



# Values, Worldviews and Religions in Education: Changing Realities in the City

## ABSTRACTS

**European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction EARLI Special Interest Group 19 for Religions and Worldviews in Education Virtual Conference, 9.-13.11.2020, Stockholm University, Sweden**

### **Conference Organizers:**

**Local Organisers:** Arniika Kuusisto (Professor, Department of Child and Youth Studies, Stockholm University) and Jenny Berglund (Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Stockholm University), together with the **EARLI SIG 19 Coordinators:** Martin Ubani (Professor, University of Eastern Finland), Laura Hirsto (Professor, University of Eastern Finland), and Alexander Unser (Associate Professor, TU Dortmund University)

## Keynote Abstracts

Tünde Puskás, Associate Professor, Linköping University, Sweden

### **”We do not speak about it directly” – Talking about religion in Swedish preschools**

In Swedish early childhood education religion education is not part of the curriculum. However, a Christian Lutheran content is in many ways integrated in the traditions that are habitually enacted in Swedish preschools. At the same time in everyday practice preschool teachers often face dilemmas about how to navigate between teaching about traditions with religious roots while keeping preschool education non-confessional. The focus of my presentation is on the multidimensional nature of these dilemmas and the conflict of values which underpin them. The theoretical point of departure is that practical considerations in pedagogical situations are inherently dilemmatic because they require teachers to attend to contradictory social and educational values. The dilemmas that are of interest here arise in the intersection of the policy of non-confessionalism and the common sense understandings of what is understood as Swedish cultural heritage. The reflections of preschool teachers over continuity and change suggest that their taken for granted practices and ideas over what is (and what is not) considered religious in a secularized society have been put at stake in a society that has become multireligious. Thereby, the Swedish preschool can be seen both as a site of secularization as well as site of anxiety as regards to religion.

Anna Strahn, Lecturer, Sociology, University of York, UK (co-authored by Rachael Shillitoe)

### **Nonreligious Childhood: Growing up Unbelieving in Contemporary Britain**

Quantitative research has drawn attention to the significance of the family, education, and geographical variation in contributing to declining religious belief, affiliation, and practice, and to increasing numbers of children identified as nonreligious across many former Christian liberal democracies in Europe and North America. There is however currently a lack of knowledge about the nature, varieties, and substance of children’s ‘unbelief’. In this keynote, I will report on a study of what it means to be ‘unbelieving’ for children in the UK. How, when, where, and with whom children do learn to be unbelieving? And how do they experience and negotiate their non-religious identities and worldviews across everyday school and family life. Our use of the term ‘unbelieving’ here follows other research in this area in referring to a lack of belief in traditionally religious phenomena such as belief in God rather than the idea of having no beliefs. The study involved ethnographic fieldwork with primary schools located in three contrasting geographical microclimates of religion and nonreligion in the UK, based in urban, suburban and semi-rural settings, and interviews with 115 children, 45 parents, and 12 schoolteachers. While research on religious transmission has demonstrated the importance of family context, our multi-sited approach reveals the important role also played by both everyday school life and children’s own reflections in shaping their formation as non-religious, suggesting a complex pattern of how non-religious socialization takes place. Focusing on these children’s experiences and perspectives is also relevant to wider public issues in relation to education, enabling insight into how unbelieving and nonreligious children interact with aspects of collective worship or religious education, and whether there is currently an adequate public language through which such children are helped to recognise and reflect on their existential commitments.

David Thurffjell, Professor, Study of Religions, Södertörn University, Sweden

### **Religious by ascription: Muslims and post-Muslims in secular Sweden**

The Muslim population of Sweden is growing. Demographical scenarios predict that the Muslim population of the country will constitute 20 per cent of the population by 2050 making Sweden the West European country with the highest percentage of Muslims in its population. It also makes Sweden a most interesting case for anyone interested in understanding the interchange and dynamics of religion and values in a multireligious modern society. Based on survey data, this talk presents empirical findings concerning values, beliefs and religious affiliation among Swedes with

a Muslim family background. Contrary to the popular belief, Swedish people with a Muslim family background do not seem to be more religious than those who have a Christian family heritage. This finding leads to a discussion about what happens when a post-Lutheran majority population with a secular self-image is set to deal with religiously defined minorities.

Martin Ubani, Professor, Religious Education, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

### **Religious literacy and the 21st century school**

In my keynote I will discuss religious literacy both as an objective of and a tool for 21st century public education. First I will frame the discussion within educational policy context: as a question of rhetoric, legitimation and power. Then I will concentrate on the origins of the concept in modern public education and on its current framework of 21st century transferable skills and multi-modality. I will then proceed on to examine how prepared Finnish teachers in public schools seem to be in promoting religious literacy and how do they perceive it as part of their professionalist skillset. Here I will refer to several empirical studies especially from our project with Professor Arto Kallioniemi and several researchers on 21st century skills, multiple literacies and developing RE teacher education (2018-2021). I will then conclude with what I perceive as critical issues with regards to promoting religious literacy in the textures of whole public education.

## Abstracts for Paper Presentations

Augelli, Alessandra

### **Writing the Interior Movements: The Spiritual Diary as an Educational Tool**

In the current socio-cultural context characterised by fragmentation, speed and uncertainty, care of the individual spiritual dimension risks being easily neglected and hindered. The compression of the so-called "time for oneself", of relaxed time, and the increase of a productive action-oriented time lead to failing to train reflexivity and to the inability to rest, which are, on the contrary, necessary conditions for the development of consciousness, in particular in the youth age. A diary, as a personal writing tool, can be a significant educational tool, enabling one to restore the balance between doing and being, to re-read and review one's own personal experiences and give voice to what we live inwardly. Starting from a reflection on the interweaving between religiosity, spirituality and faith in the youth age, this essay intends to explore the educational perspective offered by the "diary" through the analysis of three writing samples: St. Augustine in "The Confessions", Etty Hillesum in "The Diary" and St. Therese of Lisieux in "History of a Soul". An attempt is made at grasping common roots and important orientations of meaning to be promoted in educational and training contexts.

Bartz, Janieta

### **Acknowledging Worldview Diversity in Inclusive Education at School and University**

In the context of increasing immigration into Germany and German efforts to establish an inclusive school system which enables learners from different religious, ethnic, linguistic and social backgrounds with and without disabilities and special needs to participate, religious education has become a key topic for interdisciplinary discourse between theology, philosophy, and pedagogy in German schools. The following questions are of special interest: How can we manage diversity in inclusive classroom settings in general? And specifically: How can we do so with regard to worldview diversity especially when working with young refugees? Does worldview diversity in schools exist, and if so, how can we recognize it in its plurality and complexity? How can we acknowledge different worldviews in the context of a changing inclusive school system?

At the conference I would like to present the theoretical foundation, the research setting and the first findings of our ongoing pilot studies of worldview education at different inclusive German schools. This project under the auspices of Dortmund University is unique because it combines worldview education with higher education in the context of a project for young refugees (Tu@Adams Corner). The case studies in which innovative language and machine learning technology has been used for data analysis illustrate the great potential of inclusive methods and didactic concepts such as "Universal Design for Learning", "Learning in the Presence of the Religious Other", and "Reflexive Inclusion" for inclusive worldview education in the context of a religiously pluralized and secularized society.

Blair Stonechild, Alexander

### **The Loss of Indigenous Eden**

This paper is the outcome of working with Indigenous Elders in Canada over forty years and describes major research findings of the forthcoming book *Loss of Indigenous Eden and the Fall of Spirituality* by the presenter due for release in April 2020. It provides a perspective of history and civilization from an Indigenous spiritual perspective. Methods used include interviews with Indigenous Elders and analysis of studies relating to the rise of civilization as well as critiques of philosophy and religion. The paper concludes that Indigenous ideology and spirituality existed since the dawn of humanity 200,000 years ago. A break from Indigenous values occurred when civilization, which is described as a rising up against and conquering of nature, arose. Indigenous Elders believe that creation is a gift of the Creator and that humans are to treat other created beings as spiritual relatives. The course of contemporary society began with the persecution of Indigenous

peoples in both the Old and new Worlds. Non-Indigenous peoples became the majority of world population in the 1820s, and since that time the worst abuses of the environment and one another have occurred. Recognition of Indigenous spirituality and reconciliation with its philosophy and values will be critical for future human well-being.

Bredlöv Eknor, Eleonor

### **Emotional aspects of preschool teacher students' learning processes**

The planned study connects to the term "emotional labour", coined by Hochschild (1983/2003), and explores how preschool teacher students are constructed as (un-)professionals through emotion work, and how gender is at play throughout these processes, during workplace learning. Drawing on a poststructural approach, inspired by Foucault and poststructural feminist theory, regularities of description and self-description will be analysed in the material, which will be consisting of field notes derived from observations of workplace learning interactions. Preschool teachers' emotional and relational practices, and the understanding and the skills that these practices presuppose, are a part of their professional knowledge and therefore also constitutes important parts of the preschool teacher students' learning processes. In feminized occupational fields, the activity of managing feelings to fit the work role is constructed through a caring discourse. This further reinforces femininity, since the responsibility for caring is still constructed as something ascribed to women. The care and emotion work that women perform is often unacknowledged and undervalued, since it is often reduced as skills that women automatically gain in their experience of being female. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge aspects of emotional labour in learning processes since this is often tacit and not acknowledged as a part of the professional knowledge. At the same time, it is crucial for operating successfully in a future work life. In the planned study, attention is directed towards norms about "correct" feelings in the professional practice of ECEC, and, more specifically, towards how these are expressed during preschool teacher students' workplace learning. This focus allows me to examine emotional aspects of the learning processes of potential preschool teachers. How are the processes, through which subjectivities are constructed, enacted in this educational setting? How is the (un-)professional constructed through emotion work and what makes these constructions possible, or even desirable?

Copier, Jorien

### **Aims and Values in School Identity Narratives**

In the educational landscape in the Netherlands there is a growing resistance towards an instrumental approach to the quality of schools and learning. Quality of education is often indicated by a set of statistics about the efficiency and effectiveness of educational processes (Biesta, 2010). Another way to show quality of education is in by school identity narratives (Bakker 2013, Dupont 2010, Biesta 2015). Identity narratives consist of stories in which members of the school community articulate their aims and values for education and in which they phrase how they attribute meaning to experiences in the school context related to these aims and values.

This paper presents the results of an intervention study in which school teams try to improve their school identity narratives. Based on the identity theory of Paul Ricoeur we discern three characteristics for narrative quality; the quality of a narrative can be determined by the extent to which it is shared by the school community (1), directive for choices in school practice (2) and rich which is defined as referring to sources of inspiration (3) (Praas 2018, Ricoeur 1991, Van der Zee 2013). The data is collected by focus group interviews with five primary school teams in the Netherlands before and after an intervention of their school leaders. The results of the qualitative coding analysis show that school teams include little aims and values in their identity narratives, but that there is a small increase in narrative quality in their school identity narratives.

Dal Toso, Paola

### **Young Italians participation in religion**

From the sociological surveys it emerges that 76.5% of young Italians who declare themselves non-believers followed the catechism, 52.8% the parish or the oratory; 24% of those who declare themselves Catholic attend weekly a religious ceremony. These changes particularly affect young women, so much so that the diversity of religiosity between males and females, who have always been more faithful, believers and practitioners, almost seems to have been canceled. It could be inferred that the traditional "transmission of faith" between generations no longer works and that religion has nothing more to say (Garelli, 2016; Matteo, 2010). The young person perceives the liturgy, the participation in the Mass, the community prayer as alien to the subjective experience, therefore, do not find a place in his religious experience because he does not understand the value, he warns them as rites that do not involve them, they cannot enter in relation to and interact with the research and the personal situation. He struggles to understand the ecclesial language used. He prefers to pray spontaneously, freely, with his own words, when he feels, according to his inner state. Moreover, it expresses religious sentiment mostly in one's personal interiority, passing from an opening to transcendence in search of a personal harmony, subjective responses, an individualistic spirituality, a tailored god. (Istituto Giuseppe Toniolo 2016) What is the task of the educator? What possible actions? In the adolescent age, characterized by the search for one's own identity, the search for answers to the great existential questions, which today are postponed and resurface in particular circumstances, could be solicited. Participation in an association with an educational purpose, the experience of volunteering put the subject in comparison with other realities, can provoke a rereading of the situation and start overcoming the widespread indifference, not only religious, which is perhaps an aspect of a fashion cultural.

Eskilsson, Cecilia

### **The RE-teacher in the globalized 21st century class room, a comparison between Finland and Sweden**

The greater aim of this PhD- study is to gain a greater understanding of the process in becoming a teacher in Religious Education (RE), through a qualitative, longitudinal and comparative study. Becoming a teacher in RE involves understanding the globalized 21st century class room. The classroom is a different arena today because of the many different groups being represented in that space. Recent research discusses the challenges in the 21st century RE- classroom (e.g. Kittelman Flensner 2017; Kuusisto 2017; Rissanen et al 2016; Vikdahl & Skeie 2019; Vikdahl 2019). The interview method is inspired by life history approach, stimulated recall method, ethnographic approach and 'performance maps'. (Dehanas 2003; Sikes & Everington 2001; Scherp 2012; Stimulated recall 2003), and is developed to suit this very project. The interviews, of student teachers, will be hermeneutically interpreted by using the concepts 'professional self-understanding', and its sub-concepts 'the personal interpretative framework' and 'subjective educational theory', as developed by Kelchtermans (2009). This presentation focuses mapping and understanding what has been written about RE and its challenges in the globalized class room. Studies focusing on teachers and teachers' understanding and handling these challenges (e.g. Everington et.al.2011) are of special importance to this presentation as well as the comparison between the neighboring, but yet quite different countries, when it comes to RE, educational systems and teacher status (Furuhagen et.al. 2019).

Gearon, Liam

### **Brave New Worldview: Securitisation Theory and the Securitised University**

In the wake of the defining 9/11 landmark of international security and terror attacks on European cities, Europe has become increasingly engaged in strengthening its counter-terrorism policies (Argomaniz 2009; Argomaniz, Bures, and Kaunert 2014; European Council, 2017). This as part of a wider notion of European security evidenced by the European Agenda on Security (EAS), into

which universities have now been explicitly drawn (EAS 2015). European universities are then increasingly significant institutions in a securitised Europe (Davies and Gustafson, 2013; de Graaff, 2017). Further, universities have been and continue to be major sources of recruitment for the security and intelligence services in Europe and the United States, and a reservoir of secret as well as open source knowledge (Aldrich, 2010; Andrew, 2010; de Graaff 2016; Jeffery 2011; Weiner, 2012). Western security and intelligence agencies have also helped shaped significant emergent disciplines in the Academy such as security and intelligence studies, and have an historic and current, near all-encompassing outreach into a multitude of fields across the arts, humanities and social sciences as well across all domains of medical, scientific and technological research (Sinclair 1989; Winks 1987). The emergent 'disciplines' of intelligence collection, knowledge gathering, generation and dissemination, the very aims and purposes of universities are themselves increasingly critical to security and intelligence processes (Lowenthal and Clark, 2015). Universities have long, then, been then the physical and intellectual space where two types of intelligence have met in the physical and intellectual space of the European university (Author, 2019). Today, in large measure through greater involvement of European universities in counter-terrorism provisions of governments across the continent, this historic security environment is now intensifying (Albert and Buzan, 2011; Buzan et al. 1997; Buzan and Hansen 2009; Dunn Cavely and Mauer 2012; Durodie 2016; Glees 2016; Huysmans, 1998; Johnson 2012; Laustsen and Wæver 2000). Conscious of post-Brexit and other geo-political threats to Europeanisation, this paper uses securitisation theory to highlight a notion of 'the securitised university' as part of a wider frame of security in public policy, in order to provoke discussion (playing on Aldous Huxley's famous dystopian novel) on the implications of this new security environment as a 'brave new worldview'.

Hirsto, Laura

### **Teacher students' career motives in relation their personal worldview**

The aim of this paper is to investigate teacher students' career motives relations to their personal worldview in terms of commitment and the effects that the worldviews have had in their lives and decisions. There is quite a lot of research on the motives through which teacher students have chosen their career path. Various researchers (e.g. Balyer and Özcan, 2014; Bergmark, Lundström, Manderstedt & Palo, 2018; Han & Yin, 2016) suggest that the general motive categories include intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motives. There are also other typologies of motives, however similar typologies can be found also in other higher education fields. According Hirsto (2012) certainty of career choice in the theological field seems to be related to having a spiritual calling, a helping orientation and self-fulfillment. Comparing this to the perspectives on teacher motivation, intrinsic and altruistic motives seem to be strong among students behind both professions. Also, in terms of teaching profession Sinclair (2008) has suggested that intrinsic and altruistic motives seem to be beneficial for retention. The theoretical perspectives into teacher students motives for choosing teachers education was operationalized into a questionnaire, in which first year teacher students responded (n=91; female=85.2%, male=14.8%; religious majority=63.8%, religious minority=11.8% , non-religious=18.9% and other=5.5%) on a Likert-scale (1-6). The questionnaire also included items related to the students' worldview commitment (Mayhew & Rockenbach, 2013) and effects of personal worldviews on their goals (Hirsto, 2019a; Hirsto, 2019b). Items were factor analyzed with the method of Maximum likelihood (KMO .705). A four factor solution explained 50% of the total variance. Four factors were named: Self-fulfillment motive (alpha=.793), Instrumental motive (alpha=.762), Mission/Altruistic motive (alpha=.710) and Other peoples' influence (alpha=.804). According to the results, Self-fulfillment motive (mean=4.65, mode= 4.8) and Mission/Altruistic (mean=4.68, mode=4.67) motives were the most important. Much less teacher students reported Instrumental motive (mean=3.51, mode=3.50) and Other peoples' influence (mean=2.03, mode=1.50). Male students reported significantly more often Other people's influence as a

motive ( $p < .05$ ). Furthermore, religious identity group was related to the Self-fulfilment motive ( $U = 880.00$ ,  $p < .01$ ) in such a way that non-religious group more often reported Self-fulfilment motive compared to religious majority group ( $p < .05$ ). Mission/Altruistic motive correlated significantly with the extent to which teacher students' reported that their personal worldview had affected their goals ( $r = .216$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the amount of commitment into their personal worldviews ( $r = .236$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These results will be discussed with respect to theoretical perspectives and earlier research.

Johansen Rinde, Adrian

### **Student conceptions of religion. Proposed essences and significant traits.**

In an effort to figure out what Norwegian students associate with the concept of religion, I gathered data from a single upper secondary school where teachers presented their students with the optional task of 'creating and describing a new religion'. The pilot project ran in the early months of 2019, while the data collection proper took place during August the same year, with students that had just recently enrolled in Religion and Ethics courses during their final year of upper secondary school. We had 181 responses, meaning we have 181 new religions to look through and analyze, ranging in scope from a single sentence to a page of text.

This is an empirically driven article presenting and discussing codes produced abductively from the data, with the intent to situate them within the academic discussion of 'world religions' and similar paradigms. The data consists of 181 student responses from a Norwegian upper secondary school, responding to the task of individually 'creating and describing a new religion'. Focus of the analysis rests on proposed 'cores' and 'essences' based on three identified strategies for asserting the significance of a conceptual element. The conceptual content signified by these strategies is presented and discussed, focusing on the use of humor, the important role of rules and ethical behavior, and the concept of disenchanting religion. The research questions this article aims to investigate are as follows.

1. Are the students proposing 'essences' and 'cores' when they are 'making and describing a new religion'?
2. If so, how are they proposing essences and attributing significance?
3. And what conceptual elements are they proposing as essential?

Jr Shi, Jin

### **Buddhist *Currere* in Religion and Education: A Scholar Practitioner Approach**

Awakening is the ultimate goal of Buddhist education. Connecting Buddhist principles of awakening to religion and education scholarship, the interplay between theory and practice leads to the notion of embodied scholarship. Joseph Schwab's commonplaces guides the study of students, teachers, content, and milieu, but the study of scholars has yet to become commonplace. This meta-study explores Buddhism and education from a scholar-teacher-student perspective in a milieu of insistent fear from climate change, school safety, and social media bent. To fill a vacuum instigated by external insecurities, the scholar-teacher practitioner will engage William Pinar's *currere* to uncover Buddhist interiority by analyzing and reflecting on Buddhist and student parables, and explore its intersection with religion and education scholarship, teaching, and learning. Studying the scholar as the scholar reflects on the theories of the seven Lotus parables—The Burning House and the Three Carts; The Prodigal Son; Herbs and Trees; Phantom City and the Treasure Land; Jewel in the Robe; Jeweled Topknot; and The Physician and Patients. Studying the scholar-teacher as the scholar-teacher reflects on the theory-practice of the Lotus parables. Studying the students as the scholar-teacher reflects on the moral parables written by the students, post-reading of the seven Lotus parables. These exemplify a unique web of educational conditions and convictions. Recognizing and embracing this interconnected, interlayered web is Buddhist interiorization that dynamically interfaces movement and stillness, weaving through the intricacies of scholarship,

teaching, and learning, within and without. Pinar's *currere* maps the horizontal-historical past and the vertical-societal present, while the Buddhist perspective builds on with the diagonal-awakening values and the circumference of introspection. *Currere*'s four sequenced narrative steps—regressive, progressive, analytical, and synthetical—are met by the corresponding Buddhist parallels—arising, dwelling, dwindling, and emptying. Both processes heed the ideas of change, diversity, and worldviews as its building blocks to addressing contemporary educational issues, bounded by fear, that face scholars, teachers, and students.

Keränen-Pantsu, Raili

### **Promoting narrative identity in worldview education**

One of the values on which basic education in Finland is based on according the curriculum is respecting the uniqueness of each student and guaranteeing the right to a good education. While learning, pupils are building their identity, their understanding of life and of humanity, their worldview, and finding their place in the world. At the same time, they learn to understand themselves, other people, society, the environment, and different cultures. (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, 2014, 15-16). In worldview education, one of the main goals is to support the pupil's identity development (Miedema, 2014; NCCBE, 2014, 264-265). Narrative can be regarded as a tool for identity work (McAdams & McLean, 2013), or, 'the primary scheme by which human existence is rendered meaningful' (Polkinghorne, 1988, 11) According to Clark & Rossiter (2008, 65) people are 'narratively constituted and narratively positioned'. One's life story is situated in a given historical and social context, so every human life story is enmeshed within 'a community of life stories' (Bruner, 1987, 699) We are surrounded by 'cultural stock of stories' (Hänninen, 2004), which refers to the 'totality of narrative representations that the person hears or reads in the course of his or her life, ranging from pieces of gossip and TV advertisements to novels and sacred texts, and from fairytales to real-life stories' (Hänninen, 2004, 73). In this paper I want to explore the cultural stock of stories provided by religions and worldviews and their role in the process of identity negotiation, based on both legitimizing and resisting the cultural stocks of stories and thus providing a platform for project identity construction.

Kimanen, Anuleena

### **Realities change – can RE contribute to change-making?**

USKALLUS project receives funding from the Finnish National Agency for Education for developing research-based teaching material for intercultural education in comprehensive school. A special theme of the project is to use research of the Faculty of Theology of University of Helsinki and to aim at promoting sense of belonging, participation and social justice.

The Council of Europe's competences required for democratic culture and intercultural dialogue contain several competences that RE could (and in many cases should) cover: values like human dignity and cultural diversity, attitudes like responsibility and openness to other beliefs, skills like analytical thinking skills, and empathy, as well as knowledge and critical understanding of the self and religions. However, RE is generally regarded as a conservative school subject, rather than a subject that promotes change and social participation. What kind of barriers may arise from this general understanding of the subject if RE tries to take education for democracy seriously?

This paper focuses on certain materials that were designed for addressing power, privilege and justice in lower secondary school's RE. The data will consist of ca. five observed lessons where these materials or activities will be used and correspondingly five focus group interviews with the pupils. The data will be analysed from the point of view of the following questions: How do pupils react to addressing power, privilege and justice in RE? To what extent do the pupils regard the issues mentioned above as relevant for RE? To what extent do these social justice issues increase pupils' motivation to study RE? The preliminary results indicate that addressing power and justice engages youth in learning but more effort is needed in order to make them see themselves as actors in change for justice.

Kuusisto, Elina & Isolde de Groot, Doret de Ruyter

### **I want to help others to find a meaning in life - A case study of life purposes of students in university with a strong civic profile**

This case study investigates life purposes of students in a university with a strong civic profile. In light of concerns about civic and political issues, universities across the world increasingly see a role for themselves in advancing students' civic engagement through research and education. However, there is a lack of research into life purposes that might inform the civic engagement among higher education students. Life purpose is defined (1) a personally meaningful intention to which one is (2) engaged in a long-term to realize the purpose by contributing not only to oneself but also (3) beyond-the-self (Damon, Menon, & Bronk, 2003). The research question is: What characterizes the self and other related purposes of students enrolled at a university that specifically advances students' academic and professional skills in meaning making and humanization? Participants were Dutch university students (N=237) who answered a survey which instruments were adapted from Damon (2013) and Moran (2014). Qualitative content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) of students' reflections on their life purposes focused on self and other oriented life purposes. Apart from love and happiness related purposes, many students also mentioned purposes related to existential growth. Likewise, prevalent other-related purposes concerned helping others, and a substantial number of students aimed to contribute to a more humane and sustainable world (e.g. by addressing human rights, poverty and environmental issues) on an interpersonal or structural level. Interestingly, few students mentioned family and religion related aims. The results suggest a clear connection between the main themes of the curriculum (meaning making and humanization) and the students' life purposes.

Lafrarchi, Naïma

### **Islamic religious teacher training as a means for teacher professionalism and citizenship education**

Since the constitutional recognition of Islam in 1974, much debates have been held regarding the place of Islamic religious education (IRE). Moreover, Islamic training for instance for IRE teachers and imams is in the midst of the heated debates. The landscape of Islamic religious education in Belgium/Flanders changed since the bombing attacks of Paris (2015) and Brussels (2016). IRE is seen as a problem and as a solution by the different stakeholders, in the first place the regional and local policy makers, and secondly by the fieldworkers. The successive Action Plan Radicalization since 2015 refer explicitly to the imams and IRE teachers as a buffer and means to deliver a counter discourse. One of the action points formulated by the Flemish ministry of Education is the implementation of additional IRE teachers training at University College level. First question is: Is it the task of the IRE teacher to deliver an counter discourse? And, are the IRE teachers tooled to do so through the existing IRE programs? Can we find elements in the IRE teachers training programs which substantiate this expectations? To have a clear overview we analyze the IRE programs of the five Flemish training programs. Beside, we note that super diverse big cities as Antwerp or Ghent set up interconvictional dialogue programs, with emphasis on citizenship, in collaborations with the local stakeholders, i.c. the City Departments of Education and the Representatives of Recognized Religions (Belgium). Which impact and result can we expect from such programs? What is the content and are the aims of such programs? We clearly see a process of negotiating and searching for common ground to work on citizenship, interconvictional dialogue and more qualitative IRE training program to contribute to the formulated expectations, mainly in the big super diverse Flemish cities.

Laird Iversen, Ragnhild

### **20 days of Christmas. Acculturation strategies among children with religious minority background at Christmas time in a Norwegian Kindergarten.**

In this paper, I will examine how children aged 4 and 5 with religious minority background are using different acculturation strategies (Sam & Berry 2010) in a Norwegian Kindergarten. According to The Norwegian Frame Work “Kindergartens shall use diversity as a resource in their pedagogical practices and support, empower and respond to the children according to their respective cultural and individual circumstances. Kindergartens shall highlight differences in values, religions and worldviews.” (Directorate for Education and Training 2017: 9). However, research indicates that many kindergartens to a limited degree are highlighting religious pluralism and that kindergartens mainly celebrate Christian holidays and retells stories from the Bible when staff highlight religion as part of the kindergartens pedagogical practice. (Fauske 2012, Hidle & Krogstad 2017, Krogstad & Hidle 2015, Toft & Rosland 2014, Østrem et.al. 2009). How may such contexts effect children with minority family backgrounds? My analysis is based on ethnographic material collected through 20 days of observation in a Norwegian Kindergarten during Christmas preparations. The staff is arranging numerous activities related to Christmas. At these occasions, the staff often invite children to share their experiences from Christmas preparations at home. However, several children are from families with religious minority background. Some seem to adapt their parent’s strategies of integration or separation, clearly stating that they do or do not celebrate. Others seem to use strategies as silence or imagination as a way of integration, avoiding revealing difference or clearly making up stories similar to their peers. The paper aims to give an empirically based contribution to discussions about religion in Early Childhood Education, as well as to theories about children’s acculturation strategies.

Lipiäinen, Tuuli, Kaisa Viinikka, Martin Ubani, Arto Kallioniemi

### **How do Finnish RE teachers perceive the significance of new learning skills in teaching RE successfully today and in future**

The purpose of this presentation is to present empirical results from a questionnaire to Finnish RE teachers (N=83) collected in Spring 2019. In the questionnaire the teachers were asked which skills they emphasized as important for successful teaching in religious education. The questionnaire was based on P21 skills framework. In addition to other questions, it included a question: “Evaluate the importance of following skills in managing successfully the task of a teacher in the next 20-30 years”. The data was collected with an online questionnaire (Likert 1-5). In addition, they were asked to mark the order of importance of each skill in the work of a RE teacher. Then they were asked to evaluate how integral knowledge, skills and attitudes in the respective P21 framework skills were in the work of a RE teacher. The analysis of the data will take place in early 2020. The study is part of a project funded by Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture called “21st century skills, multiple literacies and developing RE teacher education” (2018-2021).

Lovat, Terence

### **The Integral Link between Islamic Education and Religious Education: A Bonhoeffer Reflection and Analysis**

The paper will begin with Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s reflections on the integration between religion and life that he discerned in Islam, then to explore this notion in relation to the consequential integral link to be found between Islamic education and religious education. It will explore Islamic scholarship old and new in making the point that all Islamic education is religious education in the important sense that its ultimate goal is the pupil’s holistic wellbeing and development, intellectual, moral and spiritual, as impelled by Qur’anic principles embedded in the Five Pillars. In Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works in English (DBWE), we read: ...it seems to me that there is immense similarity between Islam and the lifestyle and piety recorded in the Old Testament ... In Islam, everyday life and religion are not separated at all. (DBWE 9, 124) The paper will take this assessment as a place to begin analysing the integration between Islamic religious education and education as a whole to be found in medieval and contemporary scholarship. It will begin with the tantalising similarity between Bonhoeffer’s notion of religionless Christianity (DBWE, 6) and the de facto “religionless

Islam” of the Golden Age scholar, Ibn Tufayl. It will proceed to tease out the implications of this notion with the educational imperatives to be found in scholars such as al-Farabi, al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd, as well as contemporary educational scholars such as al-Zeera, Nasr, Sultana and Faryadi. This integrated religious education is designed principally to provide holistic development, including intellectual, moral and spiritual wellbeing, an integration between religion and life that Bonhoeffer perceived. The paper will conclude with some thoughts about lessons for Western educators and religious educators to be learned from such Islamic perspectives.

Oliva, Joanna Marie

### **The role of Catholic school leaders in promoting the common good from the context of the Philippines Catholic educational institutions.**

This paper focused on the role of Catholic school leaders in promoting the common good from the context of the Philippines Catholic educational institutions.

The literature review explored the Christian perspective of the common good by examining what the Catholic Church teaches about the nature of the common good in Catholic education and identified the roles of Catholic school leaders in promoting it. It also recognised the leadership challenges such as balancing the secular perspective versus the Christian perspective of the common good. The literature review relates the excessive affirmation of equality and freedom, and the rapid growth of globalisation and secularisation as key challenges for Catholic school leaders.

The methodology chapter discussed the range of research tools used in this study. Each research method was selected with consideration of the advantages and disadvantages, alongside the ethical considerations for the three Philippine case study schools. This research gathered data through written interviews of the six institutional leaders and survey conducted from forty five (45) Catholic school leaders. Results of the survey were presented and compared each case study from one another. Information from written interviews and survey are interpreted and analysed through the process of triangulation. In conclusion, recommendations for improved practice of the Catholic school leaders in promoting the common good while maintaining the Catholic distinctiveness in the Philippine Catholic educational context were suggested. Further research topics that may contribute to enhancement of the educational mission of Catholic schools and fulfilment of the vocation of Catholic School Leaders were also proposed.

### **Orchard, Janet , Shelley McKeown Jones, Amanda Williams, Kathryn Wright, Kate Christopher Developing teachers’ capacity to promote positive community relations through subject Religion and Worldviews: the ‘Shared Space’ project**

Religion and Worldviews Education (RWE) or its equivalent is widely perceived as a vehicle for promoting positive community relations in schools, although empirical evidence to support this view is limited. The Shared Space project explores the potential of Allport’s (1954) contact hypothesis for RWE practice in England and Hong Kong. The contact hypothesis posits that under certain conditions, meaningful intergroup contact can reduce prejudice and promote community relations. In England, RWE practitioners (n =81) completed an online survey which examined motivation toward applying the contact hypothesis to practice, examples of how they did this, and how they could be supported to do this more. Teachers claimed to apply the contact hypothesis and thought it to be relevant. An analysis of practice examples demonstrated that for the most part, teachers reported classroom practice that enabled conversation between groups and opportunities for encounter with difference. Very few provided examples of practice that met Allport’s contact conditions; illustrating a divide between theory and practice. In terms of professional development, teachers indicated that teacher-led, rather than researcher-led dissemination was preferred through approaches such as an online toolkit and workshops.

Building on this research, a teacher toolkit was developed and trialled with teachers in England and in Hong Kong. Preliminary findings, while indicating positive responses to the materials and strategies developed by the project team, reveal interesting differences in professional

development cultures within these two settings, which had to be overcome by the project team itself observing contact hypothesis principles. Future implications include further investigation into how teachers might be empowered to engage in the wealth of further social psychological research that might be helpful to their professional practice as well as 'Shared Space' in RWE itself.

Peacock, Lucy

### **Getting to 'know' you: Religious literacy as a barrier to interfaith contact in London's schools?**

This paper is based upon 2016-2020 doctoral research which examined the relationship between 'interfaith encounters' and 'peaceful relations' among young people in London's schools. The research consisted of a mixed methods evaluation of the Faith and Belief Forum's School Linking Programme, an informal education programme based in the cities of London and Birmingham, UK, which trains teachers in interfaith dialogue facilitation skills and brings students from different schools together to creatively engage with questions of identity, belonging and belief.

The paper explores key questions around the role of 'knowledge' in School Linking. To what extent does students' reported knowledge of the religion and beliefs of others increase during School Linking? Does an increase in students' knowledge correlate with positive attitudes towards others? Does the 'type' of knowledge affect how positive attitudes are formed towards others?

Drawing upon data from 1,400 student surveys, teacher focus groups and participant observation in schools, low levels of religious literacy among students and teachers emerge as a key barrier to sustainable interfaith contact, the paper argues. This finding has academic and practical implications; it contributes to a) providing contextualised evidence for social psychologists' claims that knowledge is a weak mediating factor of effective contact between individuals, and b) recommending changes to the School Linking programme to foster optimum conditions for effective interfaith contact among young people. The PhD took a unique approach to an under-researched topic; it combined interdisciplinary research in education, the sociology of religion and social psychology with impact evaluation to provide an original account of the role and effectiveness of interfaith approaches as a tool for fostering peaceful relations among young people in London's schools.

Pintimalli, Andrea

### **Religions as Educative Systems, a proposal**

The prevailing sociological viewpoint on religions in the last century overshadowed in academic research intrinsically pedagogical aspects of religious systems. In religious systems, generally speaking, we have a global representation of the world, of its order, of the place of human being in it, knowledge to be acquired, capacity to be strengthened, a system of values and morals to be learned and developed, bodily practices to be assimilated, reference models and supporting narratives, a system of evaluation of the results in terms of positive and negative levels and final outcomes. The category of educational system seems to adapt to describe religious systems in a very appropriate way and would also have the significant advantage of acting as a bridge between a "pre-modern" or confessional concept, and a scientific and secular one.

To fully understand the idea of religions as educative systems, it must be recalled a specific concept of human being as "deficient animal with the specific ability to represent to oneself" with the words of Arnold Gehlen. This condition predisposes the human being for an educational process, which orients him and responds to the self-perceived deficiencies. Religions, in this sense, are educational systems, didactic methods that take on the task of mediating for man the relationship with becoming. The idea of an educational system brings us into the field of the human sciences, whose epistemological status allows us to read the fundamental difference between confessional and secular educational visions within the same framework: the capacity for abstraction/representation is understood in confessional visions as an instrument of knowledge of an objective and causal

immaterial world, while in confessional visions it is brought back to the sole relationship between the human being and the material world.

Poulter, Saira and Silja Lamminmäki-Varti, Elisa Hyvärinen, Katja Castillo

### **Developing teacher's professionalism through collaboration in early childhood education: The case of Finnish worldview education**

In this paper, we will discuss methodological aspects of research project "Creating Spaces for Diversity of Worldviews in Early Childhood Education" which aims at developing ECE teachers' professionalism and pedagogical imagination towards worldview education. Finnish ECEC National Curriculum (2018) states that different worldview backgrounds of families are taken into account in every-day pedagogical planning and individual identities of children should be fostered. Methodologically this study is based on the idea of collaborative and action research approach in which professional thinking is constructed through educational interventions, modelling and continuous reflection. The collaborative process invites students and teachers to take responsibility of pedagogical innovation in their work. The paper will present three research cases from different geographical and worldview contexts in Finland. 1) In Helsinki case study, a group of teachers and students partake a collaborative process in the midst of visible diversity where professional development is supported through dialogue between experts and novices and active pedagogical planning. 2) The case study of Eastern Finland has a particular emphasis on Orthodox Christianity as a minority religion in Finland and diversity understood from Orthodox viewpoint. Methodologically, a collaborative team teaching model is employed in which the students and teachers form communities of practice to develop a new understanding of worldview education. 3) Oulu case study aims to challenge the assumed homogeneity of Lutheran Christianity and investigate geographical distances in implementing worldview education. The case will gather ECE teachers to reflect on ethical encounters in which children invite adults to respond to their inquiry in practices of worldview education.

Putkonen, Niina

### **Possibilities of narrative. Investigating meanings in research of Islamic religious education**

My doctoral study examines issues that the diversity of Islam poses in the context of Islamic religious education (hence IRE) and home-school cooperation. The main question of the study is: How do teachers of Islamic religion and Finnish Muslim parents understand the diversity of Islam in IRE in Finnish public schools? In this paper, I will present the methodological starting points of the study. I am currently exploring the possibilities of narrative to approach the research question. In this paper, I will focus on the perspectives of personal and shared narratives. From an autoethnographic standpoint, I will also discuss a teacher as a researcher. Despite the diverse denominational background of Muslim students, IRE construction in Finnish schools is based on the form of "general Islam". The form has been questioned about fading the diversity of Islam. However, the previous research shows, that teachers of Islamic religion have seen the emphasis on communality as its strength. In my study I will ask, how the diversity of Islam is navigated in Islamic religious education, in the frameworks of education and upbringing of schools and homes. To examine the diversity, the study will investigate individuals in certain surroundings and interactions. 'Islam' is studied related to time and place and carrying meanings from different people both now and in the past.

Raivio, Magdalena & Ellinor Skaremyr

### **Understanding Religion as a Culture: An Intercultural Reading Strategy for Renegotiating Troublesome Concepts in Swedish ECEC Policy**

Preschools in Sweden are increasingly culturally diverse and obligated to provide every child the opportunity to develop their own cultural identity, as well as knowledge about and interest in different cultures. At the same time, teaching should be non-denominational and pass on a cultural

heritage from one generation to the next. According to previous research, several pedagogical dilemmas partly derive from how the concepts religion and culture are used in the policy documents that regulate Swedish preschool. This paper aim to make visible what constructions of religion that are made possible when analysing the concepts religion and culture in the Swedish ECEC curriculum (Lpfö 18) in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The method used was a policy analysis guided by an intercultural interpretation. The results show a lack of an explicit definition of the concept religion in the Swedish Lpfö 18. However, co-reading Lpfö 18 with the CRC, using an intercultural interpretation, exposes a number of semantic overlapping of the concepts religion and culture, wherein religion can be understood as constructed as a cultural phenomenon. Hence, where the Lpfö 18 uses the concepts culture and cultural heritage, it is suggested to be understood as including religion as both identity, practice, worldview and artistic practice. A further discussion regarding the proposed intercultural strategy for reading the policy documents, and its possible pedagogical implications will be addressed.

Rissanen, Inkeri

### **New approach to studying teachers' intercultural competencies: investigating the role of implicit theories of malleability**

The ethnic and cultural heterogenization of classrooms and the existing achievement gaps create a need to develop teachers' intercultural competence. In Finland the underachievement of second generation immigrants (not driven by socio-economic status) is particularly severe. Research has shown that teachers' pedagogical practices in multicultural contexts are largely shaped by their attitudes and beliefs. There are many known mechanisms through which teachers' beliefs affect minority students' learning. Attitudes and beliefs are generally acknowledged as a core dimension of intercultural competence but there is little consensus on what these beliefs are, or how they can be altered. This paper will present an early-phase mixed methods project which studies teachers' intercultural competence by drawing on social psychological research on implicit theories of malleability. People have different implicit theories concerning the extent to which traits of individuals and groups are malleable or fixed. These theories have implications for how people make sense of the social world, they predict prejudices and stereotyping, and have been found to be changeable by simple interventions. However, theoretical models of intercultural competence and approaches to the development of these competences do not take account of the impact of implicit theories of malleability for intercultural interactions. In this paper I will present initial findings on Finnish teachers implicit theories of malleability and their role in shaping teachers' intercultural competencies.

Tuasun, Dina Novita

### **Changing City, Changing Realities:the shift of values, worldviews, and religion in children's and young adult books about gentrification**

The concept of gentrification is being defined as "the transformation of a working-class or vacant area of the central city into middle-class residential and/or commercial use" (Lees, et.al 2008). Therefore, in this term, there is a process of class neighborhood upgrading (Atkinson 2004 ) and a displacement in which high-status segments of the population displace low-status groups and existing buildings are upgraded (Blasius 2004). And as a global phenomenon that is intertwined with processes of globalization, gentrification also happens rapidly in major cities in Indonesia. This paper aimed to examine children's and young adult books about gentrification as a tool to educate and also as literature that reflected reality. Gentrification may change the neighborhood and family context. Children and young adults are often impacted by this replacement and changing realities in their city. The focus of this paper will be on the representation of rural and urban, and how the shift of values, worldviews, and religion are depicted in the children's and young adult books. However, gentrification may bring economic, social, and moral effects on the

state of society. It also has a disparate effect on different races, ages, and classes, and fosters further segregation.

Unser, Alexander

### **Effects of class heterogeneity on individual learning in religious education: a multilevel analysis**

Today, Europe is facing an increasing religious diversity which poses new challenges to religious education (RE). Although there is plenty of research on how individual diversity influences students' perception of and learning in RE (e.g. Sjöborg 2013; Unser 2019), we have hardly any knowledge of whether and how class heterogeneity – which is diversity in the composition of school classes – has an effect on students' learning in RE. The present paper aims at closing this research gap by analysing the effects of students' individual characteristics, class heterogeneity, and interaction effects between both on students' learning activities in RE. Therefore, a multilevel regression model is computed (Raudenbush & Bryk 2002; Hox 2010). Building on previous studies, this model includes on individual level students' learning activities as dependent variable and their religiosity, cultural capital, and gender as well as their perception of teaching clarity and relevance of teaching content as independent variables. On class level, the model includes class heterogeneity due to religiosity, cultural capital, and gender as independent variables. The secondary analysis presented here builds on data which was collected by a survey in 2014/2015 among ninth graders in Germany (Unser 2019). The sample consists of  $n_i = 952$  students in  $n_c = 57$  classes. All variables on individual level were operationalised by established scales. The variables on class level were computed as standard deviations of religiosity and cultural capital respectively the percentage of female students within classes (Decristan et al. 2017). The findings show that class heterogeneity has no direct influence on students' learning activities, but rather moderates the influence of individual variables. Significant interaction effects between the perception of teaching clarity and religious respectively gender heterogeneity suggest that an increasement of these types of class heterogeneity require much more precise instructions by RE teachers so that students can effectively learn.

Viljanen, Merja & Elina Kuusisto

### **Civic purpose amongst 9th graders in Tampere surroundings**

This study is interested in young people on their last year of their nine-year basic education, when they have just made their plans for their future and for coming transition in their lives. The study investigates students' civic purpose, which is defined as “a sustained intention to contribute to the world beyond the self through civic or political action” (Malin, Ballard & Damon, 2015, p. 103). The research questions are: What are civic purposes of 16-year-old Finnish pupils?

What kind of civic commitments do the studied young people have to pursue their purposes?

Can there be observed any variation in the civic purposes or in the means to achieve them according to gender, ethnicity, social class and area of living?

The informants for the study are 9th graders ( $N = 1900$ ) from municipalities surrounding Tampere which is the second largest city in Finland. The quantitative approach uses a survey which instruments were adapted from Damon (2013) and Moran (2014). The data will be gathered in spring 2020 to present up-to-date results in the conference. Based on previous studies it is expected that pupils would be more likely self-oriented than other-oriented. However, it is interesting to find out how the current discussions for example on global warming are reflected in pupils' civic purposes. Results of the study have theoretical and educational implications. Findings will provide new insights for schools and youth workers on how to make life more meaningful for adolescences who have welfare or educational challenges on a critical era of youth development. The study enables to analyze differences between boys/girls/other and rural/urban youth or those who aim to apply to general/vocational upper secondary education. It would be also interesting to identify whether there are shared narratives upcoming after deceased era of a grand narrative.

