although several scientific disciplines use worldview as an analytical term, it remains a somewhat ambiguous concept. As of yet there exists no joint, standardized definition. Therefore, in this section we will clarify the concept of worldview in the context of this paper by relating it to the German term *Weltanschauung*, by describing its basic components and functions, and by introducing the distinctions between public and private, organised and personal, and religious and secular worldviews.

Weltanschauung

The term *Worldview* originates from the German term *Weltanschauung* (Naugle, 2002, p. 55–66), first used by Kant (1983, §26) to refer to the fact that different individuals perceive the same thing in different ways. According to Kant, it is the individual's aesthetic intuition which leads to such variance. In Kant's philosophy, however, *Weltanschauung* is more a by-product of analysis than a core concept.

The romanticist movement then adopted this term and encouraged its philosophical recognition. In contrast to the rationalist agenda of the philosophy of enlightenment, the romanticist movement favoured personal sensitivity and individual intuition (Russel, 2002, pp. 684–692; Müller & Halder, 1988, p. 341f). It posited that real understanding of the world is made possible by subjective perception rather than by objective reasoning. *Weltanschauung* expresses this subjective approach to reality because it represents a person's comprehensive idea of the structure, goal, sense, and value of the world as a whole. It is characterized by two features: First, *Weltanschauung* represents a consistent and holistic idea of the world. Second, *Weltanschauung* is a product of aesthetic intuition that cannot be explained completely on rational grounds.

In the 19th century, *Weltanschauung* became a popular term and was commonly used to justify laissez-faire lifestyles. In the process, the term lost its analytical power. A renaissance of its use as a serious analytical concept took place at the beginning of the 20th century. Dilthey (1911) employed *Weltanschauung* to describe the three typical

epistemic frameworks of naturalism, idealism of freedom, and objective idealism. Jaspers (1919) published a psychological analysis of *Weltanschauungen*, in which he distinguished between lifestyles and cognitive perceptions of the world. Finally, Freud used this term to address "an intellectual construction which gives a unified solution of all the problems of our existence in virtue of a comprehensive hypothesis" (1991, p. 154).

Weltanschauung became negatively connoted when the National Socialist Party in Germany co-opted this term to promote their ideology. Additionally, in the second half of the 20th century philosophical and sociological critique emphasised the discrepancy between a pluralist, multifaceted society and the holistic character of *Weltanschauung* (Blumenberg, 1986, pp. 9–11; Müller & Halder, 1988, p. 342). In consequence, in recent scientific discourse, *Weltanschauung* is only used by political science to critically address ideologies of all types (Dupré, 2013, pp. 44–107). Other scientific disciplines exchanged *Weltanschauung* for similar concepts like *meaning-making system* or *set of attitudes and values*. With the current usage of the term *worldview*, however, it still is present in several English-speaking scientific discourses.

Components and Functions of Worldview

Although there is no standardized definition of worldview, it is commonly understood to refer to a comprehensive perspective on the world that originates from an individual's aesthetic and intuitive understanding of daily life (Sire, 2015, pp. 23–69). Moving beyond this simple interpretation, the definitions of worldview vary. This variance is of particular interest with regard to the question of what components characterize a worldview. For example, Lindemann's definition refers to a purely affective mind set:

> A worldview is comprised of the beliefs, values, assumptions, and volitions that provide the rationale for how people understand and order their lives (2018, p. 6).

Hiebert, however, additionally addresses cognitive and evaluative components in his definition: Worldview is the

fundamental cognitive, affective, and evaluative presuppositions a group of people make about the nature of things, and which they use to order their lives (2008, p. 15).

Worldviews relate to existential experience (van der Kooij et al., 2013, p. 213). They address individuals' primary concerns, and their answers to these concerns help individuals cope with the challenges of daily life. It is this daily viability of worldviews which lends them their credibility: They are received with unconditional seriousness in people's lives. The authority of a worldview cannot be proven according to scientific logic via argumentation or experimentation. There is no objective rationale available to confirm the truth of a worldview. Its viability is derived from aesthetic intuition and from day-to-day experience.

Given the credibility attributed to them, worldviews serve at least four functions (Topitsch, 2001). First, worldviews provide an epistemic logic according to which people process information. They enable individuals to distinguish between true and false information, between positive and negative goals, between appropriate and inappropriate lifestyles. Second, worldviews frame and interpret daily life. They are more than a collection of knowledge. Worldviews offer moral claims and scripts for how to act in everyday life. Third, worldviews explain the world. The knowledge incorporated into a particular worldview contains structures and causal relationships that order daily perception and ascribe meaning to it. These structures and relationships follow an intrinsic logic that is convincing within a particular worldview but may be contested by the intrinsic logic of competing worldviews. Fourth, worldviews transcend material reality and offer some higher meaning to life. They set a goal, the fulfilment of which promises to provide true happiness and purpose.

In light of these features, there is a solid evidence for the identification of at least three components of worldviews (e.g. Bryant, 2011; Schultz & Swezey, 2013; Sire, 2015). First, a propositional component comprises the facts, concepts, and theories an individual possesses about life and the world. It represents the cognitive material which the individual uses to perceive their day-to-day environment. Second, an affective component comprises the individual's attitudes, preferences, and feelings with regard to life and world. It concerns the criteria according to which the individual evaluates its daily environment.

Third, a behavioral component consists of the individual's scripts and volitions concerning life and world. It deals with the way an individual (inter-)acts in their daily environment.

Categories of Worldviews

There are several categorical distinctions discussed in the literature on the nature of worldviews. A first distinction is that between *private* and *public* worldviews (Sire, 2015, pp. 127–139). In its original sense, *Weltanschauung* referred to an individual's perception of life and world. Both Kant and the romanticism movement used that term to label the personal and subjective approach towards reality. Such worldviews can be regarded as *private* ones. There are, however, also worldviews that constitute the joint frame of reference of a group of people. Christianity, Humanism, or Nationalism are examples that can be identified as *public* worldviews. Unlike private, subjective frameworks, public worldviews orient the lives of many individuals in a social environment. Offering shared perspectives on life and the world, public worldviews establish social cohesion. They set the standards of in-group-interaction and determine its members' relationship to people that do not belong to this in-group.

Another, similar distinction is that between *organized* and *personal* worldviews. According to van der Kooij et al., organized worldviews represent "a view on life that has developed over time as a more or less coherent and established system with certain (written and unwritten) sources, traditions, values, rituals, ideals, or dogmas" (2013, p. 212). Organized worldviews have much in common with public worldviews since both are typically associated with a group of believers who adhere to this perspective on life. However, the category *organized* focuses more strongly on the structure of such a worldview than on its public dissemination. As with private ones, *personal* worldviews comprise individual beliefs and views on life and reality. They represent the perspective and the meaning system adopted by a particular person (van der Kooij et al., 2013, p. 212). Often, personal worldviews are not as homogeneous and consistent as organized ones. Personal worldviews may change depending on the given situation and are at times eclectic and idiosyncratic.

Finally, one may distinguish between *secular* and *religious* worldviews. Normally, the distinction between religion and secularity is made based upon whether a meaning system takes metaphysical phenomena seriously (Vroom, 2006). In this context, a worldview can be labelled as *religious* when its frame of reference understands some metaphysical entity to be real. It takes into account the power and efficacy of something that is not part of empirical reality. *Secular* worldviews, meanwhile, restrict themselves to belief in physical reality and explain the world within the immanent realm. That does not mean that every phenomenon must be measured according to the theories of the natural sciences. All elements of daily life, however, must be explained according to the concepts and methods of modern science.

Worldviews and Religious Education

It is the latter distinction that constitutes the relevance of the worldview concept in the discourse of religious education. On the one hand, the worldview concept does not depend on this distinction. Whether a given meaning system recognizes or neglects metaphysical reality neither qualifies nor prohibits it from being identified as a worldview. That said, worldviews are able to address this distinction due to the fact that they feature an epistemic dimension telling individuals what they are to view as *real*. Hence, worldviews may serve as powerful concepts to analyze meaning systems of various nature, both religious and secular. Religion can consequently be considered a subcategory of worldview.

In religious education, both organized and personal worldviews are addressed. The didactic challenge in religious education is to present organized religious worldviews in a manner that also accommodates the development of personal worldviews. There is positive evidence from various educational fields that when students feel safe, they are willing to share personal perspectives with others (Hunter, 2008; Rom, 1998). Creating a feeling of safety in classrooms should allow the students to share and develop their personal worldviews (critical: Iversen, 2018). But even as a space in which students feel secure, the context of religious education is still affected by the

conceptual frame of the relevant subject (Riegel, 2018). The approach of confessional religious education to world views differs from that of its non-confessional counterpart. For this reason, the following section will analyze the variance of conceptual frames of religious education.

MODELS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The conceptual analysis of religious education predominantly follows the basic distinction between confessional instruction and non-confessional education (Ferrari, 2013; Schreiner, 2016; Willaime, 2007). In this framework, the goal of confessional instruction is to nurture students' own religious belief, while non-confessional education is intended to inform students about the various religions in the relevant society. This interpretation can be contested by at least two observations. First, recent confessional instruction in state schools also addresses religious plurality and aims to enable students to engage in respectful dialogue with people of other faiths. In this regard, the similarities between confessional and to non-confessional approaches are greater than the differences. Second, the discussion on the concepts of learning *about*, *from*, or *through* religion indicates that a broad variety of educational goals are represented in non-confessional education. The label of *non-confessionalism* does not express what the relevant subject is about and, forms of non-confessional education that realize the paradigm of learning from religion have much in common with recent confessional religious instruction. In consequence, in many cases the differences between approaches *within* one of the two types of religious education may be greater than their similarities. Therefore, this paper will not use this traditional distinction to discuss the relevance of worldviews in religious education. Instead, it will employ an alternative distinction that focuses primarily on the concepts of religion represented by different models of religious education (Riegel, 2018, pp. 91–134). In this perspective, three models of religious education can be distinguished. These are the denominational, the pluralist-informative, and the interpretative-dialogical models.

Denominational Religious Education

Denominational Religious Education addresses religion as confession in its original sense (Kropac, 2013). In a confession, an individual reveals both their personal point of view on a particular issue and the fact that they consider this point of view to be credible. A confession without the claim to truth is one which is not worth making. Religious confessions are an expression of the relationship between an individual or a group of believers and some meta-physical reality which is regarded as unconditionally reliable by those making confession. According to the denominational approach to religious education, such confession comprises the very core of religion. Religious doctrine and religious practice are byproducts of lived confessions. They must be considered in order to better grasp why believers of a particular religious tradition think and act as they do. To fully understand the nature of religion, however, it is vital that one directly experience the subjective credibility of the relevant belief.

This concept of religion entails didactic consequences. Denominational religious education has to follow a participatory educational paradigm (Dressler, 2015; Hermans, 2003). Experiencing the subjective authenticity of belief means to personally experience the internal dynamics of theological concepts and religious practice. Therefore, denominational religious education puts students into close contact with theological concepts and religious practice. Participation in theology and religion is the basic concept of the denominational approach. Today, the goal of that contact is not to nurture the students' belief, but to facilitate better understanding of the personal motives of believers by reflecting on real religious experience (Riegel et al., 2018). This reflection shall help students to both comprehend religious individuals and to enter into respectful dialogue with them.

Participation as a didactic paradigm requires some organizational conditions (Dressler, 2015). First, the subject of focus must be explicitly related to a particular religious tradition (or a set of religious traditions). In order to respect students' right to religious freedom, they must be informed about what to expect and with which religious practice they will have an opportunity to engage prior to their participation in a given subject. An explicitly religious frame of reference guarantees this human right. Second, textbooks and further material

must express the relevant religion's intrinsic point of view towards the subject's topics. Normally, it is up to the relevant religious community to determine the content and the material of denominational religious education. The didactic material then provides this religion's authentic perspective on life and world, and the students are able to tentatively assume this perspective. Third, the teacher has to be personally familiar with the religious tradition(s), the theological concepts, and the religious practice that the students are to engage in. Without such familiarity the teacher would not be able to address the particular subjectivity of the relevant religion's belief and help the students to grasp it, because conveying this subjectivity requires more than merely being cognitively informed.

These three requirements establish the denominational character of the relevant religious education. This denominational perspective addresses the plurality of religions within the frame of reference of one particular religious tradition or a fixed set of religious traditions. A homogeneous group of learners in which all students adhere to the relevant denomination, however, is not a requirement of this model. Although most denominational religious education occurs with such groups for historical reasons, this approach also accommodates students from other denominations in the classroom. In these cases, the only requirement is that all students are willing to tentatively participate in theological thinking and religious practice, and to subsequently reflect on their own experiences.

Pluralist-Informative Religious Education

Pluralist-informative religious education sees religion as both a societal and cultural issue (Bleisch & Frank, 2013). Religions are part of modern society, both in civil society and in private life. Moreover, recent culture is deeply shaped by religious stories, symbols, and norms. To prepare students for adult life, schools must inform them about the religions they will encounter in their social and cultural environment. They must be aware of the basic doctrines, central practices, and essential norms of these religions to understand why religious people think and act as they do. The more objective the provision of this information, the better prepared students are for

life. Proceeding from this understanding, the pluralist-informative approach builds on a scientific reconstruction of various religions' doctrines and practices.

According to this scientific perspective, in the pluralist-informative approach to religious education information on religions is provided from an outsider's perspective (Frank, 2015). One does not have to be a member of a religious community or to engage in some religious practice to fully understand the internal logic of religion. Non-participatory observation will provide sufficient knowledge on the various religions. This approach, however, does not mean that such education ignores personal motives of religious people. In reconstructing the significance of external phenomena with regard to how those who actually participate in religion experience it, the pluralist-informative approach addresses the experiential dimension of religion as well (School's Council, 1971, p. 47). In consequence, the didactics of the pluralist-informative approach offer students a genuine encounter with religion without requiring them to engaging in religion themselves.

A scientific approach does not favor one religious tradition over another. As objects of scrutiny, all religions are considered equal in this context. The reconstruction of the various religious traditions is conducted from a religiously neutral point of view and occurs according to conceptual dimensions which facilitate comparison across the various religions. In consequence, the frame of reference in the pluralist-informative approach to religious education is the *diversity* of religious traditions. The textbooks used in the corresponding religious education address many religions on equal terms. They provide the students with knowledge about various religions, enabling them to compare religious traditions from a rational point of view.

The didactic consequences of this approach are as follows. First, pluralist-informative religious education does not raise questions of religious identity (Frank, 2015). Acquiring objective information does not require that the students take a personal position regarding the topic of focus. Rather, it is a cognitive encounter with religion that has the potential to stimulate perspective taking by the students, allowing them to better understand the internal logic of various religions. Such perspective taking, however, purposely avoids addressing the students' personal worldview. Such personal reflection is not necessary

to grasp how religions function, and it would furthermore violate the non-participatory paradigm of this model. Second, pluralist-informative religious education is neutral in terms of the students' religious background. On the one hand, the cognitive study of religions does not require any personal involvement in terms of worldview, and no student should experience any advantage because of her or his religiosity. On the other hand, pluralist-informative religious education addresses both religious and secular students. In the framework of this subject every student may learn about religion and the various religious traditions. Third, this approach to religious education is also neutral in terms of the teachers' religious background. Basically, every person with sufficient training in religious sciences is capable of teaching pluralist-informative religious education. Moreover, it is the task of the teacher to critically reflect upon their own personal religious background and subsequently avoid presenting this subjective perspective in the act of teaching. The teachers' individual religiosity must not interfere with the scientific study of religion in the classroom.

These didactic conditions establish the pluralist-informative character of such religious education. It addresses the diversity of religions within a religiously pluralist frame of reference. Neither teachers nor students are required to possess a particular religious background. Therefore, pluralist-informative religious education can be offered as a compulsory subject at state schools because such schools' educational goals include the dissemination of objective information. In this context, learner groups are normally heterogeneous in terms of their religious denomination.

Interpretative-Dialogical Religious Education

Interpretative-dialogical religious education views religion as personal belief system (Jackson, 1997, pp. 30–48). According to this approach, all individuals are driven by fundamental beliefs and perspectives that orient their lives and ascribe meaning to their existence. These beliefs and perspectives may be correlated to cultural clusters like religions, but at their core they comprise subjective religiosities. To prepare students for adult life, interpretative-dialogical religious

education therefore enables the students to explore their personal religiosity and to recognize the fact that everyone possesses their own unique religiosity. In reflecting this aspect of life, this approach to religious education aims to foster the students' ability to enter respectful dialogue on other about issues of belief and its key concerns.

By focusing on the personal beliefs of the students, interpretative-dialogical religious education constitutes a pluralist agenda with regard to religion (Barnes, 2015). Subjective beliefs are individual and unique in nature and there is no objective norm to rationally evaluate whether one belief may be better than another. The value of each individual belief system is determined by its fundamental function in that particular individual's life. Established religious traditions form the cultural horizon of religious plurality. Their doctrines and practices may help to explain why religious individuals think and act as they do. Such individual behavior, however, should never be understood as the pure reproduction of some religious norm. According to the interpretative-dialogical approach, such behavior always represents a subjective re-construction of cultural schemata. To fully comprehend such behavior, one must interpret it on the basis of the individual's belief system.

Subjective belief systems may come into conflict when contact occurs between individual attitudes that are driven by incompatible core concerns. Therefore, in interpretative-dialogical religious education, pluralism itself constitutes a challenge to be met rather than a means to an end. The corresponding educational paradigm is dialogical in nature (Knauth, 2016). In pure dialogue the partners are equal and respect one another. Mutual understanding is achieved through expression of one's own perspective and consideration of the other's perspective. Such dialogue may lead to formation of a shared perspective but can also facilitate some agreement about and acceptance of disagreement. In any case, it enables both partners to grasp why the other thinks and acts as they do, and thus contributes to social coherence.

Interpretative-dialogical religious education entails specific didactic conditions. First, dialogue on private issues like individual religiosity requires that students and teachers see the classroom as a space in which they can safely express themselves. As previously seen, in such environments the students may feel comfortable sharing

personal perspectives with their classmates. Second, the teacher acts as a dialogical partner. In interpretative-dialogical religious education the teacher may reveal their perspective on the discussed issue. This perspective, however, only forms one perspective among others. Therefore, the teacher must find a way to teach in a mode that removes their role's inherent authority, thus enabling the students to argue against their perspective if there is good reason to do so. Third, the frame of reference of classroom interaction is not formed by a particular religious denomination. A particular religious tradition may help students to better understand the others' perspectives and therefore may be reconstructed in a lesson. Such reference to a particular denomination, however, should always be driven by the actual issue of focus and not by some compulsory relationship between religious education and religious denomination.

These didactic conditions establish the interpretative-dialogical character of this type of religious education. It addresses the plurality of religions within a subjectivist frame of reference in terms of religions due to the fact that religion is understood as a personal belief system. There are no requirements regarding the religious background of either teachers or students. Therefore, since it contributes to social cohesion, pluralist-informative religious education can be offered as a compulsory subject at state schools. The relevant groups of learners are normally heterogeneous in terms of their religious denomination.

Ideal Types and Critiques

The three models of Religious Education represent ideal types in the Weberian sense. They focus on three typical approaches to religion in the recent discourse on religious education as well as the didactical features that these approaches entail. Each of the models recognizes the plurality of religions in modern Western societies, respects students' freedom of religion, is based in sound didactics, and sees religion(s) as an issue of its own. As ideal types, the perfect implementation of these models can hardly be expected in real religious education. Their analytical benefit is that they enable examination of the basic ideas of real religious education in various contexts beyond the basic distinction of confessional vs. non-confessional.

The adequacy of each of these models has, however, been contested in the discourse on religious education (Riegel, 2018, pp. 126–132). The denominational model has been criticized for failing to fully represent the plurality of religions, and for potentially manipulating students' perspectives through its participatory educational program. Critics of the pluralist-informative model have suggested that by overlooking religion's confessional character, it fails to capture the real nature of religion, and that this model is therefore incapable of addressing the truth claims of the various religions. The interpretative-dialogical model, finally, is accused of underestimating the normative power of organized religions, disregarding the intrinsic rationality of specific established religious traditions due to its focus on individual religiosity. These critiques should be discussed in more detail in a future paper.

WORLDVIEWS IN THE THREE MODELS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This paper raises the question of how religious education may respond to the wide variety of worldviews. As previously described, some scholars see the concept of worldview as being able to reconcile religious education with a society that is both secular and religiously plural. Such education, however, is defined by its focus on religion. Even when religion is viewed as sub-concept of worldview, religious education still does not include secular worldviews. In the following section, the three models of religious education will be used to shed light on the opportunities and challenges of addressing the full range of possible worldviews in religious education.

Denominational religious education deals with the plurality of religions within the frame of reference of one particular religious tradition, often in a quite homogeneous group of learners in which many students – at least formally – belong to this particular denomination. In this model the students may acquire deep insight into the functioning of this particular worldview. They may grasp its basic doctrines and practices and comprehend the internal logic of this doctrine and these practices. The benefit of such insight goes beyond knowledge about one particular religion or denomination. It additionally

provides a deeper understanding of the constitutive rationality of worldviews. The students may recognize that every worldview is driven by certain existential needs and that every worldview asserts that its particular perspective represents the truth. Religious and secular worldviews function identically in this regard. Moreover, the students of denominational religious education may comprehend that constitutive rationality is a particular form of rationality – different from scientific rationality, yet still rational. According to the principle of exemplary learning, intensive examination of one particular religious tradition may offer insight into more general features of worldviews. The issue with denominational religious education is that the focus on one particular religious tradition necessitates that the examination of other worldviews must remain cursory. There is little opportunity to address examples from the wide variety of worldviews to the same degree as the denomination under explicit scrutiny. Another potential problem is that students that do not belong to the relevant denomination may claim that they have no real voice in a subject that predominantly addresses one particular religion. Non-religious students in particular may feel less comfortable in this subject because their personal worldview lacks a religious character. The deep exemplary focus on one particular worldview does not compensate for the lack of representation of the plurality of worldviews in denominational religious education.

Pluralist-informative religious education deals with the plurality of religions within a pluralist frame of reference with regard to religion, often in heterogeneous groups of learners where many of the worldviews found in the local social environment are represented. In this model, the many religions discussed should be addressed on equal terms and the students should have to opportunity to understand the basic doctrines and practices of the major religions. Moreover, every religious tradition is reconstructed according to its own constitutive rationality. Therefore, this model of religious education offers information on many religions and their individual internal logic. Additionally, students may grasp that worldviews function in accordance with a particular logic that can be characterized as constitutive. In pluralist-informative religious education, however, religious positioning does not occur because there is no participatory didactical interaction. This may have the effect that students are

unable to fully comprehended the existential logic of worldviews, i.e. that people neglect dialogue and enforce their subjective perspective, sometimes even through violent means, because they are convinced that their personal worldview is the only one which offers valid access to reality. This drawback of pluralist-informative religious education may be intensified by this model's tendency to address worldviews at an organizational level. In this context, it is religions as such that are the focus rather than the individual reconstructions of these religions in individuals' lives. Finally, even in pluralist-informative religious education, non-religious students may lack a real forum for their (non-religious) worldviews.

Interpretative-dialogical religious education deals with the plurality of religions within a subjectivist frame of reference in terms of religions due to the fact that religion is viewed as personal belief system. This model enables every student to contribute to classroom interaction via expression of their personal worldview, be it religious or secular. This model of religious education has the potential to make every student feel comfortable because everyone's personal worldview is acknowledged as valid. In this setting, the students may grasp how personal worldviews drive individuals' thought processes as well as their behavior. They can acquire deep insight into the constitutive rationality of worldviews at an individual level and get a sense of the uniqueness of this logic when compared to a scientific logic, for example. The price of this focus on the situated and individual aspects of worldviews may be more limited insight into the collective and organizational aspects of worldviews. Most personal worldviews are inspired by organized worldviews. In the interpretative-dialogical model, however, there are limits on the time available for examination of the internal logic of specific religious traditions. This may result in underestimation of the correlation between organized and personal worldviews, and the students may be unable to realistically assess the influence of the religious traditions present in their social and cultural environment on their personal worldview.

To sum up, each model of religious education addresses the variety of worldviews in a particular manner. No single model seems able to exhaustively address the plurality of worldviews. Since the three models represent ideal types, teachers of religious education may

consider which aspects are worth implementing in their classroom interaction. Reviewing the pros and cons of the three models, one may recognize good arguments for clarifying the constitutive rationality of worldviews and striving for a balanced representation of both organized and personal worldviews in classroom interaction. The basic challenge of reconciling religious education with a predominantly secular condition, however, still remains, and how to address secular worldviews adequately in religious education merits further consideration.

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