

# Contents

Acknowledgments .....	15
Abstract .....	16
Abbreviations.....	17
1. Introduction .....	21
1.1 A systematic approach to comparative studies in Religious Education.....	21
1.2 The cases: RE in England and Norway .....	22
1.3 Different school systems .....	25
1.4 Scope and limitations .....	26
1.5 Main research questions .....	27
1.6 Summary and Conclusion.....	28
2. Towards a Methodology for Comparative Religious Education .....	29
2.1 Introduction .....	29
2.2 Comparative studies in related fields .....	29
2.3 Pioneering work in the field of RE.....	34
2.4 Challenges in comparative studies in RE .....	37
Classification of RE.....	37
Problems of terminology .....	39
Why comparative studies?.....	39
2.5 Methodological considerations.....	40
2.6 Is this a new methodology?.....	42
2.7 National imaginaries and supranational processes .....	42
2.8 Three dimensions in comparative studies .....	44
2.9 The supranational dimension.....	47
2.10 A template for comparative studies in RE.....	52
2.11 Summary and Conclusion.....	54
3. Societal Level: Themes within Academic Debates about Religious Education in England and Norway .....	56
3.1 Introduction .....	56
3.2 The contribution of ‘secular’ religious studies to the development of multifaith approaches to RE in England and Norway .....	57
3.3 The institutional basis for RE research.....	63
3.4 Can we talk about ‘traditions’ for pedagogy of RE?.....	65
3.5 The reading of two ‘power texts’ by looking for characteristics of academic debate in England and Norway .....	69
3.6 The supranational dimension in academic debates on RE today .....	79
3.7 Summary and conclusion .....	82

4.	Institutional Level: Legal and Policy Developments in England and Norway .....	83
4.1	Introduction .....	83
4.2	The Legal Framework .....	83
4.3	Law regulating RE in state schools .....	84
4.4	Laws regulating the right to opt out .....	87
4.5	The Norwegian law suits .....	88
4.6	Religion in laws regarding schooling in general .....	89
4.7	Comparative discussion on legal issues .....	90
4.8	Introducing QCA 2004 and UD 2005 .....	95
4.9	QCA 2004.....	96
4.10	UD 2005 .....	98
4.11	Comparative remarks regarding layout and structure .....	100
4.12	The place in the school curricula.....	101
4.13	Comparative points.....	102
4.14	Structure and content of RE in England and Norway exemplified through QCA 2004 and UD 2005 .....	103
4.15	Comparative discussion regarding structure and content.....	108
4.16	Concluding discussion.....	110
4.17	Summary and Conclusion.....	114
5.	Religious Education in Practice: Introduction to Case Studies from England and Norway .....	115
5.1	Introduction .....	115
5.2	Representation and national imaginaries.....	115
5.3	Different styles of civility in the school systems .....	118
5.4	Characteristics of the schools .....	123
5.5	Location of the schools and characteristics of the school populations .....	126
5.6	Do classroom activities reflect different national styles?.....	127
	The pupil population.....	127
	Organisation of teaching rooms.....	128
	Topics covered.....	129
	Teaching methods and styles.....	130
	Dialogue in the classroom .....	131
	Different styles?.....	132
	Visiting Christian believers .....	133
	Pupils' interest in the topics taught .....	134
5.7	National styles and civil enculturation .....	136
5.8	Reflecting on the empirical studies in the methodology .....	136
5.9	Summary and Conclusion.....	138
6.	Instructional Level: Teachers' Perspectives .....	139
6.1	Introduction .....	139
6.2	The teachers and their contexts .....	140
6.3	Describing their school and its RE .....	141

6.4	Aims of RE .....	143
6.5	The importance of RE .....	144
6.6	National aims and local adjustments .....	148
6.7	Text books and schemes of work .....	150
6.8	Content of teaching.....	152
6.9	Social enculturation gives nationally distinctive patterns in teaching?.....	154
6.10	Learning about and from religion.....	155
6.11	Reflecting on multifaith RE as integrative RE .....	158
6.12	Is RE creating otherness? .....	160
6.13	How is ‘Norwegianness’ and ‘Englishness’ imagined? .....	161
6.14	Summary and conclusion .....	162
7.	Experiential Level: Pupils’ Perspectives .....	166
7.1	Introduction .....	166
7.2	The pupils and their context .....	167
7.3	Which modernities?.....	170
7.4	Aims of RE .....	174
7.5	Content of learning.....	177
7.6	What can explain the difference in quality of factual knowledge? .....	178
7.7	Religion in Britain? Norwegian religion? .....	180
7.8	Learning about and from religion.....	183
7.9	What kind of imaginary would be inclusive?.....	186
7.10	Summary and conclusion .....	189
8.	Concluding Discussion .....	192
8.1	Introduction .....	192
8.2	A systematic approach to comparative RE.....	192
	A model .....	192
8.3	Is this a general model, a template for comparative studies?.....	193
8.4	Obstacles and limitations.....	195
8.5	Results: Examples of findings .....	196
8.6	Different national styles .....	198
8.7	Inclusive RE and construction of otherness .....	202
8.8	Summary and conclusion .....	207
Appendix 1:	Interview Schedules .....	210
	Schedule for interviews with RE teachers.....	210
	Questions .....	210
	Backgrounds .....	210
	Aims.....	210
	Contents.....	211
	Learning from and about .....	212
	Respect.....	212
	Personal growth .....	212
	Interview schedule for group interviews with pupils .....	212

Questions .....	213
Aims.....	213
Contents .....	213
Learning from and about .....	213
Respect.....	214
Personal growth .....	214
 Appendix 2: Norwegian Legal Texts .....	 215
The law on KRL prior to the change in 2005.....	215
Christian object/ purpose clause – the school law preamble before 2008 .....	215
The Bolstad Committee’s suggestion for a new school law preamble .....	216
 Appendix 3: The Teachers’ Educational Backgrounds .....	 219
 References .....	 221