A Comparative Study of Religious Education Policy in Turkey and England

Abdurrahman Hendek

St Antony's College

University of Oxford

Thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

Hilary Term 2018

Contents

Contents 2
List of Tables and Figures 4
Abbreviations 5
Acknowledgements 7
Abstract 9
1. Introduction 10
1.1. Relevance of the Research 13
1.2. Terms and Limitations 18
1.3. Contents of Thesis Chapters 22
1.4. Conclusion 24
2. Conceptual Framework 25
2.1. Introduction 25
2.2. Comparative Education Research 25
2.3. Comparative Religious Education Research 29
2.4. Conceptualising Supranational and National Factors and their Influence on RE Policy 33
2.5. Research Question 47
2.6. Supranational Factors 49
2.7. Conclusion 67
3. Methodology 69
3.1. Introduction 69
3.2. Religious Education Policy 69
3.3. Selection of Cases 72
3.4. Qualitative Research 77
3.5. Data Collection 79
3.6. Data Analysis 93
3.7. Reflexivity 100
3.8. Ethical Considerations 104
3.9. Conclusion 107
4. National Factors 109
4.1. Introduction 109
4.2. Politics 109
4.3. State and Religion 119
4.4. The School System 128
4.5. Particularities and Peculiarities 134
4.6. Teachers 142
4.7. Conclusion 151
5. Supranational Factors 154
5.1. Introduction 154
5.2. Supranational Religious Education Policy 154
5.3. Secularisation 172
5.4. Pluralisation 194
5.5. Conclusion 212
6. Influence 214
6.1. Introduction 214

6.2. Religious Education Reform 214
6.3. Charge of Confessionality 236
6.4. Omissions and Additions 258
6.5. Confusion 268
6.6. Marginalisation 281
6.7. Calls for Reform 293
6.8. Conclusion 313

7. Discussion: Supranational and National Factors and Religious Education Policy 316
7.1. Introduction 316
7.2. Factors 317
7.3. Mechanisms 322
7.4. Consequences 331
7.5. Conclusion 333

8. Conclusion: Sensitising for Plurality 335
8.1. Introduction 335
8.2. Implications 335
8.3. Personal Reflection 347
8.4. Concluding Remarks 348

9. Appendix: CUREC Forms 352

10. References 357

List of Tables and Figures

Table 3.1 Participants of the study 87
Display 5.1 Supranational policy and religious education policy in Turkey 156
Display 5.2 Supranational policy and religious education policy in England 165
Display 5.3 A taxonomy of the ways secularisation is seen by the Turkish participants. 177
Display 5.4 Secularisation and religious education policy in Turkey. 180
Display 5.5 A comparison of the views of Anglican 1 and BHA representatives about secularisation. 185
Display 5.6 Secularisation and religious education policy in England. 190
Display 5.7 Pluralisation and religious education policy in Turkey. 202
Display 5.8 Pluralisation and religious education policy in England. 207

Abbreviations

AMSS	:	Association of Muslim Social Scientists
APPG RE	:	All Party Parliamentary Group for Religious Education
AULRE	:	Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education in the United Kingdom
BERA	:	British Educational Research Association
BHA	:	British Humanist Association
CORAB	:	Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life
CUREC	:	Central University Research Ethics Committee
DCSF	:	Department for Children, Schools and Families (replaced by the DfE)
DfE	:	Department for Education
DÖGM	:	*Din Öğretimi Genel Müdürlüğü* (General Directorate of Religious Instruction, the Ministry of National Education)
EBacc	:	English Baccalaureate
ECHR	:	European Convention on Human Rights
ECRI	:	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ECtHR	:	European Court of Human Rights
ERI	:	Education Reform Initiative, Turkey (*Eğitim Reformu Girişimi*)
ESWU	:	Education and Science Workers' Union (*Eğitim ve Bilim Emekçileri Sendikası*; known as *Eğitim Sen*).
ETU	:	Educators Trade Union (*Eğitim Bir Sen*)
EU	:	European Union
GCSE	:	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HC Deb	:	House of Commons Debates
IARF	:	International Association for Religious Freedom
ISREV	:	International Seminar on Religious Education and Values
MEB	:	*Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı* (Ministry of National Education, Turkey)

MRG	:	Minority Rights Group International
NASACRE	:	National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education
NATRE	:	National Association of Teachers of Religious Education
NSS	:	National Secular Society
Ofsted	:	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
OSCE	:	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PISA	:	Programme for International Student Assessment
PRA	:	Presidency of Religious Affairs, Turkey (*Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı*; *DIB*)
QCA	:	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
RE	:	religious education
REC	:	Religious Education Council of England and Wales
REDCo	:	Religion in Education. A contribution to Dialogue or a factor of Conflict in transforming societies of European Countries
RELIGARE	:	Religious Diversity and Secular Models in Europe – Innovative Approaches to Law and Policy
SACRE	:	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
TBMM	:	*Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi* (Grand National Assembly of Turkey)
TEU	:	Turk Education Union (*Türk Eğitim Sen*)
UK	:	United Kingdom
UN	:	United Nations
USA	:	United States of America
USCIRF	:	United States Commission on International Religious Freedom

Acknowledgements

Praise be to the God, the Cherisher and the Sustainer of the Worlds. My utmost gratitude is reserved for the God, to Him I belong and to Him I shall return.

Thereafter, I would like to acknowledge the Ministry of National Education of Turkey for funding my MA and DPhil. Moreover, I owe a debt of gratitude to several people. To start, very special thanks go to Dr. Liam Gearon and Dr. Nigel Fancourt who patiently supported me throughout my thesis. I am grateful to Professor Mehmet Ali Büyükkara, Professor Muhsin Akbaş, Professor Recep Kaymakcan, Dr. Nimetullah Akın and Dr. Mahmut Salihoğlu who encouraged and helped me to pursue my degree in England. Furthermore, I appreciate the help and support of Professor Andrew Wright, Dr. L. Philip Barnes and Professor Meg Maguire at King's College London. Moreover, I have greatly benefited from the discussions with Professor Trevor Cooling, Professor Alis Oancea, Dr. David Mills, Dr. Katharine Burn, Dr. David Johnson and Dr. Kerem Öktem. I am particularly grateful to the participants of this study for their time, help and insight.

I also would like to thank my friends and peers, Dr. Rahman Dağ, Dr. Hüsrev Tabak, Dr. İbrahim Yılmaz, Dr. İlyas Fırat Cengiz, Mehmet Tiren, Mehmet Emin Çetinkaya and Fatih Şafak, for offering me advice and supporting me through this process. I want to thank my late father, mother, sisters and especially my elder brother, Adem Hendek, who has always been a light and inspiration for me. Last but not least, I must thank my own family: my wife Ayşe Yıldız Hendek, son Hüseyin Eymen Hendek, and daughter Meryem Erva Hendek. Thanks to them for being supportive, patient and *qurrota a'yun* (Qur'an, 25: 74): 'the coolness of my eye'.

Dedicated to my wife, son and daughter

Abstract

It has long been recognised that education policy has been questioned, critiqued and reformed in response to a variety of supranational and national factors. In the field of religious education, there has been a growing argument for comparative works to study this relationship between wider factors and religious education policy. This thesis seeks to present a comparison of religious education policy in state schools in two strikingly different countries, Turkey and England, by interviewing various policy actors, to unravel some of the complexities and contestations around supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education policy.

The thesis reveals that wider factors have explicitly and implicitly shaped religious education policy by constituting a significant milieu that has constrained and enabled policy actors. Yet, the thesis also suggests that religious education policy can be better understood through a conflict theory lens, because policy actors have responded to and interpreted wider factors and their influence on religious education policy widely and contradictorily, reflecting their deeply held worldviews and values. Furthermore, in the context of the collision of wider factors and rival policy actors, religious education has tended to converge on common problems such as confusion, marginalisation, accusations and on endless reform actions and discussion. The thesis suggests that there is a need for sensitising for plurality across and within societies and a need for more open and plural religious education policies.

The findings of this thesis give insights into how different policy actors view and interpret supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education policy. The findings have relevance for debates about the role of religion in education within plural societies.

Key words: religious education policy, policy actors, comparative religious education, Turkey, England, Islam, Christianity, supranational factors, secularisation, pluralisation, conflict, compulsory consensus, plural religious education policy

1. Introduction

In 2008, just one year after the European Court of Human Rights' (ECtHR) decision that Turkish religious education was not conducted in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner, and that, therefore, it amounted to violation of the parental right to education (ECtHR, 2007b), I was awarded a scholarship from the Turkish Ministry of National Education to pursue a postgraduate degree in the field of religious education abroad, in return for obligatory service in a Turkish university. There might be different reasons for the Turkish government's sponsorship of the overseas study scholarship program (Çelik, 2012). One of them being Turkey's long-standing quest to attain the level of 'contemporary civilisation' that has become synonymous with 'Western civilisation' (Ashkenazi, 2009: 895). Since the eighteenth century, Turks have 'begun to look outside, more particularly to the West, for new inspiration' and sent students, statesmen and researchers to the West (Berkes, 1964: 25; Kazamias, 1966). In recent times, Turkish interest in the West has intensified after the Turkey's acceptance as a candidate for European Union (EU) membership in 1999. In relation to education policy, the Ministry of National Education stated that the ultimate aim of the education reforms is 'to adapt education to the norms of the European Union' (MEB, 2005). In 2017, the Minister of National Education was reported to say that religious education would be taught in schools in accordance with ECtHR (2007b, 2014) rulings (Hurriyet Daily News, 2017), even though Turkey's relationship with the West has been tense at times and can be best characterised as a 'love and hate' relationship (Bülbül, Özipek and Kalın, 2008).

In Turkey – a laic state with Muslim majority population – perhaps not surprisingly, religious education has always been a controversial issue. On the one hand, some have seen religious education as a relic of former times. For them secularisation of education and the State is unfinished unless religion is removed from the curriculum or tamed and modernised completely. On the other hand, some have found 'laic' (secular) or 'tamed' religious education insufficient and called for more Islamic-oriented religious education in state schools. These different and rival views over religious education mean that debates around religious education policy in state schools have often ended up in deadlock (Müftügil, 2011). This has led both supporters and opponents of religious education in state schools to use the Western examples to argue their case. For example, supporters have argued that these issues had already been settled in the West and they have cited Western countries, usually England and Germany, as examples to justify the place of religious education in state schools (see Ayhan, 2004 for examples from politicians); but, as can be guessed (Ball, 2013: 40), both groups have used examples selectively and rarely acknowledged contradictory examples, which is, according to Noah (1984), a blatant 'abuse' of comparative education.

This made me want to learn more about religious education in the West, and especially religious education in England. When I started to read and learn about English religious education, I realised that religious education in England is far from settled; like Turkey, it has been subject to controversies and fierce debates (e.g. Barnes and Wright, 2006; Copley, 2005, 2008; Thompson, 2004a; Wright, 1993, 2007).

As part of a Master of Arts in Religious Education degree, I compared Turkish and English religious educations in terms of the partnership between the State and religion, laws regarding religious education and religious education curricula (Hendek, 2011). When I applied for a DPhil at the University of Oxford, my plan was again to conduct a comparative

study, but after a few weeks, following the advice of one of my supervisors, I decided to study only Turkish religious education to do extensive research in one context and to establish a better theoretical model of the relationship between society and religious education policy. However, in my exchanges with officials, they made it clear that they wanted me to conduct a research on English religious education so as to bring something useful back to Turkey.

However, my views on comparative research had evolved by this time: partly because of my readings on comparative education, comparative religious education and religious education in England and Turkey and partly due to conversations with my former and current supervisors. I have been convinced that instead of aiming to learn from the English context in order to transplant it to Turkey, my comparative research should attempt to understand how religious education policy is made and interpreted by different actors in the context of wider factors in different societies. I believe that the theoretical insights emanating from such a work will be more beneficial theoretically and practically than research that focuses on the parts of English religious education policy that can be used at home.

This is my personal experience and background that led me to conduct comparative research in religious education policy in Turkey and England (for more personal biography see 3.7 below). My biography is important, because as a 'socially situated researcher' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: xii) I am part of the research, and my biography might influence the research. However, these are not the only reasons why I decided to conduct comparative religious education research. In the next section I will discuss the relevance of comparative study in religious education policy.

1.1. Relevance of the Research

Some founders of comparative education realised that education policy is a product of national socio-political, legal and economic factors. For example, more than a century ago, Michael Sadler (1900, reprinted in Bereday, 1964b: 310) argued that 'the things outside the schools matter even more than the things inside the schools, and govern and interpret the things inside' (see also Bereday, 1964a: ix; Kandel, 1933: xix). In recent decades, others have argued that the decisive factors shaping education policy are not national, but global in character (e.g. Arnove, Torres and Franz, 2013; Dale and Robertson, 2009b; Kallo and Rinne, 2006; Meyer et al., 1977).

In the field of religious education, too, some have recognised that influences on religious education policy come from the supranational as well as the national levels (Chater and Erricker, 2013: 1; Cush, 2015, 2016a) and there is a growing argument for comparative religious education studies (Bråten, 2015: 138; Fancourt, 2013, 2015; Freathy et al., 2016: 125; Nipkow, 2006: 578; Parker, 2013: 14; Schreiner, 2011: 22; Schweitzer, 2004: 353; Weisse, 2007), on the grounds that, as Osmer and Schweitzer (2003: 3) argue, the 'interdependent' relationship between religious education and its social contexts – which have global as well national aspects – can be better understood on the basis of comparative studies.

In the field of comparative religious education, the argument that different societies have been influenced by the same supranational factors, such as secularisation and pluralisation, has increasingly become axiomatic, and a starting point for comparative studies (Bråten, 2009; Jackson et al., 2007; Matemba, 2011; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003; Weisse, 2007; Willaime, 2007). For example, Bråten (2009: 49), who inspired me to conduct comparative

religious education research, claims that 'the same basic international trends' affect religious education in different countries. Similarly Osmer and Schweitzer (2003: 26) argue that 'the decisive developments shaping contemporary societies and our world as a whole are international in character'. On the same premise, in recent years, there has been an increasing interest in global governance in religious education policy (e.g. the Toledo Guiding Principles see OSCE, 2007). The guidelines and recommendations produced by supranational organisations offer religious education policy solutions to different countries on the premise that different countries are facing similar challenges, such as increasing religious diversity (Jackson, 2014). Furthermore, some commentators claim that the same factors have, to some extent, resulted in convergence and similar policy developments (Bråten, 2016; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003; Schreiner, 2002, 2007, 2011; Willaime, 2007), such as the development of non-confessional and plural approaches to religious education in different societies.

However, these two arguments can be problematized and challenged in several ways. First, Ramirez (2012: 434) and Dale (2015: 359) claim that it is important to identify the 'factors' and worldwide 'trends/ideas'. If this is the case for comparative education, then there is a greater need for such an endeavour for comparative religious education since this is a field which is, as Schweitzer (2015: 20) argues, 'still at an early point of its development' .

Second, previous comparative studies in the field of religious education, which started with the premise that the same supranational factors influence religious education in different countries, have examined religious education policies in similar (predominantly Christian) contexts (see 2.3 below). It seems that a research study that compares religious education policies in strikingly different countries is a timely endeavour. Therefore, this study compares the religious education policies of two significantly different countries: England

and Turkey – which are strikingly different in terms of religious education policy, education policy (diversity and unity respectively), religious tradition (Christianity and Islam), religious landscape (plurality and homogeneity) and the structural location of religion (laicism and the Established Church) (see 3.3 below) – to discern the respective meanings and influence of assumed supranational factors in strikingly different contexts (Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003: 27).

According to Bereday (1964b: 6), a comparative study can help us 'to be aware (…) of other nations' points of view'. This point is important; because there are supranational religious education policies in addition to the arguments that different countries are facing same challenges. A comparison of significantly different countries' religious education policies can inform us about other nation's points of view vis-à-vis these supranational factors and religious education policy. One problem with the academic research in the West is its Euro/Western/Christian centrism (Apple, Ball and Gandin, 2010a: 9; Nipkow, 2006: 582; Rui, 2007: 255; Said, [1978] 2003; Takayama, Sriprakash and Connell, 2017; Warner, 1993: 1048). Even though this bias is not the case with every study, it makes it important to include a non-European/Western/Christian voice in comparative religious education study to illuminate alternative points of view on wider factors such as secularisation and its influence on religious education policy.

Third, the argument that different countries are facing the same challenges should itself be challenged because it has also been used as an argument for more integration and convergence in religious education policy in different countries. For example, Alberts (2007: 353) argues that

> a common framework for integrative RE, which ensures that all pupils in Europe learn about religious plurality in an educational approach, is necessary.

This study with its two strikingly different cases, namely Turkey and England, and its focus on diversity within societies can shed some light on the possibility of adopting the same religious education model in different countries.

Fourth, it is important to put an extra focus on diversity within societies to properly understand wider factors and religious education policy. Bråten (2009), Alberts (2007) and Osmer and Schweitzer (2003), who all contributed massively to comparative religious education, did not address how different policy actors experienced and interpreted wider factors and their influence on religious education policy. This was also a basic limitation in previous comparative religious education studies that incorporated Turkey and England (Alakuş and Bahçekapılı, 2009; Kaymakcan, 1998; also Kaymakcan, 2004). For example, Kaymakcan (1998) used textbooks as a primary research source to examine the teaching of Islam in secondary schools in England and Turkey. This was also the limitation in my MA dissertation (Hendek, 2011), in which I argued that, due to the same global trends, Turkey and England now have 'non-confessional' religious education. My conclusion was based on the exploration of respective curricula documents (MEB DÖGM, 2005, 2006; QCA, 2004) and the relevant literature (Bilgin, 2002: 35; Hull, 1989; Jackson and O'Grady, 2007; Kaymakcan, 2007). However, I have realised that there are a significant number of people and academics who would disagree that Turkish and English religious education is 'non-confessional'. The limitation of my dissertation was that I did not address how different policy actors and stakeholders actually interpret religious education policy.

This present study, therefore, seeks to compensate for this limitation found in my dissertation and in previous comparative studies by incorporating the views, interpretations, and worries of various policy actors in two distinctive countries, England and Turkey. This focus on diversity is important because these policy actors might view and interpret factors

and their influence on religious education policy differently. Moreover, it is important to include the views of various policy actors because, as Ball (1990) argues, in education policy, some voices are heard and others are simply ignored in the policy-making process (see also Ball, 2010: 157; Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992: 20). In religious education policy, some commentators claim that the views of minorities (Ahmed, 2012; Gürcan, 2015; Müftügil, 2011; Muslim Council of Britain, 2007; Sarwar, 1994) are ignored – both 'the silent minority' (i.e. religious) (Moulin, 2011) and 'the silent majority' (i.e. non-religious) (Rudge, 1998). This thesis might provide a platform for the voices of that 'silent minority' and 'the silent majority', as well as for those who participate in the policy making process.

Matemba (2011), which I came across after I started my research, is close to my thesis, because it studies the views of various stakeholders in one European and one African country – Scotland and Malawi – albeit both are predominantly Christian countries. Matemba (2011) focused on religious education reform in both countries. Even though Matemba, too, is interested in factors influencing religious education policy reform, he did not address how various stakeholders understand and view these factors, such as secularisation. This research focuses on wider factors and religious education policy from the perspectives of various policy actors.

Fifth, previous comparative studies did not address how these factors shape religious education, such as its mechanisms and consequences. The next chapter will explore these issues.

In short, this thesis with its two significantly different cases and its focus on diversity is relevant and timely in studying the wider factors and their influence on religious education policy. In the next section, I will explore some of the terms used in this thesis.

1.2. Terms and Limitations

Based on the relevant literature, a key assumption here is that wider factors shape religious education policy. It is common in comparative studies that these factors are divided into supranational and national (or global and local). Even though I question such a dichotomy, I still use it for the purpose of clarity because some factors are described as 'supranational' and some as 'national' in the literature (see 2.4 below for these terms).

Moreover, even though it is difficult to explain the whole of religious education through these factors (Fancourt, 2017: 128-129; Schweitzer et al., 2012: 90), religious education policy (and probably that in other curriculum areas, such as citizenship education) can be understood as an active response to the changing world around it (Matemba, 2011; Nixon, 2009; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003).

The term 'religious education policy' here is understood as more than an official policy. Religious education policy consists of the views, interpretations and understandings of policy actors such as teachers, state officials and religious and secular organisations; as well as official state policy articulated in policy documents such as education acts and syllabuses. The thesis' focus is on the views of policy actors, rather than on official documents which make up the official religious education policy. Therefore, the thesis uses interviews with religious education policy actors as the main medium of data collection to answer the research question.

The term 'religious education' means different things in different contexts (Jackson, 2016a: 16; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003: 6), but I use it as a general term that denotes a separate school subject that deals with religions and/or non-religious worldviews. The name of the

subject is officially ‘Religious Education’ in England and ‘Religious Culture and Ethics Course’ in Turkey, but I call both ‘religious education’ in this thesis.

In other words, the term ‘religious education’ is not used in this research as a reference to any pedagogical approach. Regarding pedagogical approaches, it is not unusual in the literature to divide approaches to religious education into two: confessional and non-confessional. The term confessional often stands for religious education that somehow encourages and aims at increasing the pupils’ religious commitment; non-confessional stands for educational (or secular) religious education that is assumed not to seek to nurture pupils in a particular belief system (Cush, 2007: 219; Durham Jr, 2013: 4; Ferrari, 2013: 100-101; Keast, 2008; Kimanen, 2016: 265; Pépin, 2009: 19). In the Turkish context, the terms doctrinal (*doktriner*) and non-doctrinal (*doktriner olmayan*) are more common and more or less correspond to the same dichotomy, though some Turkish commentators also use confessional and non-confessional to describe and categorise religious education models (see Bahçekapılı, 2011: 24-25). Throughout the thesis, I also use the term ‘indoctrination’. This term is historically used to refer to a more severe form of confessional religious education.

However, some have criticised this dichotomy, arguing that every religious education model is ‘confessional’ in the sense that, as Watson (2007: 3) argues, it ‘is founded on certain beliefs and has particular aims in mind’ (see also Thompson, 2004b: 62-64). Moreover, some have suggested that indoctrination (and confessionality) might have secular as well as religious forms, although there is a bias against religious indoctrination (see Copley, 2005; May and Johnston, 1968; Thompson, 2004b; Watson, 2007). Moreover, some have argued that concepts like confessional and non-confessional are abstract, and that, in practice, there is no clear-cut difference between them (Schreiner, 2015: 149-150).

Denominational and non-denominational are also used in this thesis. Even though some use these terms interchangeably with confessional and non-confessional (see Fabretti, 2013: 48; Ferrari, 2014: 29; Schreiner, 2014a: 166), in this thesis denominational denotes a religious education that is based on a specific denomination, such as Sunnism, while non-denominational refers to an ecumenical religious education that avoids denominational teaching. In Turkish, supra-sectarian (*mezhepler üstü*) is used to refer to non-denominational religious education. These are the terms I use throughout the thesis to describe religious education and religious education models.

1.2.1. Limitations

As Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 36) put it, 'there is never enough time to do any study', therefore the focus should be narrowed to specific cases (see also Bråten, 2016: 37). This thesis compares the religious education policies of Turkey and England. In other words, there are two cases: Turkish religious education policy and English religious education policy. Regarding religious education policy, I focus on the views and interpretations of policy actors, rather than on official documents.

This thesis focuses specifically on religious education policy in 'fully state-funded secondary schools'. Private schools and higher education institutions are not included in the scope of the thesis. I focus on 'secondary schools', because there are almost no religious education classes in primary schools in Turkey (religious education starts in the fourth (final) grade of primary education) and all the teachers I interviewed are secondary school teachers. There are also state-funded faith schools – schools with a religious character that receive state funding – some of the issues I discuss are related to these schools, but my focus is on ordinary state schools: fully state-funded secondary schools in England, which must provide religious education that 'shall reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in

the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (U.K. Parliament, 1988); and *devlet okulları* (state schools) in Turkey. However, the implications of this thesis seem to be relevant to both fully state-funded schools and faith schools.

I use 'English' religious education policy, or religious education policy in 'England' for a reason. The thesis does not cover religious education policies in the other UK home nations – Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales – because both historically and currently there are important differences between English (religious) education policy and the rest of the UK (Cush, 2016b: 53-54; Furlong and Lunt, 2016: 249; Taylor, Rees and Davies, 2013: 290).

This thesis does not focus on religious practices in schools such as collective worship, which was historically part of religious education policy in England (Copley, 2008). Even though the principles and factors that shape religious education policy in England also have implications for collective worship, I excluded it from the thesis, partly because there is no equivalent in Turkey and partly because of the need to narrow the focus of the thesis.

This thesis is also not about religious education pedagogy and classroom practice. Even though I interview teachers, my focus is on their views, rather than on their teaching techniques and methods. Nevertheless, it should be noted that even though this research is 'policy' focused, there are some topics and issues discussed that can also be identified as pedagogical or curricular issues. This is partly because of the interconnectedness of these issues. Religious education pedagogy and practice are closely bound up with religious education policy (Chater and Erricker, 2013: 1).

1.3. Contents of Thesis Chapters

The thesis has eight chapters, including this Introduction. The first three chapters introduce the research. Then, the next three chapters present the findings and the last two chapters discuss the findings and present implications.

Chapter 1 (Introduction) introduces the thesis, presents the rationale behind and relevance of the research, and the contents of the thesis chapters. In this chapter, I argue that there is a need for this thesis, a comparative religious education research that includes distinctively different countries – Turkey and England – and studies the views of various policy actors on wider factors and their influence on religious education policy. In this chapter, I also make the limitations of the thesis clear, and explain some terms used in the thesis.

Chapter 2 (Conceptual Framework) expands on the discussion provided in Chapter 1, by providing what will be studied in this thesis. In this chapter, I argue that a comparative study should include at least two cases and it should study the relationship between supranational and national factors and religious education policy from the perspectives of various policy actors. Moreover, in this chapter, I conceptualise these wider factors and their influence on religious education policy. Furthermore, I present the research question, which requires the identification and exploration of wider factors and their influence on religious education policy from the perspectives of policy actors. Finally, in this chapter, I explore three supranational factors that are derived from previous comparative religious education studies.

Chapter 3 (Methodology) describes the research methodology for the study. It specifically explores 'who will be studied' and 'how they will be studied' to answer the research question. In this chapter, I argue that various stakeholders in religious education policy can be called policy actors who are part of the policy-making process. I justify the selection of

England and Turkey as representing two distinctively different countries and outline research design, data collection and analysis methods. Furthermore, the chapter discusses reflexivity and ethical issues.

The next three chapters present the findings of the thesis. Chapter 4 (National Factors) identifies and explores the national factors shaping religious education policy in England and Turkey. These factors emerged from data. Five national factors were identified and discussed: politics, the state and religion, the school system, particularities and peculiarities of Turkey and England, and teachers. This chapter shows that national factors still decisively influence religious education policy according to the policy actors. Chapter 5 (Supranational Factors) explores whether the three 'supranational' factors – namely supranational religious education policy, secularisation and pluralisation – that are derived from previous comparative religious education studies, have shaped religious education policy in Turkey and England according to the participants of this study. Chapter 6 (Influence) explores the influence of wider factors on religious education policy according to the participants. The analysis of data in this chapter is presented in six thematic sections: religious education reform; charge of confessionality; omissions and additions; confusion; marginalisation; and call for reform.

Chapter 7 (Discussion) summarises and discusses the findings to answer the research question. In this chapter, I revisit the dichotomy between supranational and national and argue that the borders between supranational and national factors seem to be hazy. Moreover, I discuss how wider factors shape religious education policy. I argue that wider factors shape and inform religious education policy, but that the policy actors still interpret these factors differently and contradictorily. The thesis suggests that how the wider factors

shape religious education policy is closely related to who makes, interprets and applies the policy.

Chapter 8 (Conclusion) discusses the implications of the thesis and presents my personal reflection. This thesis suggests that there is a need for a more open and plural education and religious education policy, as, interviews with over 40 policy actors show that there is a diversity of views about wider factors and religious education policy in Turkey and England.

1.4. Conclusion

In this introduction to the thesis, I have stressed that as a 'socially situated researcher' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: xii) my biography might have an influence on the research. Therefore, I opened this chapter, by briefly discussing my biography and how I ended up conducting a comparative study. This study is a result of my professional and personal interests. Moreover, I have set the scene by introducing rationale and relevance of this thesis. I have argued that this thesis is relevant and timely, because of various reasons. First, it compares two strikingly different countries in terms of state, society and education system and religious education policy. This is important, because previous comparative religious education studies compared religious education in similar contexts. Second, it incorporates the voices of diverse policy actors. Since modern societies are marked with diversity, it is important to hear the views and interpretations of a wide variety of policy actors about religious education policy and its relationship with wider factors. Moreover, I described some key terms used in this thesis and made its limitations clear. The next chapter will expand on the discussion here, by providing the conceptual framework of the thesis.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Introduction

The conceptualisation here aims at providing a means of illuminating factors and their influence on religious education policy. Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 21) argue that a conceptual framework should specify a) 'what will be studied' and b) 'who will be studied'. This chapter attempts to specify what will be studied in this thesis through the exploration of comparative education and comparative religious education. An exploration of comparative education research and comparative religious education research informs us that a comparative study in religious education should encompass supranational as well as national factors to fully understand (religious) education policy; but that the notion of the influence of supranational and national factors on religious education policy is abstract and especially its mechanisms has not been addressed sufficiently in previous comparative religious education studies. Therefore, this chapter explores 'what counts as supranational and national factors', and 'how and to what end these factors influence religious education policy (its mechanisms and consequences)'. In this chapter, the research question of the thesis is also discussed. Then, this chapter finishes with an exploration of the assumed supranational factors in religious education policy, derived from previous comparative religious education studies: supranational religious education policy, secularisation and pluralisation.

2.2. Comparative Education Research

'What should be studied in comparative research in religious education?' An examination of classical and contemporary works in the field of comparative education shows that there is no consensus on the issue. In 1982, Kelly, Altbach and Arnove (1982) described the

intellectual crisis of comparative education as one that was reduced to answering the question: 'what is comparative education?'. Even today, the debate has not ended and the question of 'what is comparative education' is still asked (see Cowen, 2014; Epstein, 2008; Manzon, 2011) and still answered differently. As a result, Cowen and Kazamias (2009b: 4) note that, today there is not 'one' comparative education, rather there are 'several comparative educations'.

Even though this can be read negatively as a lack of clarity, or a 'lack of understanding' (see Epstein, 2008: 373), it can also be read positively: that there are different ways of constructing and conducting comparative education research (see Kandel, 1933; Manzon, 2011; Rust et al., 1999: 89). Thus, there can also be different ways of conducting comparative religious education research (Schröder, 2016: 202), and this research is only one of the ways of conducting it.

Returning to comparative study, one key question is what makes a comparative study 'comparative?'. As can be guessed, there is no unanimity. For example, some describe the essential subject matter of comparative education as cross-national, that is, a study of two or more countries. For example, Postlethwaite (1988: xvii) argued that

> strictly speaking to 'compare' means to examine two or more entities by putting them side by side and looking for similarities and differences between or among them

but he also noted that single-country studies constitute a significant element of comparative inquiry (see also Phillips and Schweisfurth, 2007: 21). In this thesis, comparative study is understood as a study that encompasses at least two countries/cases, because in order to compare, we need at least two things (see Manzon, 2011: 162 for a criticism of single country/case 'comparative' studies).

Furthermore, some consider school-society relations as the essential component of comparative education (Bereday, 1964a; Hans, 1967; Kelly, Altbach and Arnove, 1982; Noah and Eckstein, 1969). Scholars in this genre are concerned to understand the 'forces' (Kandel, 1933) and 'factors' (Hans, 1967) shaping national education systems. In these studies, the nation state was the primary unit of analysis, because the State was seen as the primary factor shaping the national education system.

However, globalisation has challenged this assumption. Globalisation here can be understood as the creation of 'new forms of supranational governance' (Dale, 2000: 437), which means that the nation state is no longer only 'space within which to think about policy' (Ball, 2013: 29); that is, the supranational context should also be considered. Globalisation can also be understood as increasing interactions and interdependencies (Daun, 2008: 732). In this sense, globalisation facilitates the interactions between global and national processes. As Ramirez (2012: 436) puts it, 'the more the world is better-integrated the greater the influence of other countries.'

Therefore, there have been theories and perspectives in comparative education that start with the premise that national systems are dependent upon the global world (Alexander, 2001; Antunes, 2006; Arnove, 1980; Arnove and Torres, 2007; Arnove, Torres and Franz, 2013; Dale, 2000, 2006; Dale and Robertson, 2009a; Daun, 2011; Ginsburg et al., 1990; Kallo and Rinne, 2006; Meyer et al., 1977; Ramirez, 2012; Vavrus and Bartlett, 2009). For example, world society theorists argue that

> Worldwide changes lead to changes in the nation-state and in national educational policies and structures. National developments are not solely driven by properties of the nation-state. (Ramirez, 2012: 428)

Similarly, Dale (2006: 27) discusses 'policy relationships between supranational and national scales', pointing to:

> [a] widespread recognition that the relationships in the area of educational policy between supranational and national organizations have become more and more common, extensive and more complex (see also Dale and Robertson, 2009a: 1117).

There are, of course, differences across these perspectives (see below), but they share an emphasis on the importance of supranational factors, and the idea that national policy goals and processes are influenced by supranational factors. These perspectives see the supranational as part of the national policy context. Bartlett and Vavrus (2009: 10) even argue that 'attention to' the global processes is 'not optional but obligatory to generate rich comparative knowledge [because] "the local" cannot be divorced from national and transnational forces'. Then, it can be argued that comparative religious education too should encompass and study supranational factors as well as national and local factors to understand religious education policy.

However, in comparative education, some observers maintain that despite global forces education is still deeply embedded in its 'national' context (e.g. Schriewer, 2012: 415). These commentators do not argue that global influence is absent in education policy, but they maintain that the national/local context is still the primary space where the policy is made and implemented (Anderson-Levitt, 2003b). Akboga (2016) calls them 'local-culture theorists' who argue that educational policy change and reform is shaped and influenced by political, social and economic dynamics within a local/national environment.

Moreover, some commentators urge researchers to emphasise diversity within nation states. They argue that nation states (or societies) should not be regarded as homogenous entities. Rather, comparative studies should be sensitive to differences and similarities not only

between societies but also within societies (Bray and Thomas, 1995: 472; May and Perry, 2011: 247; Phillips and Schweisfurth, 2007: 22-23). This is partly because of the devolution of some educational decisions to local/subnational authorities (Dale, 2006).

From the debates over what should be studied in a comparative study, so far, these points can be derived: comparative religious education should have at least two cases; it should study the relationship between education policy and supranational and national factors; and it should pay attention to the diversity within societies. Therefore, this study at hand has two cases, namely, Turkey and England. It studies how supranational and national factors have shaped religious education policy. It pays attention to the diversity within societies, by interviewing a wide range of policy actors. I will now explore comparative studies in religious education to find out what have been uncovered so far.

2.3. Comparative Religious Education Research

In 2004, Schweitzer (2004: 353) made a call for more comparative studies in the field of religious education. Since then, there has been a growing argument for comparative studies in the field of religious education (Bråten, 2015: 138; Davis and Miroshnikova, 2013; Fancourt, 2013, 2015; Nipkow, 2006: 578; Parker, 2013: 14; Weisse, 2007), yet, 10 years later, Schweitzer (2015: 20) claimed that comparative religious education is 'still at an early point of its development' (see also Rothgangel, 2014: 23; Schröder, 2016: 202). Despite this, it is evident that the field is thriving. There are large-scale studies, theses, books and articles undertaking comparative research in religious education.

In this thesis, I divide comparative works in religious education into two groups. The works in the first group are the main works. They study two (or more) cases and they examine or encompass supranational trends and factors and/or their influences on national religious

education policy in detail, with a guiding methodology and conceptual framework. These studies, in this sense, are 'strictly comparative' (Phillips and Schweisfurth, 2007: 21; Postlethwaite, 1988: xvii; Schröder, 2016: 204). I will now introduce these main works briefly; their arguments will be discussed in the next section.

The first study (by date) which meets these conditions is Osmer and Schweitzer's study (2003) that compared religious education in the context of Protestant churches in the United States of America and Germany. This is substantially different from what I explore in this thesis, which is religious education for all pupils regardless of their religious backgrounds in state schools in England and Turkey. However, this book can be claimed to be a pioneering analysis in the field (Bråten, 2013) since it presents supranational factors, such as modernisation and globalisation (and partly post-modernism), as a framework for focusing on different methods and styles for the teaching of religion in/by Protestant churches in Germany and the USA. Osmer and Schweitzer's (2003) work was literature-based, studying the main academic Protestant texts.

Secondly, Alberts (2007, 2010) compared religious education in England and Sweden, because, she claimed, these two countries are pioneers in 'integrative' religious education. Alberts (2007: xv) presented increasing plurality and globalisation as a framework for integrative religious education and argued that, in the face of increasing plurality and globalisation, pupils should not be separated by confession, which is the case in most German States. Rather, Alberts (2007: 1) wanted religious education in different nations across Europe to adopt 'integrative' religious education, which is 'non-separative and non-confessional school education about different religions'. Alberts' (2007) work was literature-based, studying academic literature and textbooks.

The third one is the REDCo project (Religion in Education. A Contribution to Dialogue or a Factor of Conflict in Transforming Societies of European Countries). The REDCo project was carried out by scholars from eight countries and lasted for three years. The REDCo project studied the views of 14-16-year old students on learning religious diversity in state schools. The aim of the project was to identify the potential and the limitations of religious education and then to identify approaches and policies that could 'contribute to making religion in education a factor promoting dialogue in the context of European development' (Weisse, 2011a: 3; 2011b: 113). The REDCo project is a huge project that has resulted in many books and journal articles that have provided insight into the countries involved, contributed to the emerging field and encouraged further research (Weisse, 2007: 3). In this thesis my focus is on their first book (Jackson et al., 2007), and specifically Willaime's (2007) article in the book. Willaime (2007) presented secularisation, pluralisation and legal requirements for non-discrimination against religion as the common challenges to religious education and argued that, due to these challenges, religious education in European countries is converging.

The fourth one is the PhD thesis of Bråten (2009) which was later published as a book (Bråten, 2013). Bråten (2013) compared religious education in England and Norway, combining the 'levels of curriculum' with the idea of three dimensions (supranational, national and sub-national processes). Bråten (2013) argued that the similarities in religious education in England and Norway have been caused by supranational factors and the differences have been because of different 'national imaginaries' of England and Norway. Bråten (2013) conducted both empirical study, by conducting interviews with teachers and pupils, and literature-based study.

The fifth one is the PhD thesis of Matemba (2011) who compared religious education in Scotland and Malawi, two predominantly Christian contexts, arguing that previous comparative studies in religious education have examined similar national contexts. The aim of Matemba (2011: 291) was to understand how Scotland has been able to make the reforms in religious education acceptable while Malawi has not been so successful and then to propose a way forward for religious education in Malawi in light of the Scottish experience. He later dropped this aim, concluding that 'without government intervention and support from other key stakeholders RE will continue to be regarded as a marginal curriculum subject' in both countries (2011: 2). Matemba (2011) conducted interviews with various stakeholders.

As stressed before, there are also studies that have compared religious education in Turkey and England (Alakuş and Bahçekapılı, 2009; Kaymakcan, 1998). Kaymakcan (1998) compared religious education in Turkey and England with special reference to the teaching of Islam in secondary state schools in terms of selected textbooks from the two countries, while Alakuş and Bahçekapılı (2009) aimed at exploring different aspects of the teaching of religion in Turkey and England, both conducting literature-based studies.

There are also other works that helped me to understand the nature of religious education and its relations with the wider factors. There is a growing genre of comparative religious education that seeks to map religious education internationally. Some of these studies contain chapters mainly on religious education in different countries (i.e. articles on religious education in a single country) (e.g. Almén and Øster, 2000; Berglund, Shanneik and Bocking, 2016b; Davis and Miroshnikova, 2013; IARF, 2002; Kuburić and Moe, 2006b; Kuyk et al., 2007; López-Muñiz, De Groof and Lauwers, 2006; Robbers, 2011; Rothgangel, Jackson and Jäggle, 2014; Rothgangel, Jäggle and Schlag, 2016; Smyth, Lyons and

Darmody, 2013; Thomas, 2006); some focus on issues related to religious education in different countries (Heimbrock, Scheilke and Schreiner, 2001; Skeie, 2009; Skeie et al., 2013) and some are mixed (Beaman and Van Arragon, 2015; Berglund, Lundén and Strandbrink, 2015; De Souza et al., 2006; Engebretson et al., 2010; Franken and Loobuyck, 2011; Jödicke, 2013; Larsson and Gustavsson, 2004; Meijer, Miedema and van der Velde, 2009). These works are also important because they are rich in breadth and provide an overview of current trends in religious education in different countries, even though they are not 'strictly' comparative.

Above I have stated that this thesis aims to explore supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education policy from the perspectives of policy actors. I will now explore issues related to this aim, such as what counts as supranational and national factors, their nature and how and to what end they influence national religious education policies (mechanisms and consequences).

2.4. Conceptualising Supranational and National Factors and their Influence on RE Policy

Before attempting to conceptualise the influence of supranational and national factors on religious education policy, I will briefly explore the terms 'supranational' and 'national' and the dichotomy between them. In comparative education, there are theories that, differences aside, emphasise the importance of external factors and their influence on policy goals and processes, but they use different terms. For example, Arnove, Torres and Franz (2013) use 'the global and the local', while Dale (2006) prefers 'supranational, national and sub-national' to point to wider factors at different levels. Sometimes these terms are used interchangeably (Griffiths and Arnove, 2015). In comparative religious education research,

too, different terms are used. For example, while Osmer and Schweitzer (2003) use 'transnational' and 'international', Berglund, Shanneik and Bocking (2016b) prefer 'global and local', and some use these terms interchangeably (see for example, Bråten, 2009, 2016). In this thesis, I also use these terms interchangeably, but prefer to use supranational and national. Supranational is the same as 'global', and national incorporates both 'national' and 'subnational/local'.

However, the dichotomy between supranational and national (also global and local) is not clear-cut. The term 'supranational' might mean that it is a sui generis level, that is, it belongs to a different level from the national. For example, Dale (2005: 125) argues that the concept 'supranational (…) denotes a separate, distinct and non-reducible level or scale of activity from the national'. However, some disagree. For example, Anderson-Levitt (2012: 442) argues that the borders between supranational and national is 'hazy' and some actors or factors 'may fall into both categories simultaneously' (see also Bartlett and Vavrus, 2009: 12; Milana, 2015: 498; Schwinn, 2012: 530). Some commentators use the term 'inter/national' to stress the difficulty in separating 'national' from 'international' and vice versa (see Max, 2009; Phillips, 2009). Dale (2005) also accepts this and gives the World Bank as an example. The World Bank is often considered as a supranational factor/actor in comparative education, but the World Bank and other similar supranational organisations have been established by the nation states themselves (Dale, 2005: 131) and they gain 'authority' from state membership (Milana, 2015: 504). In other words, what we call supranational might not be a separate and distinct level from the national.

This might be also the case in supranational factors in religious education policy. In comparative religious education, secularisation and pluralisation are presented as 'supranational' (Bråten, 2009) or 'transnational' (Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003) factors.

However, these 'global' or 'supranational' factors might not necessarily belong to a different level from the national. For example, Bråten (2009: 339) uses 'supranational' to mean 'shared' or 'common' factors. If these are 'shared' factors, then it means that, they are actually national factors that are shared internationally.

Thus a problem arises. If these are actually national factors, then we should not assume that we are talking about the 'same' factors; because if they are national, it is highly likely that they would be manifested in different ways in different countries. In some previous studies, this issue has been neglected. For example, Schreiner (2014b) argued that Bråten (2009) neglected this issue. Schreiner (2014b: 360) argued that the 'supranational factors' Bråten used are 'abstract' and

> need more concrete adaptation about how they shape the specific contexts of research: pluralisation in England may be manifested in a different way than in Norway.

The same problem can be seen in Alberts (2007) who presented increasing plurality and globalisation as a framework for the advancement of 'integrative religious education' in Europe and beyond, but different countries might experience different forms of plurality and might respond differently, which could make 'one size fits all' approach to religious education nearly impossible.

This research takes this argument on board and explores whether the 'same' supranational and national factors influence religious education policy in Turkey and England. Moreover, I argue that these factors might be manifested in different ways not only across contexts but also within the same context. It is possible that policy actors within the same country might understand different things by these assumed 'same' factors. Among the main comparative religious education studies, only Matemba (2011) sought to address how different

stakeholders interpreted religious education reform, but Matemba (2011) did not specifically examine what different stakeholders understood by wider factors such as secularisation and did not include the voices of secular organisations. This study seeks to explore how different policy actors in two distinctively different countries understand and make sense of supranational and national factors.

2.4.1. What counts as supranational and national factors?

In comparative education, the 'supranational' or 'global' is understood as 'the world [capitalist] economy' (Arnove, 2009: 113; Ramirez, 2012: 428). This is highly significant as, when the supranational is based on economy, inevitably supranational factors shaping education policy are also based on or related to economy.

Religious education, which is a part of general education policy, is of course subject to the influences of the world economy, but in comparative religious education research, the 'global' might be understood in a different way. Amidst the prevalence of the world economy, religion is itself also a significant global factor influencing a wide array of fields from politics, law to education (Berger, 1999a; Ferrari, 2015; Francis and Ziebertz, 2011; Habermas, 2006; Huntington, 1993; Motzkin and Fischer, 2008; Norris and Inglehart, 2011). Therefore, in this research, the 'global' in comparative religious education is understood as 'religion'. What I mean by this is that the factors influencing religious education policy globally are related to 'religion' (or lack thereof).

From the main comparative religious education works, one issue becomes clear: religious education is influenced by wider factors. For example, Osmer and Schweitzer (2003: 26) argued that:

> Due to the global scope of economic and political processes, individual societies and cultures are increasingly subject to similar, if not identical, forces and give evidence of similar developments.

Even though the main works cited above used different terms and concepts, three supranational factors can be derived from them: supranational religious education policy, pluralisation and secularisation. For example, Bråten (2009: 339) argues that these are the main factors that 'are shared internationally'.

Additionally, the comparative studies in the field of religious education also suggested that there are national factors influencing religious education policy. The supranational factors interact with the national factors to then shape religious education policy. This thesis also seeks to find out the national factors shaping religious education.

As argued above, this research challenges and tests whether these are the factors shaping religious education policy in two strikingly different countries. The thesis argues that the identification of the factors should be both deductive and inductive in comparative religious education, because while the field is in its early days, there are existing studies on the topic. As Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 20) argue, 'in the life of a conceptualization, we need both approaches [inductive and deductive]'. Therefore, I specifically explore whether supranational religious education policy, secularisation and pluralisation, which are all derived from the main works, have shaped religious education policy in England and Turkey, while at the same time remaining open to the possibility of different factors deriving from my own data.

2.4.2. How factors shape religious education policy: mechanisms

As argued above, the main works in the field of comparative religious education agreed that supranational factors influence national religious education policy, but how these factors

shape national policies remains under-studied. Carney, Rappleye and Silova (2012) argue that in education research, different perspectives should be seen as complementary. Ball (1993: 10) even argues that it is necessary to use different theories/perspectives (see also Bacchi, 2000: 55; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003: 16; Taylor, 1997: 33), because, he claims, no theory can explain 'the whole world', but 'most theories' can 'tell us some useful things about some bits of the world' (in Mainardes and Marcondes, 2009). Therefore, in the analysis of the complex field of religious education policy, I will use different concepts/theories, such as structure and agency, equilibrium and conflict, and compulsory consensus –borrowed from sociology, political science and comparative education – to understand how supranational and national factors shape religious education policy.

Even though this research does not aim to come to simplistic cause and effect conclusions, I use concepts like 'structure' and 'agency' to explore how supranational and national factors shape religious education policy. According to Epstein (2011: 95-96) exploring educational policies and practices within the context of structure and agency has 'important implications for the ways in which we view globalisation trends' (see also Shilling, 1992: 79). Structure refers to factors or forces that constrain and enable individuals, while agency refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently of structures. Structure versus agency debate is one of the central issues in sociology and other social sciences and the issue at stake is how determining social structures are for the behaviour of agency.

However, like the debate on dichotomy between supranational and national, there is also debate about the dichotomy between structure and agency. For example, whether structures are sui generis and impersonal forces apart from and above human action is a controversial issue. Shilling (1992), in his analysis of the structure-agency dualism in educational research, examined various attempts made by education sociologists such as Hargreaves and

Hammersley to address this issue. According to Shilling (1992: 77-78), structuration theory which sees structures as being 'both implicated in and reproduced by actors', is especially helpful in overcoming this dualism.

For this thesis, the issue is to identify how determining supranational and national factors are for religious education policy. For example, if secularisation is a supranational factor in religious education policy, then the questions that arise are how determining it is for religious education policy, and how local policy actors in strikingly different countries respond to its challenge. These questions are of interest to this thesis.

I also use the term 'compulsory consensus' to explore how supranational and national factors influence religious education policy. I use 'compulsory consensus' (Copeaux, 2015; Massicard, 2013) in this thesis to express the phenomenon of constant referral to values and factors that are taken for granted and unchallenged both in official policy documents and by individuals and groups who want to advance their demands. I started to use this term when I finished my data analysis, which showed that the participants constantly referred to some factors to criticise or support some aspects of religious education policy and to advance their policy preferences.

I also use the concepts of 'equilibrium' and 'conflict' (Arnove, 2009: 101; Ginsburg et al., 1990: 478; Griffiths, 2009: 1; Paulston, 1983; Simmons, 1983b). It should be noted that these are two major theories (Paulston, 1977 calls them 'paradigms') that have been used to explain social change; they are complex and encompass a number of different theories within them, therefore it is extremely difficult to do full justice to them here, but, I think, they are useful to understand the nature of supranational and national factors and how they shape national religious education policy.

Even though these two theories have similarities, as argued by Arnove (2009) and Ramirez (2012), there are also significant differences. The central difference is the roles of hegemonic power, dominance and conflict. On the one hand, conflict theory scholars point to the 'differential capacity of nation states' in shaping the global and resisting global prescriptions (Griffiths and Arnove, 2015: 100). Dale (2005: 131-132) argues that global policies 'very clearly reflect the different power of' nation states and that the global policies 'may be seen as being made by and in the interests of the already powerful countries' (see also Arnove, 2009: 106). Conflict-theory scholars emphasise coercive mechanisms, conflicts and vested interests in the spread of certain education models and perspectives (Griffiths and Arnove, 2015).

On the other hand, the equilibrium-theory scholars do not see the global world as 'simply hegemonic powers coercing educational outcomes on the other countries of the world' (Ramirez, 2012: 425). Rather, they argue that the modern nation states share common cultural understandings (Meyer et al., 1977), therefore they voluntarily adopt what they see as the acceptable or modern way to run society. One of the key concepts here is 'external legitimation', that is, according to Ramirez (2012: 424-425), 'the wider world legitimates the pursuit of mass schooling as a nation-state project' and those who follow this trend are accepted as more legitimate and modern than those who do not. Equilibrium-theory scholars acknowledge 'the Western origins of the world models' (Ramirez, 2003: 249-250), but they do not accept that the spread of Western models involves 'coercion' per se (Ramirez, 2012: 428).

By using these concepts, what I am interested in is how policy actors see wider factors and interpret religious education policy in the face of these factors. For example, whether the local policy actors see global religious education policies as being made by and in the

interests of the already powerful countries has not been addressed in previous studies comparative studies.

Moreover, I am also interested in whether religious education policy can best be understood within a conflict or equilibrium theory terms. Discussions like these are largely absent from the main works. Even though Willaime (2007) and Bråten (2009) hinted that wider factors and their influence on religious education policy cause 'tensions', they did not address how and why they cause tensions and how different policy actors interpret these processes. Osmer and Schweitzer (2003: 5) critically examined these factors, arguing that 'all of the social theorists (…) have both explicit and implicit normative claims built in their theories', but they examined these issues by focusing 'primarily on "mainline" Protestant figures' (Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003: 210), acknowledging that they excluded not only other religious and secular figures but also other Christian and Protestant groups.

This thesis examines the issues around supranational and national factors from the perspectives of various policy actors (see 3.2 below). As can be seen, the issue is complex and contested. This thesis attempts to unravel some of these complexities and contestations through interviewing different policy actors in religious education policy, who will probably approach supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education policy from different angles and reach completely different conclusions.

2.4.3. How factors shape religious education policy: consequences

If supranational factors influence national policies, what will be their influence on national policies? In comparative education, according to Silova and Rappleye (2015: 1), there are two camps: on the one hand, some scholars have identified global educational models and trends, and on the other hand, others have demonstrated the divergence between global

norms and local meanings and practices. Even though they are not mutually exclusive, there are some differences. For example, world-society theorists point to, 'isomorphism', that is, as Chabbott and Ramirez (2000: 173) argue, 'an increase in common educational principles, policies, and even practices among countries with varying national characteristics' (see also Inkeles and Sirowy, 1983: 303). Some argue that 'isomorphic pressures give rise to increased isomorphism' (Heugens and Lander, 2009: 78). They accept that development strategies might differ across societies ('loose coupling'), but argue that there is a 'convergence' in the value and meaning of development (Meyer et al., 1977: 255).

In contrast, for example, Anderson-Levitt (2003b: 17) argues that 'from our vantage points, we do not see a world becoming more homogenous with time', but she (2003b: 17-18) also points to some kind of homogenisation; we 'hear the same kind of reform *talk*' (emphasis in original) in very different locations and 'the common educational discourse and taken-for-granted features of schools' structure' (see also Arnove, 2007: 2; 2009: 107).

In religious education, some have tended to argue that supranational factors have led, to some extent, to similar policy developments such as the advancement of non-confessional religious education (Franken and Loobuyck, 2017: 1). For example, Willaime (2007) sees a degree of convergence in the ways the States deal with religion in education:

> Be it for social or legal reasons, we discern an effective convergence in the way European countries attempt to meet the challenges facing public education in secularized, pluralistic societies. (Willaime, 2007: 57).

Willaime (2007) argues that the reason for convergence is that national religious education policy is constrained by two supranational forces: pluralisation (including secularisation) and international human rights law. Willaime (2007: 66) observes that:

> European convergence is the *development of non-confessional religious education* through the establishment of secular and pluridisciplinary approaches to religious faith. (emphasis in original)

Likewise, Schreiner (2011: 23) argues that

> a survey of different objectives and goals for religious education in different countries reveals that they share much in common. One can speak of a tendency towards coming together or convergence. (see also Schreiner, 2015: 147-148)

Moreover, some maintain that it is possible that the same forces are sometimes met differently. For example, Hunter-Henin (2011: 1-2) claims that if European societies have all been faced with similar challenges, 'the responses chosen to meet those challenges have varied greatly, with the most striking differences arising in the context of education', but she also notes convergence: 'a common trend has been the emergence of a human rights discourse in which law and religion issues are now being phrased in terms of religious freedoms', and the shift from religious instruction to religious education in Europe. This was also the main argument in Bråten (2009), who claims that the supranational factors have been met differently, reflecting the national imaginaries of nation states. Bråten (2009) finds similar policy responses due to common supranational challenges, but also points to differences between Norwegian and English religious education.

The nature and the extent of the convergence and divergence of policy responses in the context of supranational and national factors is of interest to this thesis, but the limitation of this thesis is that it does not focus on official documents, as in Bråten (2009; 2013) or textbooks and syllabuses, such as in Alberts (2007) and Kaymakcan (1998), or academic literature, as in Osmer and Schweitzer (2003). As I argued in Introduction, a comparison of official documents may not necessarily provide the full picture of religious education policy, for two reasons. First, as argued by Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992), policy is more than official documents; i.e. there are other contexts such as the 'context of influence' and the 'context

of practice' within which policy is made and shaped (see 3.2 below). Second, it is possible that official policy might be applied and interpreted differently by different policy actors. This makes it important to include actors from different policy contexts to understand religious education policy and then find out whether religious education policy in different countries is converging according to the perspectives of these different policy actors.

2.4.4. Same Policy for Different Countries

When it is assumed that different countries are affected by the same supranational factors, as Schreiner (2015: 148) argues, 'the issue of common standards comes up'. In other words, the notion of common factors becomes a justification for certain religious education models as well as a description or an analysis of contemporary societies. In religious education, some have proposed common religious education models with varying degrees of flexibility.

For example, Alberts (2007) is a strong supporter of adopting the same religious education model in the face of common challenges. Alberts (2007: 1) argues that in the face of pluralisation and globalisation, European countries should adopt 'integrative' religious education. According to Alberts (2007), her model is 'a truly *educational* integrative RE' (emphasis in original) (p. 354) which 'truly take account of plurality as a basis' (p. 357). Alberts (2007: 354) states that:

> This framework for integrative RE is designed with regard to the secular character of the subject in the context of the educational task of schools in plural democracies in general.

It should be noted that Alberts, a German, established her framework for integrative 'non-separative' religious education against the backdrop of the German situation where, in most States, pupils are separated by confession and religious education is provided in collaboration with religious communities (Alberts, 2007: xv). Alberts (2007) maintained

that in her own model, religious communities are not regarded 'as immediate partners of the design of the general framework of the subject' which lies exclusively with 'secular educational authorities' (2007: 354) and integrative RE 'ought to be a normal part of any curriculum (…) without any kind of an exceptional status' (2007: 353).

Similarly, Jensen (2016: 79) wants secular and plural European countries to adopt a 'scientific' study of religions approach to religious education. In his various publications, Jensen (1998, 2005, 2008, 2016) has criticised the existing approaches in various European countries, including in England, and the recommendations of some supranational organisations such as OSCE (2007) for falling short of the 'minimum presuppositions' for an academic study of religions-based religious education.

Moreover, the Council of Europe (Keast, 2006) and the Toledo Guiding Principles (OSCE, 2007) support and suggest various non-confessional approaches to religious education in the face of pluralisation and secularisation. Jackson (2014) argues that supranational organisations, in the understanding that contemporary societies are faced with similar challenges, provide solutions to these challenges. Even though these organisations would claim that they do not offer the same solutions to different contexts, it is clear that they support and offer *similar* 'non-confessional' models (see Fabretti, 2013: 53; Martínez-Torrón and Durham Jr, 2010: 44; Rothgangel, Jackson and Jäggle, 2014: 8-9; Schreiner, 2015: 142-143).

Some commentators have criticised these attempts. For example, Davidsen (2010) was critical of Alberts (2007), but his criticism was not related to Alberts' integrative religious education model, but rather related to her claim of a 'truly educational' model. What is at stake here is that when policy solutions are postulated on the understanding that modern societies face common challenges, these solutions are often presented as 'educational',

'objective' and 'modern' models, as opposed to existing old-fashioned, 'confessional', 'religious' and even 'ideological' models.

Davidsen (2010: 7) notes that Alberts (2007: 354) claims that her own model is '*truly* educational' (Alberts' emphasis) and implies that while others' views on religious education are 'always political, ideological or even religious, her view is not, hers is supposedly educational and scientific'. Davidsen (2010: 7) find this problematic:

> But Alberts' ideas on RE are just as much founded on an ideology, hers only being a secular and humanistic one. Alberts should thus confess to belong to a lobby as well, namely the secular (…) trying to gain influence on the future of European RE.

Moreover, Poulter, Riitaoja and Kuusisto (2016) argue that such attempts, presenting others as ideological and presenting themselves as educational and scientific, might actually discriminate and marginalise other ways of thinking and of devising policy, i.e. plurality, the idea on which they argue that their models are based.

It should be noted that this thesis' main focus is not whether European countries need the same religious education policy/pedagogy or not. This thesis primarily explores how supranational and national factors have shaped religious education policy according to policy actors. However, the question of whether different countries need the same religious education model is related to my thesis, because the argument for the same religious education model (see Alberts, 2007) or similar models (see Keast, 2006; OSCE, 2007) rests on the argument that different countries face the same challenges. Therefore, exploration of factors and their influence on religious education policy from the perspectives of various policy actors can shed some light on the desirability of common religious education policies in different countries.

2.5. Research Question

Above, I attempted to conceptualise supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education policy. Three points can be derived from the discussion above. First, it is necessary to attempt to identify and explore supranational and national factors shaping religious education policy in different countries, because the field of comparative religious education is 'still at an early point of its development' (Schweitzer, 2015: 20), and previous comparative studies have examined religious education policy in similar (predominantly Christian) contexts. Second, how these factors shape religious education policy, both mechanisms and consequences, needs to be explored because this is not sufficiently addressed in previous comparative religious education studies. Third, there is a need to consider whether the 'isomorphic' factors ought to lead to isomorphic religious education models as argued by Alberts (2007). This thesis will explore these issues from the perspectives of various policy actors in England and Turkey. Therefore, the research question of the thesis is:

- How have supranational and national factors shaped religious education policy according to policy actors in Turkey and England?

This research question can be divided into three sub questions. Firstly, the research question includes a 'what' question, which is, what have been the national and supranational factors shaping religious education policy according to policy actors in England and Turkey? Secondly, 'how' in the research question refers to consequences, that is, to what end have supranational and national factors shaped religious education policy according to policy actors? Thirdly, 'how' in the research question refers to mechanisms, that is, in what ways have these factors shaped religious education policy?

To answer the research question, in Chapters 4 and 5, I will identify and explore national and supranational factors shaping religious education policy, respectively, from the perspectives of policy actors. In Chapter, 6, I will explore the influence of these factors on religious education policy according to policy actors. In Chapter 7, I will discuss how these factors have shaped religious education policy, i.e. mechanisms, by using concepts like equilibrium and conflict, compulsory consensus, structure and agency. Moreover, in Chapter 7 I will also revisit the findings of Chapters 4 and 5 to explore whether religious education policies in Turkey and England have been shaped by the same factors and the dichotomy between supranational and national factors. Furthermore, I will revisit the findings of Chapter 6 to explore whether the religious education policies of Turkey and England have converged due to the influence of external factors.

In Chapter 8, the implications of the research findings will be discussed with a reference to Alberts's (2007) argument that different countries that are influenced by such factors as pluralisation and secularisation should adopt the same religious education model, incorporating the pertinent question of how is religious belief (and lack thereof) to be handled in state schools? (Cooling, 2010: 12).

As Roger Dale (2015: 359) argues, there is 'no guarantee' that understanding and explaining the relation between policy and wider factors

> will change the world, but it may possibly enable more of the 'reality' of the world, and especially what sustains it in its present forms, to be revealed.

This is what this research wants to achieve: to understand the reality of religious education policy in the context of wider factors in the modern world.

This research is timely since, as Chater and Erricker (2013: 1) argue, global forces and their influence on religious education 'are largely unexamined and [their] consequences are almost wholly undescribed'. Even though there are existing studies examining the relationship between wider factors and religious education, as I have already noted, they have compared religious education in similar contexts. This thesis compares the religious education policies of two strikingly different countries; pays extra attention to the diversity within these two countries, by interviewing a wide variety of policy actors and attempts to explore how supranational and national factors shape religious education policy.

When identifying and exploring supranational factors, I made use of previous comparative religious education studies. The previous comparative studies started with the same premise that wider factors influence religious education policy. Even though they have used different terms and concepts, we can group them into three supranational factors: supranational religious education policy, secularisation and pluralisation. In this thesis, I explore whether these are the factors shaping religious education policy in England and Turkey from the perspectives of policy actors. I will now explore these factors to illuminate how they are understood in the relevant literature.

2.6. Supranational Factors

Before exploring these factors, two issues should be mentioned. First, other factors are also mentioned in the previous works, for example, globalisation (Alberts, 2007; Bråten, 2009; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003). Globalisation is conceptualised in different ways, but there are common themes. Some argue that globalisation is closely related to the rise of supranational organisations and the declining power of nation states (Dale, 2006). For example, Bråten (2009: 67 with reference to Dale, 2006) argues that 'the increasing

influence of supranational organisations on national policy is one effect of globalisation'. For this thesis, the concept of globalisation as the increasing influence of supranational organisations is incorporated in what I call supranational religious education policy.

Moreover, globalisation is also conceptualised as the world becoming a single place (Alberts, 2007; Bråten, 2009). Osmer and Schweitzer (2003: 61) argued that discussion of globalisation should focus on both the emergence of systems that compressed the world into 'a single place' and 'the widely divergent consciousness of and responses to this global interconnectedness found in different cultural groups'. This aspect of globalisation is related to all of the supranational factors, I examine here. For example, if the world is becoming a single place, then some might argue that nation states should also take global pluralisation or secularisation into account, when devising religious education policy.

Second, it is understood that there are also national factors, but the main works have not elaborated on them. The national factors are assumed to be obvious, as opposed to supranational factors which have often been explored in detail. The only exception was Bråten who sought to conceptualise national factors. With a reference to Schiffauer et al. (2004), Bråten (2009: 54) conceptualised national factors as a 'national imaginary' and asked 'how national imaginary shapes what kind of RE is possible in the different countries when the challenge to each is the same?'. Moreover, it should be noted that Matemba (2011) presented various factors shaping religious education, but he did not make a distinction between supranational and national factors. For Matemba (2011), these are factors shared internationally, but they may manifest themselves differently in different societies. In this thesis, I explore national factors (Chapter 4) and supranational factors (Chapter 5) in detail through the help of interviews. In this section I explore supranational factors, because these are the factors derived from literature review of the main works.

2.6.1. Supranational Religious Education Policy

In the first book of the REDCo project, Willaime (2007: 65) observed that religious education in Europe has changed and developed under a 'double constraint', the first being a

> *legal* one, through the importance of the principle on non-discrimination on religious or philosophical grounds (as well as others such as gender or race) in international law, especially in the European Convention on Human Rights. (emphasis in original)

Similarly, Bråten (2009) argued that supranational factors can be divided into two groups: formal and informal. 'Formal' refers to supranational framework such as the European Convention on Human Rights and policy recommendations of supranational organisations (see also Alberts, 2007).

I call this factor 'supranational religious education policy'. Even though I use 'policy' in the singular, this does not mean that there is a unified and coherent supranational religious education policy. There are, rather, policies and principles that sometimes contradict each other (Hunter-Henin, 2011: 3). Moreover, supranational organisations have rarely used the term 'religious education', rather they have used other terms such as 'teaching about religions and beliefs' (OSCE, 2007) and the 'religious dimension of intercultural education' (Council of Europe, 2008a).

Human rights principles are a starting point here. According to Durham Jr (2013: 2), religious education policy is 'subject to some of modern society's most fundamental constitutional and human rights norms' since it 'is so closely linked to the shaping of individual identity, character and conscientious beliefs'. There are three human rights principles that shape religious education in state schools: 'right to education', 'religious

freedom' and 'non-discrimination' (Bertini, 2014: 8; Pépin, 2009: 16-17; Schreiner, 2006). These principles are integral parts of international laws since the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and are incorporated into the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention), drafted in 1950 and enacted in 1953.

These principles are important for national religious education policy since the Convention is a legally binding text for the signatory states (including England and Turkey). Moreover, the signatory states have to account of the jurisprudence emanating from the European Court of Human Rights (the Court, or ECtHR), which was set up in 1959 to ensure states' compliance with their undertakings under the Convention. Even though the Court does not make policy, when the European States design and implement their religious education policy they must comply with the fundamental rights and freedoms, embedded in the Convention and in the case-law of the Court. These human rights principles, according to Willaime (2007: 65-66), impose a legal 'constraint' on religious education policy: the principles reduce the policy options available to national religious education policy and practice in Europe. However, Slotte (2011: 45) argues that, as international treaties, these principles were formulated in such general terms that room is left for different, and sometimes contradictory, applications and interpretations. These interpretative gaps are dealt with by the European Court of Human Rights, whose jurisprudence is, as Koenig (2015: 51) argues, 'considered as standard-setting for human rights worldwide' (see also Durham Jr and Kirkham, 2012: 2), and by supranational organisations such as the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which are known as 'trendsetters' in international standards as well as vigilant observers of human rights practices (Gunn, 2002: 243).

These supranational organisations avoided involvement in the field of religious education for a long time (Jackson, 2009: 86; 2016a: 15), but two developments triggered a visible shift on their stance towards religion and religious education. In the first place, as Casanova (1994: 3) argued, religion in the 1980s 'went public'. Habermas (2006: 1) argued that, since then, religious traditions have gained a new political importance. It was against this backdrop that the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief in 1981, which, according to Gearon (2008: 96) marked 'a real turning point in its explicit recognition of religion's role in a stable world order'.

In 1994, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Abdelfattah Amor (who served as Rapporteur from 1993 to 2004) started to examine the role of religious education in the promotion of tolerance of different religious views and traditions (Schreiner, 2006: 861). On the basis of Amor's findings and on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the UN Declaration, an international consultative conference was held in 2001 in Madrid (Taylor, 2002: 59), which 'plead[ed] for a place for religious education in all schools as a means to promote tolerance and understanding among individuals, groups and nations' (Schreiner et al., 2002: 88). In a parallel development, in 1999, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe invited member states 'to promote education about religions' (Council of Europe, 1999).

In the second place, the event of 9/11 and the subsequent attacks in European capitals that dramatized the conflict of civilisations narrative (Huntington, 1993) served to further intensify the interest in religious education (Jackson, 2009: 86; Schreiner, 2016: 273). In 2002, the Council of Europe decided to integrate religious education with intercultural education in order to develop

> a new dimension on intercultural education in Europe by addressing the religious diversity inherent to our multicultural societies, schools included, from the human rights and intercultural learning perspective (Bîrzéa, 2006: 7).

The project was based on the recognition that all countries face similar challenges and that they have much to gain by sharing their experience with each other (Jackson, 2009: 87). The main outcome of the project was a reference book (see Keast, 2006). Moreover, the Council of Europe's Recommendation 1720 (Council of Europe, 2005) and its White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (Council of Europe, 2008b) both stressed the importance of having religious education in state schools, based on the premise that all young Europeans should learn about religious diversity. The latest contribution of the Council of Europe to religious education came in 2014 (Jackson, 2014) with the discussion on the implantation of the Council of Europe's Ministerial Recommendation (Council of Europe, 2008a).

A security organisation, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), responded to events with the publication of the Toledo Guiding Principles in 2007 (OSCE, 2007). OSCE had also contributed to projects to establish religious education courses in state schools in various countries. For example, in response to the genocide following the break-up of Yugoslavia, the OSCE started a project in 2000 in Bosnia and Herzegovina to establish a non-confessional schools subject called Culture of Religions, to offset future conflicts by promoting social cohesion (Popov and Ofstad, 2006: 97).

According to some commentators, the Council of Europe (Keast, 2006) and the Toledo Guiding Principles (OSCE, 2007) supported and suggested various non-confessional approaches to religious education in plural societies to offset religious conflicts and to promote social cohesion (Martínez-Torrón and Durham Jr, 2010: 44; Rothgangel, Jackson and Jäggle, 2014: 8-9; Schreiner, 2016: 277).

During this ‘long decade’ after 9/11 (Jenkins, Jacobsen and Henriksen, 2014), the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR, or the Court) intervened for the first time in religious education in state schools, examining these cases under the right to education clause. In these cases the Court first determined the question of whether the States, in carrying out their functions of teaching and education, took care that knowledge provided in religious education was conveyed in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner or whether the States pursued an aim of indoctrination; second, it examined whether appropriate arrangements for exemption had been introduced to ensure that parents' convictions were respected (ECtHR, 2007a, 2007b, 2014).

In these three cases the Court decided that the religious education provided in Norway (ECtHR, 2007a) and Turkey (ECtHR, 2007b; 2014) was not conveyed in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner, emphasising that the contents of existing classes not only quantitatively but also qualitatively favoured Christianity and Islam respectively. Accordingly, the Court found that the refusal to grant the applicants full exemption from Norwegian and Turkish religious education for their children gave rise to a violation of Article 2 of Protocol No.1 of the Convention.

These cases have stirred the debates over religious education in Norway (Andreassen, 2013, 2014; Lied, 2009), Turkey (Gürcan, 2015) and beyond (Bertini, 2014). Some found the Court ‘interventionist’ (Leigh, 2012: 214), while others argued that the Court produced questions as well as answers regarding religious education policy. Even though the Court stated that religious education should be objective, critical and pluralistic, it had not, according to Relaño (2010: 26), tackled ‘how to discern whether education is “neutral and objective”’; and, according to Rivers (2010: 250), whether there is in fact some neutral and objective position from which religion can be taught.

Supranational organisations have produced policies and guidelines regarding religious education policy and supranational courts have handed down cases related to religious education policy. These are important, because these organisations are respected as leaders in international standards. Both the tones and directives in the content of these documents and cases might, therefore, create a significant milieu that constraint and enable local policy actors. Because of this, reactions to these documents and cases have varied. For example Jackson, in his various writings, argues that supranational organisations provide appropriate solutions to nation states that are believed to face pluralisation and secularisation (e.g. Jackson, 2014). Jackson turns on the critics of these organisations, asking 'why should not the priorities of a body such as (…) the European Commission reflect actual social need?' (Jackson, 2015: 350). These critical voices include, for example, Arthur and Holdsworth (2012), who argue that the European Court of Human Rights risks being a bastion of secularisation (see also Arthur, 2008). Likewise, Gearon (2012: 165) observes the developments in European religious education as 'the neutralising of religion in the context of a liberal *hegemony*, where liberal politics is reflected in and by a liberal (religious) education.' (emphasis in original). Other commentators find the supranational guidelines not secular enough. For example, Jensen argues that guidelines such as the Toledo Guiding Principles are steps 'in the right direction' (Jensen, 2016: 73), but he criticises them for still containing '*pro-religion* or *pro-religious* attitudes and statements' (emphases in original) (Jensen, 2008: 132). These debates are of interest to this thesis. Previous comparative religious education studies have not addressed how different policy actors in different countries have interpreted and understood the supranational court decisions and supranational guidelines and recommendations and their influence on religious education policy.

It should be noted that these Court decisions, recommendations and guidelines do not exist in a vacuum. When we look carefully at them, it can be observed that they start with certain assumptions that point to the socio-political context within which they are created and operate. There are especially two key assumptions behind these initiatives centring around pluralisation and secularisation.

For example, human rights principles such as religious freedom assume that there is religious plurality within society. The basic idea behind the Toledo Guiding Principles was that 'it is important for young people growing up today to acquire a better understanding of the role that religion play in *today's pluralistic world*' (OSCE, 2007:9) (emphasis added). Secularisation also seems one of the main assumptions. For example, the Council of Europe (2007) stated that the legislation of several member states 'still contains anachronisms dating *from times when religion played a more important part in our societies*' (emphasis added). This assumes that religion does not play as important a part in our societies as it did in the past. Moreover, in the same Recommendation, the Council of Europe (2007) stated that 'over the last twenty years, religious worship has declined markedly in Europe'. This suggests that religious practices have declined (i.e. individual secularisation) in Europe. I will now explore these two factors.

2.6.2. Secularisation

Secularisation is presented as a supranational factor in all the main works, even though some have seen it as a part of the pluralisation process and therefore have not mentioned it as a discrete factor (e.g. Alberts, 2007), while others have mentioned it as a distinct factor (for example, Matemba, 2011). Others have used other terms to indicate secularisation. For example, Osmer and Schweitzer (2003: 40-41) used 'modernisation' by which they meant 'differentiation' which can also be called 'institutional secularisation': 'the emergence of

specialised subsystems in modern societies, subsystems that are governed by their own goals, means of communication, and feedback system'.

I take secularisation as a discrete factor, even though I recognise that it has some overlapping dimensions with pluralisation. For example, the decrease in religious beliefs and practices is also a dimension of modern plurality (see below), but there are some dimensions of secularisation that require special focus, such as the decline in religion's authority over society.

Secularisation theories can be traced to the Enlightenment (Berger, 1999a: 2), but the systematic foundations were laid in the nineteenth century, when most of the social thinkers believed that the relevance of religion would gradually fade with the advent of modern society (Casanova, 1994: 17). For instance, Weber ([1918] 1958: 133) asserted that 'the fate of our times is characterized by ... above all, by the disenchantment of the world'. By 'disenchantment of the world', Weber referred to the decline in importance of religion (see also Durkheim, [1912] 2008: 427).

During most of the twentieth century, secularisation became 'the conventional wisdom' in the social sciences (Norris and Inglehart, 2011: 3) but, as Tschannen (1991: 395) argues, the theories espoused varied and were not compatible at the theoretical level. In other words, there has never been one secularisation theory, but there have been various secularisation *theories*. Even though, especially during the last two decades, secularisation theories have been subject to growing criticism and some have even suggested that we should abandon the term completely (e.g. Stark, 1999: 270), some social scientists still continue to formulate alternative (or new) conceptualisations of what secularisation is (Brown, 2009; Bruce, 2011; Chaves, 1994; Norris and Inglehart, 2011) and why and when it comes about (Berger, Davie and Fokas, 2008; Martin, 2005; Taylor, 2007).

As I have shown, despite the secularisation's wide currency, it is not one theory, with a single definition. Rather, the term embodies a wide variety of ideas and definitions (Davie, 2007: 49; Gorski and Altınordu, 2008: 57; Wilson, 1982: 148). For example, Casanova (1994: 211) adopts a tripartite categorization of secularisation. He makes a distinction between:

> '(1) secularisation as differentiation of the secular spheres [e.g. politics, economy, education and law] from religious institutions and norms, (2) secularisation as decline of religious beliefs and practices, and (3) secularisation as marginalization of religion to a privatized sphere' (numbers added) (for similar categorisations, see also Berger, 1967; Dobbelaere, 1981; Keddie, 2003; Kosmin, 2007; Taylor, 2007).

2.6.2.1. Individual Secularisation

From these categorisations, in particular (2) above, it can be seen that secularisation has an individual dimension. In this sense, secularisation implies the 'secularisation of consciousness' meaning that people look upon their life through the prism of secular reason rather than religious codes (Berger, 1967: 107). Taylor (2007: 3) argues that there are millions today to whom 'faith never even seems an eligible possibility' which, for Taylor, was not the case in the ancient world. According to Bruce (2011: 19), secularisation in this sense does not imply widespread of atheism, but it implies a growing indifference to religion, meaning that people no longer commit to religious ideas and are no longer involved in religious organisations (see also Voas, 2009: 164)

However, the concept of individual secularisation, especially whether it is a universal process, has come under fierce criticism. Berger (1999a: 2) argued that 'modernisation has had some secularising effects, more in some places [e.g. Europe] than in others'. For him, individual secularisation is not a universal process. Some have argued that secularisation theories are best suited for Europe, which is an exceptional case where religious beliefs and

practices remain exceptionally low (Davie, 2007: 64; Martin, 1991: 468; Warner, 1993: 1048). In addition, some have argued that church attendance has always been very low in Europe (e.g. Stark, 1999: 254), which means that, by this criterion, Europe has always been secular in terms of religious observance, while others have pointed to persistence of belief in spite of the decline of practice (Davie, 1994).

2.6.2.2. Institutional Secularisation

As outlined in the categorisation above, secularisation has a societal/institutional dimension. Secularisation, in this sense, refers to the differentiation (emancipation) of social spheres such as state, law, education and economy from religious authority and norms (Berger, 1967: 107; Casanova, 1994: 19-21; Dobbelaere, 1981: 11; Durkheim, [1893] 1964; Luckmann, 1967: 101; Schmidt, 2006: 90; Wilson, 1982: 155). Differentiation, according to Tschannen (1991: 404), 'in one form or another, is absolutely central to all the secularisation theories, without exception'. This process was described by Durkheim ([1893] 1964: 169-170) as follows:

> If there is one truth that history teaches us beyond doubt, it is that religion tends to embrace a smaller and smaller portion of social life. Originally, it pervades everything; everything social is religious; the two words are synonymous. Then, little by little, political, economic, scientific functions free themselves from the religious function, constitute themselves apart and take on a more and more acknowledged temporal character (…) This regression did not begin at some certain moment of history, but we can follow its phases since the origins of social evolution.

It has been argued that differentiation in turn has resulted religion in losing its power of guidance and social control over other social spheres (Chaves, 1994; Dobbelaere, 1999; Sommerville, 1998). It should be noted that secularisation as differentiation is not about the decline in religious beliefs and practices among people; but there is a clash of opinions as to whether institutional secularisation leads to individual secularisation. For example, while

Bruce (2011) argues that there is a direct link between the two secularisations (i.e. individual secularisation follows institutional secularisation and vice versa), Berger (1999a) maintains that there is no link. Moreover, some argue that differentiation leads to marginalisation of religion to a private sphere (for example, Wilson, 1982), while others maintain that differentiation does not necessarily entail marginalisation or privatisation of religion (see for example, Casanova, 1994).

2.6.2.3. Controversies

There are a number of issues related to secularisation that can be problematized. The first issue is that the theory of secularisation implies a comparative historical process, i.e. a historical 'base-line' (Dobbelaere, 1981: 31). In other words, if we accept that, as Wilson (1982: 41) argues, religion has lost the 'presidency' that it exercised over all of man's activities, then the questions that arise are 'when *did* religion have the presidency over all of man's activities?' And 'why did this change?'

As expected, opinions differ. For example, regarding the question of when religion had 'presidency', for Mills (1959: 32-33), it was in the Medieval Christian era, when 'the world was filled with the sacred – in thought, practice and institutional form', but for Stark (1999: 261), it was the Medieval era that slowed the 'progress' of Christianity, 'drain[ed] its vigour and distort[ed] its moral vision'. As much of the literature has been Western and Christian-centric, these discussions have all focused on Christianity, ignoring the trajectory of other world religions.

The question of why secularisation happened is also complex. The debate on this centres on whether secularisation is a natural evolutionary progression or a contested revolutionary

struggle. Is it an impersonal structural force, or a product of human agency? This can be also asked in a different way: is secularisation a good or bad thing – or neither?

For Bruce (2002: 36), it was impersonal forces, especially industrialisation and technology, that 'made religion less arresting and less plausible that it had been in pre-modern societies'. For Bruce (2002) secularisation is an 'evolutionary' process and 'irreversible'. Similarly, for both Weber and Durkheim (see Schultz, 2006: 171), secularisation is an evolutionary process within which as people 'advance', they no longer need the explanations and meanings provided by religion. However, some commentators have argued that it is human actors and their struggle that brought about secularisation (see Dobbelaere, 1981: 92-93; Fenn, 1978; Gorski and Altınordu, 2008: 61; Mayrl, 2011). For example, Smith (2003a) argued that secularisation is partly an end product of the political project of secularists who have been driven by a complex mix of motives including belief in 'progress', 'antipathy' to religion and 'material gain' (p. 3).

These controversies are important, not least because they shape policy actors' responses to secularisation. Felderhof, Thompson and Torevell (2007: xvi-xvii) note two stances taken by the religious education community in the face of secularisation (they call it secularism): 'pragmatic' and 'idealistic'. For them, those who take pragmatic stance argue that secular religious education has 'had an important success in upholding freedom and has been highly supportive of diversity' while those who take the 'idealistic' stance claim that religious education must take 'a far more bullish and aggressive stance' towards secularisation, highlighting its flawed and short-lived nature.

In this section, I have discussed different dimensions of secularisation and some controversies surrounding it. This section has highlighted that secularisation is complicated and there are different – and contradictory – perspectives on the issue. The interviews with

various policy actors in Turkey and England will shed a light on the controversies and debates surrounding secularisation in both countries.

2.6.3. Pluralisation

Pluralisation is presented as a supranational factor in all main works. According to Willaime (2007: 65), religious education policy in Europe operates under a double constraint, the first being a legal one as outlined above (2.6.1), and the second:

> a *sociological* one, in that religious and philosophical pluralisation of European societies obliges them to include ever more alternative religious and non-religious positions into their curricula (see also Matemba, 2011: 16).

When exploring any concept like pluralisation, it is suggested that it is important to make a distinction between the descriptive and the normative one (Bråten, 2009; Jackson, 2004; Skeie, 2002, 2006). Skeie (1995), for example, makes a distinction between plurality (description) and pluralism (value), but this distinction is often blurred both in the main works and in the supranational legal cases. For example, the Court emphasises that the nature of European society is a religiously plural society (ECtHR, 2007a) on the one hand, and declares that pluralism is a value 'indissociable from a democratic society' (ECtHR, 1993, 31) on the other. As Ringelheim (2012: 286-287) argues, plurality/pluralism as referred to by the Court 'does not only refer to a fact: it is also a value'. In this sense, for the Court, pluralism is not only a description, but also a value that should be protected.

This can also be seen in previous comparative religious education studies. For example, Alberts (2007: 370) argues that European countries have plural societies, and that her framework for religious education 'can contribute to a positive stance towards pluralism'. Similarly, Matemba (2011) makes a distinction between plurality and pluralism, with a reference to Skeie (2002), but Matemba (2011: 43) then argues that

> In this study, I take the view that pluralism provides the relevant philosophical conceptualisation for RE in Scotland and Malawi because both countries are culturally, ethnically and religiously heterogeneous.

In this thesis, I use the terms 'pluralisation' and 'plurality' as descriptive terms; i.e. they refer to the state of being plural. 'Pluralism' refers to a system or condition in which two or more people and groups coexist, but I should acknowledge that this distinction sometimes blurs in my thesis as well.

2.6.3.1. Traditional and Modern Plurality

As a description, plurality indicates that there is a sort of religious diversity in modern societies. According to Skeie (1995; 2002; 2006) plurality as a description (or a fact) can be understood through two sub-concepts: traditional and modern (see also Barnes, 2014; Vertovec, 2006 for similar concepts). The main difference is that the former focuses on groups and communities, while the latter on individuals. Traditional plurality corresponds to the observable religious diversity, manifesting itself in groups or communities, which is present in many societies (Jackson, 2004: 8). Regarding European nations, they have had to respond to the challenges of religious diversity in the past (Protestants, Catholics and a small number of Jews), but with immigration these nations have had to accommodate increasing number of people (e.g. Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus) who are religiously, ethnically and culturally different from the host society. Needless to say, the education system in general and the type of religious education in particular tend to be challenged when plurality increases in society (Hull, 2002), but in some countries, the recognition of cultural and religious plurality might occur long after the actual plurality occurs or increases (Matemba, 2011).

According to Skeie (1995: 86), the concept of traditional plurality is not enough to understand the modern situation, since it only focuses on the organised religion which manifests itself in groups. The modern situation is more complex, therefore he introduces the concept of 'modern plurality'. Modern plurality focuses on individuals and refers to the diversity within modern societies in the sense that societies are fragmented with various groups and individuals having contradictory rationalities and people more than ever before being 'exposed to a plurality of ideas, values, ideals, models and alternative choices of action' (Skeie, 1995: 87). It is related to 'the kind of functional differentiation so characteristic of modern societies' (Skeie, 2002: 53).

According to Berger, Davie and Fokas (2008: 12-13) modernisation, brought about pluralisation – through migration and urbanisation, mass education and mass literacy and modern media of mass communication. 'Modernity pluralises the life worlds of individuals and consequently undermines all taken-for-granted certainties' (Berger, 2001: 449), and this pluralisation is further intensified and diffused by globalisation, which turns 'the world into a single place' (Robertson, 1992: 8). Globalisation, then, has pluralising effects. Berger, Davie and Fokas (2008: 13) have argued that modern plurality is not confined to countries that are religiously plural (in the traditional sense):

> The pluralist dynamic begins to make its impact even in countries where one religious community continues to command the nominal allegiance of most of the population and where one such community continues to be recognised as the official religion of the state.

I found Skeie's (1995; 2002; 2006) distinction between traditional and modern plurality useful. This distinction has also been used by Jackson (2004), Bråten (2009) and Matemba (2011) who have argued that religious education policy should take both traditional and modern plurality into account. In their accounts, Skeie and Jackson give more weight to

modern than to traditional plurality, because modern plurality is seen to be, as its name suggests, a new phenomenon that religious education policy should address. For example, Skeie (1995: 88) argued that 'the context of today's religious plurality is modern plurality'.

However, the concept of pluralisation, like secularisation, can be problematized in several ways. First, like secularisation, pluralisation too implies a historical base-line. In other words, it assumes that religious 'homogeneity' existed previously, which seems highly problematic (Sjöborg, 2013a: 69-70).

Second, some commentators maintain that contrasting trends, namely pluralisation and homogenisation, go hand in hand in modern societies (Green, 1997: 185). Some call this homogenisation 'Americanisation' or 'Coca-Cola culture' (Ferguson, 1992; Tomlinson, 2005). In other words, the world does not become more diverse and plural over time, there are also the opposite pressures of homogenisation and isomorphism, such as the spread of Western educational ideas, models and practices over the world (Ramirez, 2003).

Third, some critical voices argue that there is no real pluralisation. For example, critical of the Western idea of pluralisation, Bhabha (1994) argues that it tolerates diversity only so long as it does not challenge dominant Western values. Similarly, Santos (2007: 68) argues that in the dominant Western thinking, 'the idea of the socio-cultural diversity of the world has been gaining acceptance in the last three decades', but that this does not mean that there is a recognition of 'epistemological diversity' and this runs a risk of eliminating diversity (Santos, 2007: 48) or domesticating it (Poulter, Riitaoja and Kuusisto, 2016: 74). These debates can also be seen in religious education. For example, critical of the English education policy, Mabud (1992: 91) argues that through education, and religious education in particular, 'a kind of secular mono-culturalism' is propagated which 'marginalises religions completely'.

These debates, too, are important for this thesis. An exploration of three supranational factors show that these factors are complex and contested. For example, while some argue that there is a decline in religious beliefs and practices, others claim in contrast that there is persistence of faith. Likewise, some claim that the recommendations and guidelines of supranational organisations exemplify the proof of secularisation, while others disagree and yet others see them as 'pro-religious'. These discussions are of interest to this thesis, which explores pluralisation, secularisation and religious education policy from the perspectives of various policy actors in England and Turkey who can interpret these factors differently. This research puts an emphasis on diversity within nation states. Even though it does not explore 'geographical' subnational/local variations, it does explore variations within the nation states by interviewing a wide array of policy actors.

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to specify 'what will be studied' in this thesis, through examining classical and contemporary comparative education studies and main comparative religious education studies. As a comparative study, this thesis includes two cases and studies the supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education policy in two strikingly different countries. Moreover, I have argued that even though main works in comparative religious education encompassed or studied supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education, there was insufficient discussion of how and to what end these factors shape religious education policy. Therefore, I have conceptualised them and I will use the concepts of structure and agency, conflict and equilibrium, compulsory consensus, and convergence and divergence to make sense of the mechanisms and consequences of the influence of supranational and national factors on religious education policy.

Moreover, I have explored three supranational factors that emerged from the main works: supranational religious education policy, secularisation and pluralisation. The discussion here showed that these factors are complex and open to different interpretations. I have stressed that previous comparative studies did not address how these factors are understood and interpreted by different actors and groups, such as secular and religious groups, in different settings. It is important to know how these factors are understood and responded to by different groups and individuals in two strikingly different countries.

Furthermore, in this chapter, I have specified the research question and what it entails. The research question requires first identification and exploration of wider factors and then their influence on religious education policy from the perspectives of policy actors. Chapters 4 and 5 will explore national and supranational factors (respectively), the Chapter 6 will present the influence of these factors on religious education policy and Chapter 7 will explore the mechanisms of the influence of supranational and national factors on religious education policy.

In the following chapter, I will expand on the questions of 'who will be studied in this thesis' and 'how they will be studied', through discussing religious education policy, the selection of cases, data collection and analysis methods, reflexivity and ethical considerations.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I attempted to specify what will be studied in this thesis. This chapter focuses on 'who will be studied' and 'how they will be studied' through the exploration of religious education policy, the selection of cases and data collection and analysis methods applied in this research. The ethical issues and reflexivity will be also discussed.

3.2. Religious Education Policy

In order to compare religious education policies, it is important to understand 'what policy is', but, as is the case in the question of 'what comparative education is', the literature that might help us to understand the 'policy' is also 'diverse' and 'inconclusive' (Ball, 1994: 15; Rui, 2014: 285). It seems that there is no one single definition of policy, let alone a single recipe for policy analysis (Taylor et al., 1997: 36), because policy is understood and analysed in various ways.

Policy is often defined as 'official documents', i.e. official policy (Rui, 2007: 244), but it is also possible to understand policy as more than official documents. For example, 'the policy cycle model' postulated by Ball (1993) and Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) regards policy as a process, and places policy in continuous and interrelated contexts. This model was first used to analyse the 1988 Education Reform Act (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992), but later widely used by scholars in related fields such as in comparative education (e.g. Ngo, Lingard and Mitchell, 2006; Vidovich, 2003; Vidovich and O'Donoghue, 2003) and in religious education (Fancourt, 2013, 2015).

There are three primary policy contexts in the model: The context of influence is where interested groups or individuals struggle to influence the policy. The context of policy text production is where the policy texts are created. The context of practice is where the policy is subject to 'interpretation' and 'recreation' by practitioners (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992: 19-23). Likewise, Taylor et al. (1997) developed a framework for policy analysis, which focuses on three aspects of policy: context, text and consequences.

These policy models understand policy as more than government directives. As Ozga (2000: 113) argues, policy in this sense involves not only policy directives, but also 'negotiation, contestation or struggle between different groups who may lie outside the formal machinery of official policy-making'. I found these perspectives a useful basis for examining religious education policy, because of three interrelated reasons.

First, the policy analysis models mentioned above stressed the importance of the socio-political environment within which policy is developed and implemented (Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 13). They highlighted that policy does not exist in a vacuum. Likewise, this research puts an emphasis on wider factors within which religious education policy is developed and interpreted. However, there is a difference. Studies in education policy tend to focus on political and economic perspectives/ideologies such as liberalism, neo-liberalism and the new right (Bell and Stevenson, 2006; Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992) to explain policy developments and changes (Berkhout and Wielemans, 1999: 413). These perspectives are important for religious education policy research (Fancourt, 2016: 11), as shown by Fancourt (2015) who argued that changes in religious education policy documents can be interpreted in light of these perspectives, particularly neo-liberalism. In this thesis, however, the wider factors are understood in a different way: instead of being based on economy, they are based

on religion. In other words, religious education policy is explained through the lens of supranational and national factors related to religion.

Second, these studies stressed that policy is a process that has 'neither a beginning nor an end' (Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 9). Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) characterised policy as a continuous cycle of policy production and reproduction, arguing that

> in a very real sense generation and implementation are continuous features of the policy process, with generation of policy (…) still taking place after the legislation has been effected. (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992: 14)

Policy is not only something that governments do. Rather policy is shaped and reshaped up there and down here by various groups; it is interpreted and reinterpreted (Ball, 1994: 16) and all these count as a policy process.

Third, and related to the second point, these studies stressed the importance of the context of influence where various groups struggle to influence the policy (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992; Taylor et al., 1997). If policy process never ends, policy actors, some of whom are included in official policy making, while others are excluded (Ginsburg et al., 1990: 493), still continue to attempt to influence policy through their interpretations, publications and initiatives, which all count as a 'policy *making*' process (Gale, 1999: 404 emphasis in original). Similarly, I understand policy more broadly, encompassing not only official documents and texts but also the ideas, views and interpretations of policy actors that struggle to influence the policy.

The conceptualisation of policy as such informs my research method. In order to understand religious education policy in the face of supranational and national factors, I interview various policy actors (see below), who seek to influence policy and therefore contribute to 'policy development' (Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 25).

I will use the data generated through interviews with these policy actors in two ways: a) as 'a source of information' and b) as 'a source of observational data for interpretation' (Hammersley, 2003: 120-121). As will be seen below, I asked the participants questions about wider factors and (official) religious education policy. In the first place, the participants' own analyses, views and interpretations will be used as information about how wider factors shape (official) religious education policy. Moreover, since I see the policy actors as a part of religious education policy, I am also interested in how wider factors shape the views and interpretations of these policy actors, therefore in the second place, I will use the interview data to understand how wider factors shape *the participants' views and interpretations*.

3.3. Selection of Cases

It was stressed above that the previous studies compared religious education in similar contexts and started with the assumption that these cases have been influenced by same supranational factors. This study aims at comparing two strikingly different cases. Even though there is always subjectivity involved in identifying different or similar cases, England and Turkey seem to represent two strikingly different cases.

English religious education policy is often postulated as a successful religious education policy. At the international level, England's religious education policy, with its opt out option, local determination and, most importantly, its assumed non-confessional, educational and multi-faith approach, attracts admiring interest from others (Fabretti, 2013: 49-50; Pépin, 2009: 49; Schreiner, 2011: 19) even though some insiders warn about the danger of adopting English religious education model because of its secular bias (Barnes, 2012b: 65; Moulin, 2015: 144). Statements like 'England seems to be well in advance'

(Pépin 2009: 49) and '[non-confessional RE's] most complete implementation is probably found in England' (Fabretti, 2013: 49-50) can be found easily in religious education literature. Moreover, the supranational organisations seem to be very interested in English religious education. Most of the approaches to religious education that are recommended by the supranational organisations were established and used in England (see Keast, 2006: 49-71; OSCE, 2007: 46-48).

In contrast, Turkey's religious education often finds itself condemned in international reports (ECRI, 2016, 8; European Commission, 2014, 2015; Kaya, 2009: 20-23; Meral, 2015; MRG, n.d.; USCIRF, 2016: 203; 2017: 187-188). As noted by Bertini (2014: 231), there is no UK case pending or adjudicated by the Court on the issue of religious education, but two of the three judgements related to religious education handed down by the Court were about Turkish religious education (ECtHR, 2007b, 2014).

In other words, Turkey and England both appear as 'reference societies', but difference is that England has been nearly always presented as a 'positive' reference that is admired, while Turkey has been seen as a 'negative' one that is criticised (see Waldow, 2017 for the concept of positive and negative reference societies). From this perspective, the religious education policies of England and Turkey illustrate the 'most different systems design' method of comparative research (see Fontana, 2016: 814; Peters, 1998: 36-41).

Moreover, Turkey and England illustrate different religious traditions (Islam and Christianity respectively) and different structural locations of religion (laicism and the Established Church). Furthermore, it is often argued that England has experienced individual secularization. One commentator even declared '*The Death of Christian Britain*' (Brown, 2009). Based on the last UK census (2011), there has been a decrease in people who identify themselves as Christian (from 71.7 per cent in 2001 to 59.3 per cent in 2011), alongside an

increase in those identifying themselves as having no religion (from 14.8 per cent to 25.1 per cent) (Office for National Statistics, 2011). In contrast, Turkey is often characterized as having a religious (or conservative) society (Selçuk and Doğan, 2007; Shively, 2013: 205). For example, Çarkoğlu and Toprak (2006: 11-13, 38) found that 98.4 per cent of their respondents declared themselves as 'Muslim' and the authors concluded that 'religiosity is increasing in Turkey'.

Furthermore, English society is often portrayed as a religiously plural society. The 2001 census recorded 2.8 per cent of the British population as Muslim, which increased to 4.8 per cent in 2011. Moreover, 1.5 per cent are Hindu while Buddhist, Jewish and Sikh each account for less than 1 per cent (Office for National Statistics, 2011). In contrast, Turkey is often depicted as having a religiously homogenous society, or as the one that has attempted to have a religiously homogenous society (Agai, 2007). According to one estimate (the State does not maintain population statistics based on religious identity), there are fewer than 150,000 Christians and 20,000 Jews (USCIRF, 2016: 201) in Turkey out of an overall population of more than 80 million.

There are also significant differences between English and Turkish education systems. In Turkey, there is a strict centralization of education under the patronage of the Ministry of National Education and there is a ban on any school, public and private alike, with a religious character (Adanali, 2002: 19). However, in England, local determination has played an important role in education, particularly in religious education. Moreover, there are private and state schools with a religious character.

In short, these differences show that Turkey and England serve the purpose of having two completely different cases. However, nothing should be taken for granted and the religious education policies of England and Turkey should be understood and analysed within their

proper contexts (Rymarz, 2013; Schweitzer, 2004), by presenting the views of various policy actors. The interviews with various policy actors might challenge or support these assumed 'differences'. Indeed, there are commentators who challenge the 'facts' mentioned above.

For example, England is often depicted as having a secular society, but there is a lively debate in academia regarding this issue. The central fault line of this debate is between those who highlight massive decline in religious beliefs and practices (Voas and Crockett, 2005) and those who emphasise the continuing importance of religious belief (Davie, 1994). Likewise, Turkey is often known as a strict 'laic' country, but it has also had an official religious office called 'the Presidency of Religious Affairs' authorized to oversee all cases regarding the Islamic faith, which has more than 100,000 civil servants. In short, Turkey and England illustrate two different cases in terms of religious education policy, society and the State, but this research might challenge some of these differences and might find that Turkey and England are not as different as they seem.

In terms of religious education policy, Turkey and England have some 'basic' similarities which make them 'comparable' (Hans, 1958: 10; Schweitzer, 2015: 18). The most important similarity is that the religious education policies in England and Turkey, as member states, have to be in line with the standards embedded in the European Convention on Human Rights and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights. Moreover, as the members of supranational organisations such as the Council of Europe, England and Turkey are expected to comply with the standards set out by these organisations (Jackson, 2016b). In other words, the religious education policies of Turkey and England are, at least in theory, subject to the same supranational challenges, coming from the Convention, the Court and supranational organisations. This is the basic similarity that makes England and Turkey comparable in terms of religious education policy. Moreover, both countries offer religious

education as a separate school subject that has its own curriculum or syllabus (as opposed to, for instance, France, the USA and China where there is no separate school subject devoted to religion).

In addition, the selection of Turkey and England was practical due to both language and residence. A comparison of two countries would normally require two languages. The selection of England and Turkey was practical in this sense, given that one of the obstacles for comparative study is language (Bereday, 1967: 170; Schweitzer, 2015: 25). Moreover, Bereday (1964a: 10) adds that 'residence abroad' is one of the fundamental aspects of comparative study (see also Dale, 2015: 353).

I am a native Turkish speaker and English is my second language. Moreover, I have spent 24 years of my life in Turkey while I have been living in England since 2009. That made the selection of England and Turkey practical for this research, but I should acknowledge that despite residing in England for more than seven years, I still sometimes feel less than competent in dealing with matters of language and culture. Nevertheless, doing my master's degree at King's College London and studying for DPhil at Oxford University were invaluable experiences which also helped me to access key sources and to identify and access interviewees for my research. This research would be more difficult, if not impossible, if I had not lived in England.

In short, Turkey and England were selected as cases for this thesis. As argued above, subjectivity has always been involved in the selection of cases. Other countries could have been chosen, but as a researcher I believe that these two countries best serve the purpose of examining religious education policy in two strikingly different countries.

3.4. Qualitative Research

This research aims at making sense of religious education policy in England and Turkey in the context of supranational as well as national forces from the *perspectives of policy actors*. Hence, this research needs interviews with these actors to find out their views and perspectives. This study, therefore, requires interviews, that is, a qualitative approach to the study.

However, as the relevant literature suggests (see Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Robson, 2011), there is a diversity of methods of qualitative data collection and analysis, which shows that there is no single right way to do qualitative research (Creswell, 2012: 112; Punch and Oancea, 2014: 219). Punch and Oancea (2014) argue that the researcher can choose between specific approaches such as 'the grounded theory' and a general qualitative approach. After examining and trying a number of specific research methods such as the grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Glaser and Strauss, 1967), I decided to adopt a general qualitative approach to data collection and analysis, mainly based on Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014).

Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014)' approach suits the comparative nature of this research, since Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) urged researchers to conduct cross-case studies and argued that cross-case studies are better at 'deepening understanding and explanation' than single case studies because multiple cases 'help the researcher to find negative cases to strengthen a theory, built through examination of similarities and differences across cases' (2014: 101). This research is a comparative research, which explores religious education policies of two distinctively different countries. Moreover, this

research can be regarded as a multi-case study not only because it includes England and Turkey, but also because it encompasses different policy actors from England and Turkey.

Moreover, I found Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014)'s tactics for conclusion drawing and verifying especially useful when I analysed the data. They have presented 26 tactics for drawing and verifying conclusions and urged researcher to use them 'as needed' and 'as relevant' basis (2014: 322). Furthermore, Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) have presented plenty of ideas to help the researcher to present their findings visually. Even though the main medium of data presentation in this thesis was the narrative discussion, I sometimes used displays to better present the findings (see Chapter 5).

3.4.1. Design

An important question in qualitative research is how pre-structured should a qualitative research design be? According to Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 19) much of qualitative research lies between two extremes: tight (pre-structured) and loose. This study also lies between these two extremes, it had some structure, but much of it settled as the research progressed.

The fieldwork was approached with some orienting ideas (such as the possibility of the influence of the supranational and the national factors) derived from the early works. I had my research question and interview questions but they were modified as I continued my research. Since this is a cross-case research, for the sake of comparability, I decided the groups to be interviewed in the beginning of the research, but this was also modified as the research progressed (see below). This study then lies between tight and loose designs which is acceptable in the qualitative approach (Creswell, 2012: 128; Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 19-20; Punch and Oancea, 2014: 7).

3.5. Data Collection

This research aimed at interviewing policy actors in religious education policy. Hence, the focus was not on random sampling. The 'purposeful sampling' method (Creswell, 2012: 206; Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 31; Robson, 2011) was employed in the selection of the participants for this study to reach policy actors. Some call this form of interview 'elite interview' (Flick, 2009) or 'expert interview' (Bogner, Littig and Menz, 2009), it is also referred to as researching the powerful/power (Walford, 1994, 2011; Williams, 2012). Even though there is always subjectivity involved in identifying who is and who is not elite/expert (Flick, 2009: 165; Smith, 2006: 646), I loosely employ this interview model to access policy actors in England and Turkey.

Returning to purposeful sampling, there are different sampling strategies within this sampling method. This research mainly employs the 'maximal variation sampling' strategy, a sampling strategy that helps the researcher to sample groups or individuals that differ on some characteristics (Creswell, 2012: 207-208). My purpose is to access policy actors who can speak from different perspectives. This in turn would help me to present diverse perspectives representing complex views on wider factors and religious education policy in state schools. Moreover, since this is a comparative study, I seek to find parallels, but since there are differences between two countries, I need to also take the particularities of the national settings into account. National particularities sometimes meant that it is difficult to find parallels between cases (see below).

When employing the 'maximal variation sampling' strategy, I asked 'who are the policy actors in the field of religious education?' Indeed, in the field of religious education an important question and an area of contestation is 'who owns [religious education]' and 'who

decides priorities?' (Miller, 2014). Or the question can be asked like this 'who should own religious education?' (Alberts, 2007; Willaime, 2007: 66).

For this research, interested groups, regardless of whether they were included in or excluded from the actual policy-making process, are policy actors. The aim here is to reach individuals and groups who are excluded from the official policy-making process as well as those who participated in the process, because only in this way, can we grasp religious education policy fully in different contexts. As policy actors, five groups were chosen: academics, religious and secular organisations, (religious) education professional organisations, state officials and teachers. The opinions and views of these groups and individuals were ascertained to find out how they see religious education policy in the face of national and supranational challenges.

There are some limitations in my sample. The obvious one is that it does not include politicians. Politicians are important in religious education policy, since it is politicians that make the laws pertaining to religious education, but for practical reasons (i.e. the difficulty of accessing them) they were not included in my sample. Matemba (2011: 49) noted that he tried to access politicians in his comparative study, but all of them declined to take part, stating that 'they were unqualified to comment on a subject which they said is sensitive and contentious'. Therefore, instead of trying to access politicians I interviewed senior state officials, but I sometimes used the statements of politicians as a subsidiary source. As Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 73) argue, data collection is 'inescapably a *selective* process and (…) you cannot and do not "get it all"' (emphasis in original). My sample is also selective, but despite having limitations, I believe that it can be enough to 'represent a variety of positions in relation to the research topic, of a kind that might be expected to throw light on meaningful differences' (King and Horrocks, 2011: 29).

3.5.1. In the Field

The fieldwork was conducted in Turkey and England between 2013 and 2014. The interviews in Turkey were conducted in cities like Izmir, Istanbul, Ankara and Bursa, while in England, mainly in London, Luton, Oxford and Birmingham. Some interviews were carried out online through Skype.

Regarding gaining access to participants, it is often accepted that access to experts/elites is more difficult than ordinary participants e.g. children or parents (Desmond, 2004: 262; Flick, 2009: 168; Walford, 2011: 1). The difficulty is that the targeted individuals or groups are limited, and it is difficult to find alternatives when the proposed participants are not accessed.

Overall, I agree with Gewirtz and Ozga (1994: 194) who claim that the problems of access and interviewing elites are fewer than expected, since they understand what academic research involves and they are used to being interviewed, heard and tape-recorded. Apart from this, I think that other related factors also smoothed access to these people. In Turkey, I have a scholarship from the Ministry of National Education, Turkey and I am affiliated with a renowned university. As suggested by Walford (2011: 2), to have a sponsorship from a respectable funding agency eased the access. Regarding England, studying at Oxford and being a foreign student who is interested in English religious education, I think, eased the access in England.

One of the most important reasons that eased my access, I believe, was the desire of the participants to be heard. Religious education policy, as education policy, by nature is 'political' (Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 9) and 'politicised' (Brown and Beswick, 2014: 3). It has 'winners' and 'losers' (Rui, 2014: 293). Some voices are heard and some are 'unheard'

and ‘marginalised’ (Ginsburg et al., 1990: 493). The desire to be heard, I think, eased the access in both countries, but I felt that to be even so in Turkey than in England.

Following peers’ advice, I also established an online presence, such as establishing an *Academia.edu* page with University of Oxford email address, and making my name appear on the Department of Education website, which also helped. During fieldwork, the notification ‘someone found your profile page on Google from the United Kingdom (or Turkey)’ appeared in my email many times, which tailed off after the fieldwork ended, leading to the conclusion that participants were accessing my profile.

However, there were also problems with access. Some proposed participants did not respond to my emails or telephone calls. This was especially a problem in Turkey, where only three participants responded to my emails. In Turkey, the best way to reach participants was to go their offices to arrange appointments or to call them through a gate keeper.

As stated above, when identifying main groups for the interviews, ‘maximal variation sampling strategy’ was employed. However, identifying groups for the interviews was only the beginning of the process. The second step was to select individuals and organisations within these five groups. In this step, again ‘maximal variation sampling’ was the main guiding strategy, but I also employed a snowball sampling strategy to reach the individuals who can help me to understand the central phenomenon of the thesis.

Regarding religious and secular organisations, I identified four sub-groups: Christian, Muslim, Jewish and secular; since these are the major groups in both countries. I wanted to include representatives from Hinduism and Sikhism, but there was no parallel in Turkey. In England, the two largest Christian groups were chosen – Anglicans and Catholics – while in Turkey I chose the two largest Muslim groups – Sunnis and Alevis – to reflect the fact that

England is (at least nominally) a Christian majority country, while Turkey is a Muslim one. In England, two Muslim denominations, namely, Sunni and Shia were included, but in Turkey only one Christian denomination was included since in Turkey the vast majority of Christians adhere to the Orthodox Church and I could not access other groups. The Jewish organisation in Turkey did not reply to my email and telephone call and did not allow me to enter their offices. This might be because of the timing of my fieldwork[1]. Or it might be because I could not find a gate keeper to help me to access a potential participant.

Moreover, at the time of the fieldwork, there was no was no secular or humanist association in Turkey. This problem is partly solved by following the example of the RELIGARE project (Religious Diversity and Secular Models in Europe - Innovative Approaches to Law and Policy project). The project did not focus on religious education, its focus was employment, family life, access to and the use of public space and state-sponsored activities, encompassing 10 European countries including Turkey and England, and it included the views of different stakeholders including religious and secular organisations. For Turkey, Tanyeri-Erdemir, Erdem and Weitzhofer-Yurtışık (2012) interviewed a member of Atatürkist Thought Association to present the views of laics in Turkey. Therefore, in my research I included that Association as well. However, after my fieldwork ended, a secular organisation was set up in Turkey, and immediately published a position paper on religious education (Association of Atheism, 2014b). I could not reach the organisation for interview, but I included their position paper in my data. I also included the National Secular Society's position paper on religious education (National Secular Society, 2013) in my data.

[1] At the time of fieldwork (2013) there was a terrorist attack which targeted the Jewish community in Turkey.

One problem in the selection of religious/secular organisations was that these communities were not represented by umbrella organisations; for example, there were different secular organisations in England and different Alevi organisations in Turkey. Therefore, I had to choose one organisation among others, sometimes asking participants to recommend groups or individuals to be sampled (snowball sampling).

Regarding (religious) education organisations, initially I proposed to access professional religious education organisations in England and Turkey. After the beginning of the data collection, it became clear that in England there were many professional organisations that represent religious education (e.g. Religious Education Council of England and Wales), but in Turkey there was no organisation specifically established to represent the religious education community or profession. However, there were education unions, which represent religious education teachers and lecturers. Due to this problem, this group was renamed as '(religious) education professional organisations' and I sought to reach both education and religious education associations in England and Turkey. I tried to access the head of these organisations or officers who are responsible for religious education. In Turkey, I was able to access senior officers of the three largest education unions, but in England, no education union responded. I therefore included a position paper on religious education, written by the Accord Coalition (2012), which was also officially supported by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers.

All the participants I reached in these two groups were senior officers responsible for religious education or heads of the organisations. Concerning state officials, I wanted to interview senior state officials responsible for religious education policy. In Turkey, there is a specific state department called 'The General Directorate of Religious Instruction' under the Ministry of National Education, therefore, it was easy to spot potential participants. In

England, there was no specific state department responsible for religious education, but there were officers with responsibility for religious education at the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (dissolved in 2010) and Ofsted (the post for religious education dissolved after my fieldwork). The officers responsible for religious education in these two organisations were accessed.

Since teachers are responsible for the delivery of religious education within the classroom, the thesis also paid attention to teachers' views, to give insight into how policy works in reality (Yemini and Bronshtein, 2016: 355). The aim was to access teachers who teach in schools, that have pupils from various religious backgrounds, and schools that have mostly Anglican Christian pupils in England and Sunni Muslim pupils in Turkey. Teachers I interviewed have had experiences in different schools.

Concerning academics: initially I sought to interview those who have been or seen to be influential on religious education policy and dissidents who are known for their criticism of religious education policy in state schools, but this was open to interpretation, and it ended up that almost all academics criticised some aspects of religious education policy in England and Turkey, so I just grouped them as academics, rather than making artificial sub-categories. It should be noted that the participants in the other four groups were not chosen according to their views on religious education policy, but this was different for the academics. After all, academics had publications, and I read some of their publications to learn their published views (McHugh, 1994: 58-59), so had some knowledge about what they thought about religious education policy, before interviewing them. When I assured them that their identities would be anonymised, however, I expected to gain some new insights from them. This was especially successful in Turkey, where some academics talked about sensitive issues that would be difficult for them to publish openly. Even in England,

this was fruitful, because I had a chance to ask questions about issues that the academics did not address in their publications or that they did not clarify.

Participants of the Study	
Turkey	England
Religious and Secular Organisations	
Presidency of Religious Affairs (official religious institution) representative (T01PRA) Alevi Representative (T02ALEVI) Armenian Patriarch (Christian) Representative (T03CHR) Atatürkist Thought Association Representative (T04LAIC) Association of Atheism (Document) (T05ATH)	Anglican representative 1 (E01ANG1) Anglican representative 2 (E02ANG2) Catholic Church representative (E03CATH) British Humanist Association representative (E04BHA) The National Secular Society (Document) (E05NSS) Jewish Leadership Council representative (E06JEW) Muslim Council of Britain representative (Mainly Sunni Islam) (E07SUNNI) Al-Khoei Foundation representative (Shia Islam) (E08SHIA)
Professional Associations	
Educators Trade Union Representative (T06ETU) Education and Science Workers' Union Representative (T07ESWU) Turk Education Union Representative (T08TEU) ERI (Education Reform Initiative) (Document) (T09ERI)	Association of University Lectures in Religion and Education Representative (E09AULRE) National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education Representative (E10NASACRE) National Association of Teachers of Religious Education Representative (E11NATRE) Religious Education Council of England and Wales Representative (E12REC) Accord Coalition (Document) (E13AC)
Academics	
Academic 1 (T10A1) Academic 2 (T11A2) Academic 3 (T12A3) Academic 4 (T13A4) Academic 5 (T14A5) Academic 6 (T15A6)	Academic 1 (E14A1) Academic 2 (E15A2) Academic 3 (E16A3) Academic 4 (E17A4)
State Officials	
State official 1 (General Directorate of Religious Instruction) (T16S1) State official 2 (General Directorate of Religious Instruction) (T17S2)	State official 1 (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) (E18S1) State official 2 (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) (E19S2)
Teachers	
Teacher 1 (T18T1) Teacher 2 (T19T2) Teacher 3 (T20T3)	Teacher 1 (E20T1) Teacher 2 (E21T2)

Table 3.1 Participants of the study

In Table 3.1 above, the participants of the study are shown. Due to ethical concerns, the names and positions of the participants are not identified (see 3.8 below). As can be seen one problem with the sample was that there are different numbers of participants in each group. This was because of national differences and practical issues. In Turkey, it was difficult to access religious representatives. Moreover, in Turkey, there were only three major education unions and there was literally no association specifically set up for the religious education community. On the other hand, academics in Turkey were relatively easy to access, therefore there are more Turkish academics than English ones in my sample. In England, it was easy to access religious education and secular organisations and there were many organisations that represent the religious education community. Therefore, there are more representatives from religious and secular organisations and from (religious) education associations in England than in Turkey.

So, due to access problems, there are different numbers of participants in different groups. This could be seen as a problem, but in fact, reliance on the above categorisation would be misleading, because the categories of the participants were not mutually exclusive and they often overlapped. For example, most of the representatives of the professional religious education organisations in England were academics and teachers as well. In Turkey, the representatives of the education unions were teachers at the same time. Even though I continue to use these categorisations throughout the thesis, my analysis does not depend on them. Instead I focus on the views and perspectives of the individual participants, rather than their positions and professions.

In addition, it should be noted that these participants are not 'representative'. The participants are not even representatives of their own organisations, let alone the whole group. Some participants themselves pointed out that they were expressing their own views,

rather than the views of their organisations or groups. For example, the REC representative emphasised that

> These are my perceptions. I speak to you as an individual, rather than the (….) of the Religious Educational Council. (E12REC).

Thus, these participants should be seen as individuals who expressed their own views. In this sense, for example, the above participant is *not* a representative REC official, but he is one of the officials of the REC, which is why I call him a REC representative, not a representative REC official.

Some still might see this usage (e.g. REC representative) problematic on the grounds that it gives the impression that the person is a representative voice of the organisation. I am aware of that risk, but this usage partly stems from my decision to anonymise the names of the participants, but at the same time to make the backgrounds of the participants a bit visible to provide a contextual depth. Moreover, to offset that risk, I have been careful to avoid using, for example, 'according to the REC', but instead 'according to the REC representative' to stress that this is the view expressed by the participant who was a senior officer at the REC at the time of fieldwork.

An additional issue is that the size of the sample might seem small. This study includes about 40 participants. In the beginning of the fieldwork, this was the target I had. This was partly because of the recommendations of Creswell (2012: 206) who recommended at most 40 participants (see also Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 31; Punch and Oancea, 2014: 47). Some suggested even less (Seidman, 2006). After reaching about 40, I felt that I had collected enough data to answer the research question.

Finally, I was the only interviewer involved in the research. English was the language used in the interviews in England, while in Turkey, Turkish was the language used. The majority of the participants was male: 68 per cent in England and 83 per cent in Turkey. Even though I put emphasis on including voices both from male and female stakeholders, the percentage of male participants was still disproportionate, partly because the professions were dominated by males especially in Turkey.

I gathered additional data through informal meetings and interviews with several academics, teachers and representatives of religious, secular and professional communities, before, during and after the fieldwork. These served as background for my analysis and provided me with an opportunity to discuss my research with them to learn their views. However, during the actual analysis, I rarely used these informal interviews and meetings as main data, partly because they were not meant to be formal interviews.

Documents

I collected some documents as a part of the field work. As stressed above, I was not able to access some important groups, but I wanted to include their perspectives into my research. Therefore, I collected their official policy documents on religious education policy. Furthermore, some participants gave or sent me articles or reports they or their organisations had written (e.g. Eğitim Sen, 2012, 2013). For example, some academics provided some of their published or unpublished articles for use in the research if needed. These documents were treated as equivalent sources of data to the interviews.

Moreover, I also referred to official religious education policy documents. As I stressed before, religious education policy is understood broadly in this thesis. Nevertheless, policy still includes official policy documents. In Turkey, this corresponds to the Constitution,

Basic Education Act and the official religious education curriculum. In England, this corresponds to education acts, non-statutory guidance on religious education (DCSF, 2010) and locally agreed syllabuses. Moreover, during this time, I also read and collected 'grey' literature such as newspaper articles, blogs, statements of politicians and other stakeholders regarding religious education. This data was sometimes used as a subsidiary for the reader to cross-check the findings.

3.5.2. Interview Questions

As discussed above, the research question of the thesis requires the identification of the supranational and national factors and then exploration of their influence on religious education policy. The interview questions were designed to identify supranational and national factors, explore their influence on religious education policy and examine how this is articulated by the participants. The interview questions were semi-structured, which means that questions were tailored for different interviewees and modified as needed (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 38).

I had two sets of questions. The first one was directly related to factors. In the pilot interviews, I asked participants directly about secularisation, pluralisation and supranational policy. In the main study, I asked 'what have been the deciding factors shaping religious education policy?' and 'how have these factors shaped religious education policy?' to the interviewees as first questions to avoid restricting them to predefined concepts and imposing predefined concepts on data; this change was effective. When I asked this question during the main fieldwork, in some cases, similar concepts and factors emerged, but it was important to see that the factors emerged as the perspectives and ideas of the participants rather than the imposition of the researcher. This also helped me to remain open to the data,

which yielded unanticipated factors and themes that sometimes challenged my prior assumptions.

Moreover, I directly asked about supranational religious education policy, secularisation and pluralisation to the participants who did not talk about them to learn their views on these factors. The national factors all emerged from the data. The second set of questions were about religious education policy, which were intended to find out the factors, their influence on religious education policy and the views of participants on religious education policy.

For example, I asked: 'Do you think religious education should be compulsory in state schools?' 'Why and how?'. These questions helped me understand the views of the participants on different aspects of religious education policy. Some participants explained why there should be religious education in state schools, while some participants explained why there should not. For example, academic 4 in England argued that there should be compulsory religious education in state schools, because 'in a predominantly secularist culture it keeps religion a little in the public eye' (E14A4), a clear reference to secularisation and its influence on policy. In contrast, the Education and Science Workers' Union representative in Turkey argued for an end of compulsory religious education because the participant argued, it does not reflect plurality within society (T07ESWU), a clear reference to plurality (for the interview questions, see the Appendix).

The participants also talked about 'how' religious education should be delivered in state schools. For example, the Alevi representative in Turkey said that religious education should be a 'voluntary' (opt in) and an 'inclusive' subject. When prompted, he further explained that the subject should include various religions and world-views in society and the subject should not impose any religious views on pupils because there is diversity in society and the laic state should be impartial (T02ALEVI). Overall, interview questions helped me 'to

understand the world [in my case, religious education policy] from the subjects' point of view' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008: 1).

3.6. Data Analysis

Instead of adopting a specific approach such as the Grounded Theory, this research adopts a general qualitative approach to data analysis, mainly based on Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014). There are three *concurrent* steps in data analysis: (1) data condensation, (2) data representation, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification.

Before analysis, it is important to prepare the data for analysis (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 71). This contains transcription and translation. I recorded the interviews with the permission of the participants. Recording was better than note-taking, since it allowed me to concentrate on what the interviewees were saying and this in turn allowed me to raise appropriate questions as necessary, instead of focusing on note-taking (see Robson, 2011: 300). Regarding transcription, even though there is a debate in the research methods literature about the benefits and costs of transcription (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011: 537; Meuser and Nagel, 2009: 35; Seidman, 2006: 114), I transcribed all of the recordings, except in rare cases when the participant talked about topics beyond the scope of the thesis. I used software (f4) that allowed me to lower the replay speed and to use hot keys to transcribe interviews.

Since about half of the interviews were conducted in Turkish, it was also important for me to consider the benefits and costs of translation of the transcripts. The problem of translation is that it is difficult to capture the nuance of meaning in translation: as Hoffman (1998) claims, meanings may be 'lost in translation'. Corbin and Strauss (2008: 320) and Meuser and Nagel (2009: 35) argue that it is not necessary to translate all of the research material,

therefore I translated only passages to be used in the thesis. I sought the help of my peers in translating these passages. They checked both the original text and the translation to examine whether they are as close as possible and provided me valuable feedback. I coded and analysed the Turkish text in its original language but with English codes. The transcribed data was saved and I used a computer software programme, called MAXQDA (Qualitative Data Analysis Software) to organise and analyse the data (Creswell, 2012: 241).

3.6.1. Data Condensation

The next step in analysing the data was data condensation, which refers to exploring and coding the data. Exploring the data involves reading the transcripts in their entirety several times (Creswell, 2012: 243). Since the beginning of the fieldwork, I read the transcripts several times, which helped me to make sense of the data. Then, I started to code the data. Coding is, according to Charmaz (1983: 111), 'simply the process of categorizing and sorting data' to make further analysis and interpretation of the data easier (see also Dey, 1993: 30; Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 73; Punch and Oancea, 2014: 225). I did not have a provisional start list of codes or a master code prior to the fieldwork, but as Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) argue, it is impossible to start research without some orienting ideas and initial thoughts. I expected certain codes related to, for example, supranational and national factors due to my interview questions. In this sense, the coding process can be described partly as a deductive process, but it was mainly inductive, since I did not have a start list of codes and did not have any preconceived ideas about the patterns that would emerge.

According to Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 73) coding can be divided into two major stages: 'first cycle' and 'second cycle' coding. Even though their names indicate a sequence, they can go hand in hand. In the first cycle, codes are assigned to data chunks to detect

recurring patterns. In the second cycle, from these patterns, similar first cycle codes are grouped together to create a smaller number of categories. The first cycle codes helped me to condense the data while the second cycle codes helped me to cluster them to create categories and themes.

3.6.2. Data Representation

The next step in analysing the data is representing and reporting findings. Representing findings consists of displaying the findings visually and narratively (Creswell, 2012: 253-254; Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014). In this research, I sometimes used displays to better present the findings to both myself and the reader. Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) present plenty of ideas to help the researcher to better present their findings. However, the main medium of data presentation was the narrative discussion, that is 'a written passage in a qualitative study in which authors summarise, in detail, the findings from their data analysis' (Creswell, 2012: 254; see also Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 91). In these passages, I included quotes from participants and reported multiple perspectives. Since this is a comparative research, the findings from England and Turkish contexts were then compared.

The next step in data analysis is interpreting the findings. Qualitative research is interpretive research and though interpretation is mentioned here, interpretation actually begins with the research design and continues throughout the process (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 57; Creswell, 2012: 238; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008). During the whole process, I always referred back to my research question, conceptual framework and methodology. The last step in analysis is testing and confirming findings. The aim here is to increase the confidence in what I have found (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 294).

3.6.3. Conclusion Drawing

When interpreting data, I used some methods recommended by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) who presented 13, somewhat overlapping, tactics/methods for drawing conclusions and recommended the researcher to 'use these methods on an "as needed" or "as relevant" basis' (2014: 322). There are some examples below showing how I have used some of these tactics to make sense of data.

For example, one of the most used tactics is 'noting patterns, themes'. I used this tactic during and after the coding process. When coding the data, I noted patterns and themes. For example, the Turkish participants tended to have negative attitudes towards secularisation, while pluralisation received often positive views. Some of these patterns noted during the first cycle coding, later became the second cycle codes. When noting and reporting patterns, I tried to support them with quotes from the interviews and always considered disconfirming evidence and outliers when they appeared.

I also often used 'counting'. Even though this is a qualitative research, as Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 282) argue, in qualitative research, too, 'a lot of counting goes on in the background when judgements of qualities are being made'. When I use 'a significant number of participants'; 'most participants'; or 'the majority of the participants', I come to that estimate by making counts and comparisons. Moreover, identifying patterns is also based on counting. Therefore, in displays and in narrative presentations, I often resort to numbers. For example, the data revealed that supranational policy was not seen as an important factor in religious education policy by the English participants. I reached this conclusion partly because only four participants mentioned supranational policy without being asked, only three participants referred to supranational policy to make their case, and four participants argued that it has had an impact on official religious education policy in England. According

to Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 282), resorting to numbers helps the researcher to keep himself/herself 'analytically honest, protecting against bias'.

3.6.4. Conclusion Verification

Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) recommends 13 tactics to 'increase our – and our readers' – confidence in what we've found' (2014: 294. I have applied almost all of these tactics, below I will show how I used some of these tactics.

Data quality can be assessed through 'checking for representatives'. The main issue here is the question of 'how representative is the finding?' (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 295). As noted before, the 'purposeful sampling' method was applied in this thesis, because the focus was on groups who might help me to understand the central phenomenon of the study. In other words, my sampling was not meant to be representative of the whole population, therefore I do not make any claim that the findings of the study are representative or generalizable. However, within purposeful sampling, I employed the 'maximal variation sampling' strategy (Creswell, 2012: 207-208), to access individuals who can speak from different perspectives. Therefore, I looked purposively for different and contrasting groups and individuals. I interviewed representatives from different religious groups such as Christian, Muslim, Jewish and secular groups. When choosing academics, I tried to include academics who are known for their criticisms of religious education policy. I tried to incorporate male and female participants. These all helped me to increase the representativeness of my sampling, but I still have no claim that the findings of the study are fully representative; therefore I often use 'according to the participants' to point to this issue.

'Triangulation': triangulation might have different forms (Scott and Morrison, 2006). I used triangulation by data source in this study. For each category (i.e. academics, teachers, state

officials, representatives of religious and secular organisations and professional (religious) education organisations), I included at least two participants to see whether findings were consistent or conflicting. However, since my study focuses on the views of the participants, both scenarios are a 'blessing' for my research (see Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 300). On the one hand, conflicting findings help me to compose a multi-dimensional perspective of the phenomenon. On the other hand, consistent findings mean that the view is shared by at least more than one participant. Moreover, I sometimes used policy documents to triangulate with interviews.

'Weighting the evidence': As Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 300) argue, some 'data are better than others' and it is important for the researcher to be aware of his data quality. In my study, some interviews were short compared to other interviews. For example, the interview with teacher 2 in Turkey was short and he sometimes gave superficial answers. Some religious representatives (like Catholic and Jewish representatives) in England talked more about their schools than religious education policy in fully funded state schools, but even when they talked about their schools, they often made comparisons and contrasts with community schools that helped me to understand their views on religious education policy and wider factors.

As discussed before, my data base is probably biased toward religious and secular organisations in England and academics in Turkey and may underrepresent teachers in both countries. However, I feel that the data base is strong in presenting different views on religious education policy in both countries. Moreover, the data base is also strong in terms of the views of dissidents. In Turkey, several participants told me that they were more than happy to share their views because nobody came to listen to them before. So, the conclusions of the thesis may be richer about differing views about religious education policy as

articulated by different participants, but it might be sometimes thinner on the details of each view articulated by the participants.

Furthermore, according to Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 294), looking at 'unpatterns' can tell us a lot. 'Checking the meaning of outliers', 'using extreme cases', 'following up surprises' and 'looking for negative evidence' are all related tactics that help the researcher to test a conclusion about a pattern by saying 'what it is not like' (2014: 294). When I analysed and interpreted the data, I always included the exceptions and extreme cases. For example, Turkish participants tended to use supranational policies and principles to argue their case, but English participants appeared to find the supranational religious education policy either irrelevant, because England has already had that policy, or negative. However, there were still three 'outliers' in England who look at the supranational policy to support their arguments and four 'outliers' in Turkey, who found the supranational influence dangerous, as opposed to a slight majority of the participants in Turkey.

3.6.5. Standards for the Quality of Conclusions

One of the key questions in every research is how good (or credible) are the findings? (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 311). According to Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) there are five related criteria to judge the goodness of research: reliability, internal validity, external validity, utilisation and objectivity. Even though these terms are contested by some qualitative researchers, they are still used by others (Creswell, 2012).

Following the advice of Patton (1990: 402) and Punch and Oancea (2014: 201) I described the method of data collection and analysis in detail to ensure 'reliability'. Moreover, I clearly specified the conceptual framework with the help of main comparative religious education works and comparative education, but one of the drawbacks of the study was that its design

was not tight. For example, interview questions reformulated as the study progressed, but this was acceptable in a qualitative approach (see 3.4.1 above).

Regarding 'internal validity', I included direct quotations from the participants, presented different perspectives on religious education policy from different participants, triangulating by data source and considered rival explanations and negative cases. Concerning 'external validity or generalisability', it should be admitted that it is difficult to transfer the whole findings of this thesis to another context, but, I think that, it is highly possible that the issues highlighted in the thesis can be also found in different contexts. This thesis might offer significant insights into how different policy actors understand and interpret the wider factors and religious education policy. In other words, the findings may not be 'universal', or 'generalisable', but they are 'indicative', which might have 'the ring of truth' (Conroy et al., 2013: 220; Cooling et al., 2016: 51). As for 'utilisation', I will make the findings of the thesis accessible to potential users, by publishing the material in journals. The thesis will raise awareness of the different perspectives and views about the world not only across cases (i.e. societies), but also within cases.

3.7. Reflexivity

In terms of objectivity, whether the researcher can ever be completely objective is a controversial issue (Bråten, 2009: 33; Bray, Adamson and Mason, 2014b: 428; Creswell, 2012: 18; Maxwell, 2013: 45). Corbin and Strauss (2008: 32) even claimed that:

> objectivity in qualitative research is a myth (…) Researchers bring to the research situation their particular paradigms, including perspectives, training, knowledge, and biases; these aspects of self then become woven into all aspects of the research process.

As Cooling et al. (2016: 8) would argue, I am not a 'disinterested, dispassionate and objective' researcher. I am a part of the world I am researching and it is difficult for me to be objective about it. As in any other research, I have played a key role in the selection of cases, identification of the participants and research questions and interpretation of findings. This means that the interpretation of the data I have made might differ from the interpretation that someone else makes.

Even though I tried my best to present the views of the participants and findings as accurately and fairly as possible by including direct quotations, presenting different and contradictory perspectives and considering rival explanations and negative cases, I was not probably well able to do it because of my subjectivity. In other words, my 'subjectivity' has probably a profound influence on the way this research has been undertaken and interpreted.

What is more, the data generated through interviews with policy actors should not be seen as 'objective' accounts either. According to Maclure and Taylor (2011: 10), in modern plural societies, there are groups and individuals that adopt 'different and sometimes incompatible value systems and conceptions of good'. These groups and individuals struggle to influence policy to mould the character of the next generations (Floria, 2013: 197; Kuru, 2007: 569; 2009: 8; Van Arragon and Beaman, 2015: 6), therefore many of these groups and individuals define themselves in opposition to each other and their views and perspectives might ultimately depend on their deeply held beliefs and worldviews.

Coupled with my subjectivity, then, the findings and interpretations presented in this thesis have actually been subject to 'double subjectivity' (Bligh, 1993; Edwards, 1993: 185; Edwards and Holland, 2013: 5): subjectivities of the participants and the researcher. I admit that because of the 'double subjectivity', the findings and interpretations in this thesis should be treated with caution, but this study is also a reflexive one which takes account of the

effects of the researcher and the participants. For example, as advised by Dey (1993) I did not conceal my views on religion and education, rather disclosed them. On this issue, Corbin and Strauss (2008: 33) argued that

> forcing the researcher's ideas on data is more likely to happen when the researcher ignores the relevance of self in the interpretation process and thinks that it is only the data talking when it is data talking through the 'eyes' of the researcher.

I am a Muslim, Turkish, male and an Islamic theology graduate. I studied for seven years at a vocational religious secondary school, called Imam-Hatip Schools (Öcal, 2007; Ozgur, 2012; Reed, 1955; Tarhan, 1996) and then graduated from a four-year Islamic theology degree. I have been *Imam* in Turkey for two years and in England for four years. My history as a religious learner and educator has probably had an influence on my views on religion in education. I believe that religion should have a more prominent role in education. Ideally, religion should be an integral part of whole school education rather than squeezed into an isolated slot. However, the question is 'whose religion' (Beaman and Van Arragon, 2015) should be given a prominent role in state schools in plural societies? Or what about people who do not want religion in state schools? This research helped me in my journey to find answers to these questions (see 8.3 below).

Furthermore, I checked the data for 'researcher effects' (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 296): the effects of the researcher on the participants (Bias 1) and the effects of the participants on the researcher (Bias 2). In order to limit Bias 1, I made my intentions clear to the participants: why I am interviewing them, what I am studying this topic, what I would do with it, because the literature warns that the participants might see the researcher as a spy and conceal important knowledge (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 298). This might be an important problem in Turkey. Ozgur (2012) argued that sometimes the participants in her research in Turkey saw her as a spy and were reluctant to share their views (see also

Müftügil, 2011: 1), because religion and education are sensitive and controversial topics in Turkey. For example, teachers in Turkey were not comfortable at the interviews, even though I assured them that their identities would be anonymised.

Moreover, given how sensitive the research topic is, my personality and beliefs may have 'inhibited or provoked' (Moulin, 2013: 106) particular participant responses. In Turkey. as an Islamic theology graduate and 'Sunni' Imam, I was probably seen as a part of religious education policy by the participants. In England too, I was probably seen as a Muslim, rather than an ordinary researcher, who was interested in English religious education policy at a time when the world was shaken by the terror in the name of Islam and the newspapers were full of stories about how Islamists want to take over British schools (Gilligan, 2009; Kerbaj and Griffiths, 2014). Because of this sensitivity, I avoided polemical focuses and discussions and leading questions during interviews and interview data collected is regarded as a 'collaborative effort' and 'negotiated text' (Fontana and Frey, 2005: 696, 722), co-produced by participants with the researcher.

Regarding Bias 2, this is highly likely when the researcher goes 'native' and embraces taken-for-granted versions of participants (Bogner and Menz, 2009: 54-55). To avoid such bias, I included different groups who often had different opinions about the subject. I included 'dissidents' – people or groups with different points of view from the mainstream and looked at 'unpatterns' (see above). These helped me to triangulate several interviews to make sense of religious education policy.

As will be seen in the following chapters, the participants of this study approached wider factors, their influence and religious education policy in different and contradictory ways, possibly reflecting their own values, beliefs and political orientations. This showed that the participants were not 'objective' observers. This is one of the reasons why I called these

participants 'policy actors', because they advocate or oppose particular policy approaches. The subjectivity of the participants can be seen as a weakness, but I think the interviews with policy actors suits the aim of this research which is concerned with how supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education policy as *understood* and *interpreted* by various policy actors. Therefore, I deliberately included various policy actors, from teachers to state officials and from representatives of religious and secular organisations to academics to present differing and subjective views about religious education policy in the context of supranational and national factors, which will provide insights into concerns, inspirations and views of policy actors and how policy actors make sense of the relationship between wider factors and religious education policy.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

There is a consensus within education research literature that research should be conducted in an ethical manner (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Punch and Oancea, 2014; Walford, 2005), even though there is no consensus as to what 'ethical' means and involves in practice (Hammersley, 2015: 434). For a thesis at the University of Oxford, this involves adhering to formal University guidelines. For example, as part of the University guidelines, ethical approval for the fieldwork was sought and received; and during the field work, I sought the informed consent of the participants (Christians, 2005: 144). A consent form was provided to all participants to be read and signed before the interviews (these will be destroyed when the thesis is completed and defended). The information sheet, which was provided with the consent form, covered the following points in line with the BERA (2011) guidelines:

> (1) who is doing the research and for whom? (2) why their participation is necessary? (3) risks and vulnerability, (4) right to participate or not, (5) rights of

withdrawal from the process at any time, (6) anonymity and confidentiality and (7) dissemination (see the appendix).

Moreover, regarding data storage, as was covered on the information sheet, the data generated will be kept securely in electronic form for a period of five years after the completion of the thesis: the voice data recorded during the interview was saved as .mp3 format and the transcription of the interview was saved as .docx (Office 2016) and as .mx11 (MAXQDA) formats in my password-protected computer.

Even though there is no consensus about what 'ethical' means and involves, there is a considerable agreement that harm should be prevented or at least minimised (Hammersley, 2015: 435; Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 56; Traianou, 2014: 63). During and after the research, every effort was made to prevent potential harm. One strategy applied was to disguise the identity of the participants. In the information sheet, I assured the participants that their identities would be disguised, but I also warned them that 'given your status, it may be difficult to disguise your identity completely' (see the appendix).

The overwhelming majority of the participants told me that it would not be a problem for them to be identified. However, I still disguised their names to protect them against any potential harm. Even though the possibility of harm from this research is minimal, religious education still remains a sensitive topic, especially in Turkey and even more so now that the issues pertaining to religion and education are now being drawn into the remit of national and international security (Gearon, 2013a, 2015). Former Prime Minister of the UK, Tony Blair (2014) warned that 'we need to recognise that education is a security issue'. In addition, this thesis has been written in times when free speech and (academic) freedom are again challenged (Amnesty International, 2017; Independent, 2015). Therefore, to protect the participants, I disguised their identities.

However, one problem with disguising identity is that, as Walford (2005: 84-85) suggests, some participants may wish and have a right to be identified (see also BERA, 2011). This was the dilemma I faced during the research: preventing any potential harm on one hand, and respecting their decision to be named in the research on the other. As Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014: 67) argue ethical issues are not 'clear-cut', they often require 'unhappy choices'. Hammersley (2015: 440-441) argues that, in such cases, the researcher should decide whether or not to anonymise the participants according to specific circumstances. In the end, I chose to be extra careful and disguised their identities to prevent any potential harm. Anonymous codes such T01PRA, E01ANG1 and so on were used to protect the identify of those who participated in study (see Table 3.1 for the codes)

This of course does not mean that it is impossible for others to identify the participants. Their identities may be more or less difficult to recognise by different audiences (Christians, 2005: 145; Traianou, 2014: 65). For example, those who are familiar with the religious education community might identify the academics from their views but, as highlighted above, the participants were informed about the difficulty in disguising their identity 'completely' and they still willingly gave consent to be interviewed. Moreover, I assured the participants that 'every effort will be made to preserve confidentiality'. For example, one participant told me after the interview that 'I would not like you to use what I said about other people [… and] about my personal faith position'. I strictly complied with this request and never included the materials that the participants wanted to remain confidential.

Moreover, during the fieldwork I felt that the participants of this study agreed to be interviewed in order to make their voices and messages to be heard. I did not apply financial or any kind of incentive in the recruitment of the participants. The only incentive for the participants was probably to convey their message to a wider audience (see Miles, Huberman

and Saldaña, 2014: 60). Therefore, as a researcher, I have a moral responsibility to present the views of the participants as closely and truthfully as possible, because one of the harms research can cause is the distortion of the views of the participants (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 66). Such distortion would probably not cause any physical harm, but would betray the trust between me and the participants.

Moreover, the participants are not the only ones who can be harmed by the research. There is also a risk of harm to the researcher himself/herself (Traianou, 2014: 63). This includes legal jeopardy and, more importantly psychological effects deriving from committing deception and manipulation. Therefore, as a researcher, I avoided distortion to prevent harm both to the participants, and to myself.

3.9. Conclusion

This chapter described the key methodological decisions made in order to answer the research question. It started with exploring 'religious education policy'. I have shown that it is possible to conceptualise policy more broadly, encompassing not only official documents and texts but also the perspectives, ideas and views of experts, academics, state officials and interested groups that struggle to influence the policy. This thesis focuses on the perspectives, ideas and views of policy actors and what they say about official religious education policy.

I have shown that the thesis has two strikingly different cases in terms of society, the structural place of religion, education policy and, more importantly religious education policy, which is a strength of this thesis. English religious education policy is seen to represent successful policy, while Turkish religious education policy is seen as unsuccessful.

Yet, I have argued, interviews with various policy actors might challenge this assumed success and failure.

Furthermore, the chapter described the data collection and analysis methods. I have made it clear that there are different ways of doing comparative research, qualitative research and comparative religious education research and this research is only one way of doing this. I have applied a general qualitative approach to data collection and analysis, mainly based on Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014).

I have also stressed that this research is a selective account since the thesis and its writer have limitations and, as in any other research, the researcher plays a key role in the selection of the cases, identification of the participants and research questions and interpretation of findings. My personal, social, political and religious history can shape my interpretation. What is more, I stressed that the participants of this study are not objective observers either: their views and perspectives on religious education policy and wider factors, such as secularisation, ultimately depend on their beliefs and worldviews. Finally, I have discussed ethical issues, especially why I have disguised the identities of participants.

In conclusion, this chapter has presented how this research was carried out to answer the research question. This includes choices made both before and during the research. Some methodological decisions were made during the research and some before the research. The next three chapters will present the findings of this research.

4. National Factors

4.1. Introduction

To answer the research question I will firstly identify and explore national and supranational factors. This exploration will help me not only to identify national and supranational factors shaping religious education policy as understood and interpreted by the policy actors, but also to understand how these factors shape religious education policy (i.e. mechanisms), which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

'In each country, religious education has been and will continue to be shaped by a multiplicity of factors' (Berglund, Shanneik and Bocking, 2016a: 2), including internal, sub-national, national and supranational. Almost inevitably the factors shaping religious education policy are interconnected and often overlap, but for the purposes of clarity in this thesis national and supranational factors have been identified, separated and treated as if they are relatively discrete.

The chapter at hand explores national factors influencing religious education policy in England and Turkey, as reported by various policy actors in religious education in both countries. Even though there is a variety of opinions regarding these factors, we can group them into five: 1. Politics, 2. State and Religion, 3. The School System, 4. Particularities and Peculiarities of Turkey and England and 5. Teachers.

4.2. Politics

Politics was constantly present in the interviews conducted both in Turkey and England. According to the participants, the responsibility for shaping laws pertaining to religious education policy falls almost exclusively to politicians and governments, therefore, as the

AULRE representative said, 'the real power lies with the government' (E09AULRE). In Turkey and England, almost all participants talked about politics, but 14 and 13 participants (respectively) specifically mentioned politics as one of the most important factors shaping religious education policy.

4.2.1. Turkey

According to 14 Turkish participants (T01PRA; T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T04LAIC; T07ESWU; T08TES; T10A1; T12A3; T13A4; T14A5; T17S2; T18T1; T19T2; T20T3), one of the decisive factors influencing religious education policy in Turkey is politics. The participants used 'the most important factor' (T18S2); 'the most important challenge' (T08TEU) to describe the importance of politics in religious education policy in Turkey. For example, Academic 4 lamented that

> Unfortunately, the most important factor in religious education policy in Turkey is politics. (T13A4)

The participants claimed that this is especially because Turkey has a central educational structure. Educational policies including religious education policy are exclusively determined centrally by the politicians, who often ignore other stakeholders (e.g. T02ALEVI; T07ESWU; T13A4; T19T2).

The politicians were charged with 'populism' (T17S2) and ignoring relevant stakeholders (e.g. T07ESWU; T14A5). Moreover, the participants reacted against the 'politicization of religious education'. It was argued that since the introduction of a multi-party system in 1946, religious education has been a factor in the electoral calculations of political parties in Turkey, which has resulted in the politicisation of the subject (confirmed by Çağatay, 1972: 41; Karpat, 1967: 238-239; Ozgur, 2012: 36). The Alevi representative said that

politicians have been doing what is good for re-election, rather than what is good for the whole society (T02ALEVI; also, T04LAIC; T07ESWU; T08TEU; T10A1; T18T1). Even though 'what is good for the whole society' differed markedly from participant to participant, almost all participants agreed that politicisation of the subject is largely responsible for the challenges the subject faces, because politicisation has made it almost impossible to reach a national consensus over religious education policy. Some participants stressed that debates over religious education policy has been largely reduced to a political fight between conservative and laic parties (T10A1, see also Bolay and Türköne, 1995: 8).

Some participants argued that, due to the politicisation of the subject, religious education had experienced extensive policy reforms since the establishment of Turkey (T08TEU; T14A5). Academic 5 argued that 'religious education policies change as governments change'. The Turk Education Union representative even said that education policies change 'as the ministers of National Education change' (T08TEU, see also Parmaksızoğlu, 1966: 14). As will be seen in the section on 'Religious Education Reform' (see 6.2 below), religious education in Turkey has been in flux.

Politicisation of the subject also means that politicians have ignored all other factors and actors and pursued their own ideologies. The Education and Science Workers' Union representative claimed that politicians have neglected the fact that the Turkish society is plural, and repeatedly failed to accommodate the needs of a plural society (T07ESWU). According to her, the religious education curriculum in Turkey has asserted the centrality of Sunni Islam and it has been largely shaped by politicians and their allies, with little input from other stakeholders (T07ESWU). The worries about lack of consultation was also shared by most of the participants. For example, the Turk Education Representative claimed that 'the politicians only consult groups which share their ideologies' (T08TUE; also

T02ALEVI). Teachers, too, argued that they are not consulted and they demanded more Islamic oriented religious education. The teacher 1 said that the politicians have long neglected the demands of the Muslim majority for more religious courses in state schools (T18T1). This shows that most participants agreed that there was not enough consultation, but their reasons for wanting more consultation were at odds with each other.

Moreover, some participants argued that the subject was 'instrumentalised' (*araçsallaştırmak*) by the politicians (T04LAIC; T07ESWU; T12A3). The Laic representative said that religious education has long been devised by the politicians to raise 'submissive [and] contented' citizens, who 'can be easily deceived and controlled' (T04LAIC). The Alevi representative argued that the whole school education system in Turkey including religious education aims at producing 'terminal behaviour' (T02ALEVI).

Some participants argued that politicisation has influenced religious education policy so much that people view policy reforms made by political opponents with suspicion (T17S2; see 6.2 below). It is interesting to note that both state officials in my sample were keen to emphasise that their work was independent from the undue influence of politicians even though I had not asked them specifically about this. State Official 1 said that 'we did not take orders from any politician' (T16S1). They said this to stress that religious education curriculum development was left to professionals and wanted to fend off the criticism, expressed by some participants in the interviews, that religious education reforms have been made according to the wishes of the politicians in power (e.g. T02ALEVI).

Even though most participants were critical of politicians, some participants tried to look on the bright side. Some participants argued that Turkey needs 'powerful political authority' in the face of threats coming from the 'European Union' (T08TEU; T18T1) and the 'secret state' (T03CHR). The Christian representative argued that some politicians want to

implement accommodative policies on minorities, but elections hamper these attempts because the society is 'nationalistic' (T03CHR). The current conservative AK Party government was praised by teachers and some participants (e.g. T01PRA; T06ETU; T14A5) for introducing optional religious courses, but was severely criticised by other participants for 'Islamising' state education (e.g. T02ALEVI; T04LAIC; T05ALEVI; T07ESWU). As can be seen, most Turkish participants saw politics and politicians an important but negative factor shaping religious education policy.

4.2.2. England

Politics was seen as an important factor by the English participants too. Thirteen participants (E02ANG2; E03CATH; E04BHA; E05NSS; E06JEW; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E09AULRE; E10NASACRE; E11NATRE; E14A1; E15A2; E21T2) specifically mentioned politics as a decisive factor influencing religious education policy in England.

In England, too, politics was regarded as a negative factor influencing religious education policy. The participants saw the involvement of politicians in religious education negatively; so much so that even the possibility of the future involvement of politicians in religious education policy irked some participants. For example, Academic 1 said that he supported the idea of a national curriculum but his 'only worry about the national syllabus is politics' (E14A1). Similarly, the NASACRE representative said:

> [teachers] in other subjects are not pleased with what is being given to them by the government. How would we feel in RE if we get something national which is highly politicised depending on whoever is in the government? (E10NASACRE)

Politicians were condemned for their 'self-interest' (E04BHA; E05NSS), 'ideology' (09AULRE), their 'scant respect for the professionals' (E14A1) and their 'narrow understanding' of education and religious education (E03CATH; E04BHA; E06JEW;

E11NATRE; E14A1; E15A2; E21T2). The NATRE representative said that 'few of them [politicians] have got a clear understanding of what religious education is' (E11NATRE).

One can argue that this negativity towards politicians is partly due to the recent educational changes that have had a negative impact on the subject, as Anglican Representative 2 lamented 'we are seeing the subject in crisis.' (E02ANG2). The NATRE representative said 'of course it is the politics which have really come to the fore recently' (E11NATRE). However, most participants argued that the politicians have always had a narrow understanding of religious education and this has always had a negative influence on the subject. Academic 2 said that 'we never really found the political support for religious education as we know it', and this was one of the reasons behind the low status of the subject (E15A2).

The participants criticised the politicians for not doing enough for religious education. State Official 2 said that politicians 'often tend to steer away from it, *do not go near RE, it is dangerous*' (E19S2 the participant's emphasis, also E02ANG2; E09AULRE; E11NATRE). For them the reason behind this was that the subject is controversial. The REC representative said that politicians 'do not see what would guarantee an agreement on religious education if it is debated again in parliament' (E12REC). Moreover, he also added that 'no politician has got the incentive to do that, because there are no votes in it for anybody' (E12REC).

As can be seen, the participants criticised the politician's inactivity, but this should not give an impression that the participants wanted more government interference in religious education policy. The participants criticised inactivity, because they argued that the politicians undermined religious education by making wider educational changes, and paying no attention to religious education in schools. Teacher 1 and other participants reminded me of the surveys conducted by NATRE which showed that the time devoted to

religious education has been gradually squeezed and in some schools the subject is not taught at all (NATRE, 2011, 2012, 2013). The participants criticised politicians' inactivity in the face of these problems, which, they argued, were created by the politicians in the first place. The AULRE Representative argued that politicians 'deliberately neglected RE' (E09AULRE). Some participants argued that the subject 'needs the support of politicians' (E11NATRE), otherwise, 'law is not enforced' (E08SHIA) and schools 'just ignore it [because] the statutory nature of religious education is not sufficient to ensure its place [in schools]' (E12REC).

This inactivity might mean that religious education is not a part of the electoral calculations of political parties in England – as opposed to Turkey – but Anglican Representative 1 argued that if politicians try to abolish religious education, there will be 'uproar' (E01ANG1).

The participants sometimes criticised the political parties. For example, Academic 2 criticised the Conservative Party, arguing that

> [It] has been more inclined to support RE [but] its support is often not welcomed by professional religious educators, because it has in general a fairly narrow conception of religious education.

The participants also criticised the Labour Party, arguing that

> [They] has been very much controlled by secular forces and they have not found it easy to understand why we have religious education at all. (E15A2).

In contrast, Teacher 2 criticised Labour governments for 'reinvent(ing) [RE] as a very political subject' (E21T2).

It is evident that there was a consensus among the participants that recent educational changes have negatively affected religious education in state schools and that it was the

politicians that should be blamed, but the consensus ends there. For example, seven participants criticised the politicians for their 'narrow understanding' of education and religious education, but the participants themselves seemed to disagree over what a broad understanding of religious education would look like. This disagreement meant that the participants criticised the politicians for different reasons. For example, some participants criticised the politicians for over-consulting with religious groups (E04BHA; E05NSS; E18S1; E19S2), but the Jewish participant argued that there is no real consultation with religious representatives because most policies have already been decided before consultation:

> most government consultations do not really allow enough time to respond and you know policy tends to be often decided already. So, consultation exists. Does it make a difference? No [laughs]. (E06JEW).

Moreover, religious participants argued that it is 'faith communities' that should be consulted. Anglican Representative 2 said:

> Religious education is different from all other subjects because you could say stakeholders for Maths would be [from] the academic world and teachers. This is not true for RE. There are faith communities (E02ANG2).

She even criticised the politicians for consulting with the 'wrong [secular] stakeholders':

> I do not think [religious education policy] should have anything to do with groups like [the name of the group] which is an organisation [that] solely exists to remove the privileges of faith based schools. I do not think they should be part of [the consultation] (E02ANG2).

In England, too, politics and politicians seem to be an important *negative* factor shaping religious education policy, according to the participants.

4.2.3. Comparison

From the data, it becomes clear that politics was seen as a decisive factor in religious education policy in both countries by most participants; this has been confirmed by other studies (Alves, 1991; Keast, 2008; Matemba, 2011: 249; Schreiner, 2007: 10). Chater and Erricker (2013) introduced their book with this sentence: 'Is this a book about religious education, or about politics?' and answered 'It is both' (2013: 1). This research confirms this; research about religious education policy is inevitably research about politics.

It might not be surprising that politics is a decisive factor not least because in democratic countries, it is politicians, so-called representatives of the people, who make and shape policies (Brockman, 2016: 318). Pluralisation, secularisation and supranational policy can lead to official policy changes only when the politicians decide to make them. Politicians may ignore socio-political developments such as pluralisation and secularisation (Bruce and Yearley, 2006: 272). In both countries, as the participants agreed, the views and stances of politicians influenced the way religious education policy responded to the forces of pluralisation and secularisation. Of course, this does not mean that politicians can shape and determine all religious education policy as they wish. The idea of this thesis is that supranational and national factors shape religious education policy and various policy actors participate in policy-making process. As we shall see throughout the thesis, wider factors and other policy actors, such as teachers, also exert power over religious education policy (Matemba, 2011: 249).

It was apparent that policy and politics dominated participants' concerns (Conroy et al., 2013: 5). Politicians were criticised both for their inaction and their action, and most importantly for their resistance to leaving the subject to its real owners; but, as can be seen, who ought to own the subject was the matter of debate among participants. Participants were

dissatisfied with the way the politicians handled the subject. In Turkey and England, some participants said that they were excluded from the religious education policy-making process.

In both countries, religious education was conceived as one of the most highly politicised subjects in the curriculum, but an apparent difference between the two countries is that in England, some participants criticised the politicians for not doing enough to protect the subject in the face of wider educational changes, while in Turkey, the participants criticised the politicians for intervening too much into the subject. In Turkey, the subject is part of the politicians' electoral calculations, according to the participants, while in England, as one participant put it, there are no votes for anybody in religious education (E09AULRE).

In both countries the politicians were criticised for what policy sociologists call 'policy overload' (Ball, 2013: 3) or policy 'hyperactivism' (Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1987), but the difference was that in England policy overload and hyperactivism were the case in education policy in general, which inevitably influenced religious education policy, while in Turkey, education policy in general but religious education policy in particular were subject to policy overload and hyperactivism, according to the participants.

What all these findings suggest is that religious education policy is a matter of struggle. When we talk about policy, we, consciously or unconsciously, generalise and universalise it to the whole nation and society and present it as a national consensus. Yet, the views of the participants of this study reveals that religious education policy is highly controversial and 'political' and many participants in my study criticise politicians for their mishandling of religious education. There was suspicion and mistrust towards politicians, which is, according to Rui (2014: 287), a worldwide trend.

However, what is not realised is that even the views of the participants were 'political'. The participants criticised politicians for different reasons, reflecting their own worldviews, positions and values. For example, the participants often criticised the politicians for not doing 'what is good for society' or for having a 'narrow understanding' of religious education. However, unsurprisingly, there was very little consensus among participants regarding what 'good' and 'broad' religious education policy is. As a result, religious education policy was understood and interpreted very widely. In this sense, religious education policy can be better understood from the perspective of conflict theory, because even the interpretation of policy was 'a matter of struggle' (Rui, 2014: 294). Moreover, this not only shows that interpretation of religious education policy was a matter of struggle, but also shows the difficulty faced by politicians in devising a religious education policy acceptable to all (see Hunter-Henin, 2015).

4.3. State and Religion

The relationship between the State and religion was also mentioned by the participants as a factor in religious education policy in Turkey and England.

4.3.1. Turkey

In Turkey, almost all participants claimed that the State's relationship with religion has had a profound effect on religious education policy. The relationship between the State and religion is officially called 'laicism' (*laiklik*) in Turkey. The laicism principle was one of the founding principles of the Turkish Republic. The 1982 Constitution, which is still in force, asserts that Turkey is a 'laic' and 'democratic republic' (TBMM, 1982). Its Article 4 declares the permanence of the founding principles including the principle of laicism, and bans any proposal for the modification of these principles. Some participants found this problematic

(e.g. T02ALEVI; T06ETU). However, neither the Constitution nor any other national law prescribes what the laicism principle means or involves.

This has resulted in, as many participants noted, ambivalence about the application and understanding of laicism in Turkey. Ten participants (T08TEU; T10A1; T11A2; T12A3; T13A4; T14A5; T15A6; T16S1; T20T1; T20T3) noted that the laicism principle has been applied and understood in several different ways in Turkey and this has influenced religious education policy (see also Genç et al., 2012: 281; Kaymakcan, 1998 Chapter 1). For example, in the first decades of the Republic, laicism was applied as an ideology that removed religion from the public sphere and this resulted in the abolition of religious courses from state schools. This understanding has changed with the introduction of the multi-party system, which has led to the reintroduction of religious courses into state schools (T10A1; T11A2; T13A4; T14A5).

Some participants noted that these different understandings of laicism continue: some people and politicians see laicism as a system that removes religion from the public sphere, while others see it as a separation of religion and the State that provides religious freedom (T08TEU; T10A1; T12A3; T16S1; T20T3). Therefore, Academic 3 said that 'The debates over religious education policy centre around the laicism issue.' (T12A3; also, T16S1; T20T3).

One contentious issue here is whether any kind of religious education in state schools is compatible with the laicism principle (see Müftügil, 2011: 78). Academic 1 argued that due to these debates, even though the subject must be taught by law, it does not have 'psychological legitimacy' in the eyes of a significant number of people, who see religious education as incompatible with laicism (T10A1)

All participants criticised the different applications of laicism, but interestingly the participants themselves also understood the principle of laicism in different and divergent ways, even though they seemed to broadly agree on what laicism is. Almost all participants agreed that laicism means the separation of the State and religion to provide religious freedom (T01PRA; T03CHR; T8TUE; T10A1; T12A3; T16S1; T17S2; T19T2; T20T3) or religious equality (T07ESWU; T15A6).

What this principle means in practice differed from participant to participant. To trace the positions of the different participants, it may help to compare two participants. Both State Official 1 (T16S1) and the Education and Science Workers' Union representative (T07ESWU) saw laicism as the separation of the State and religion, but the difference between these two participants can be seen in their positions over religious education policy. State Official 1 is a strong defender of the need for 'compulsory' religious education in state schools, arguing that laicism requires the State to provide such education. He argued that Turkey is fulfilling laicism, by providing compulsory religious education courses to Muslims and by allowing minorities to withdraw from these courses and to establish their own schools to learn their own religions.

> To provide religious education is one of the responsibilities of the laic state. (T16S1).

According to this participant, freedom of religion can be maintained only if the State allows religious courses in state schools in Turkey.

In contrast, the ESWU representative claimed that compulsory religious education itself amounts to a violation of the freedom of religion and of the principle of laicism set out in the Turkish constitution. According to her, it is not the 'duty' of the State to provide religious education. The constitutional principle of laicism means that the State should maintain a

formal distance from all religions (freedom from religion), which requires the abolition of religious courses that prioritise Sunni Islam. She also recalled international conventions, of which Turkey is a signatory, arguing that freedom of religion can only be maintained through the abolition of religious courses in state schools in Turkey.

These two participants' views provide a summary of different interpretations of laicism and their direct influence on religious education policy. One issue here should be noted that both participants talked about a specific situation in Turkey. The specific situation is, as we will see in the next section, according to law, religion may only be taught by the State and institutions licensed by the State.

Therefore, State Official 1 reasoned that if the State does not allow religion to be taught outside of state institutions, which according to him would be problematic, then the State itself must teach it. The ESWU participant's argument was that for the Turkish Republic it is impossible to maintain religious neutrality if it allows religious courses in state schools because neither politicians nor public want neutral religious education, so the solution is to abolish religious courses altogether and to leave this issue to families.

In my sample, it was possible to divide the participants into two camps: those who argued that laicism has already made its impact on official religious education policy, and those who argued that laicism has not influenced religious education policy. The participants in the former camp argued that laicism has shaped religious education policy because only the State can offer religious education and religious education is non-doctrinal and supra-sectarian (T01PRA; T10A1; T11A2; T15A6; T16S1; T18T1; T19T2; T20T3); but some said that more could be done to attune the subject to the principle of laicism (e.g. T10A1; T11A2; T14A5).

The participants in the latter camp demanded that laicism should influence religious education policy. Within this camp, some argued that this could be done through the abolition of religious education altogether (T05ATH; T07ESWU), while some claimed this could be done through making the course more inclusive (T04LAIC; T12A3; T13A4; T17S2).

Last but not least, some participants argued that the principle of laicism prevents religious groups having a decisive role in religious education policy. Some participants lamented this (for example, T06TEU), while some participants saw this as positive but argued that it has never materialised, arguing that religious groups, especially Sunnis, still shape religious education policy (e.g. T02ALEVI; T03ATH; T07ESWU). They argued that this, in turn, marginalises other forms of Islam and other religions and world-views. For these participants, despite being laic, the Turkish State in practice adopts and supports a religious view, which is Sunni Islam.

In conclusion, the Turkish State's relationship with religion can be examined within the context of the laicism, and the participants agreed that the principle of laicism is important. According to some participants, it is one of the major factors shaping religious education policy in Turkey, but some participants maintained that religious education, as applied in Turkey, is against the principle of laicism (e.g. T07ESWU). Moreover, the principle of laicism is not straightforward at it might seem. Even though most participants saw laicism positively, they did not agree on its influence on religious education policy nor on how to interpret laicism. As a result, laicism was often used to support or criticise different and contradictory religious education policies. In other words, it acted as an 'obligatory reference' (Copeaux, 2015; Massicard, 2013), but there were different and contradictory readings and interpretation of laicism vis-à-vis religious education policy.

4.3.2. England

In England, too, most participants claimed that the relationship between the State and religion has influenced religious education policy. Some participants argued that the historical relationship between the church and the State has had an impact on religious education policy. It was argued that the introduction of compulsory religious education owes much to the Established Church and Free Churches (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E03CATH; E04BHA; E11NATRE; E12REC; E15A2; E19S2). Anglican Representative 2 argued that the Church of England 'made a major contribution to' schooling in England, so that the country 'has an education system in which religious education plays a significant role' (E02ANG2).

Regarding the contemporary situation, some participants claimed that the church is no longer a decisive actor/factor shaping religious education policy. Academic 2 argued that religious groups, including the Church of England, are now the 'subject' of the religious education, not its 'patrons'. This participant argued that

> Many of us, religious educators, did not agree with [the churches], because we felt that religious education was educationally valuable and we did not think of it as being under the control and patronage of religions. (E15A2)

For him, the involvement of religious groups in agreed syllabus conferences should be seen as examples of educational co-operation, because religious communities do not and cannot dictate what is included in the syllabus (E15A2). Anglican Representative 2, too, said that they, as the Established Church, are free to express their views on various issues such as religious education policy, but it is 'the responsibility of parliament to take decisions on such issues' (E02ANG2), but Anglican Representative 1 argued that 'no government would really

make any changes to religious education without agreement from the faith communities' (E01ANG1).

Moreover, some participants said the Church of England has been a factor in religious education policy, but that it has always been a positive factor. The AULRE representative said:

> The Anglican community has always been - I am not an Anglican, I am outsider - incredibly generous and inclusive in its role as the state religion, as the established religion. (E9AULRE).

The AULRE representative argued that since the Church of England has been inclusive, its involvement in religious education policy has not resulted in the marginalisation of other religious groups.

Yet, four participants disagreed. They claimed that in a secular society, there is no reason to give privileges to religious groups (E04BHA; E05NSS; E18S1; E19S2). State Official 1 called the current system 'archaic' (E18S1). Similarly, State Official 2 said that Britain is one of the secular countries, but religious education policy is still 'dominated by religious communities' (E19S2). The BHA Representative argued that despite the decline in religious beliefs and practices, religion's hold on education still continues. For these participants, the involvement of religious groups in religious education policy is problematic.

4.3.2.1. Is England a Secular State?

Some participants claimed that despite the state religion, England is a secular state. Some even complained about the marginalisation of religion by the State. For example, the Sunni participant argued that like Europe, England, too, is 'convinced' that 'secular way (…) is the best way' (E07SUNNI). Similarly, Anglican Representative 2 argued that the public

institutions ‘push [religion] out’ (E02ANG2). Likewise, the Catholic Representative argued that ‘this country (…) is moving towards secularism’, but he noted that it is not ‘an aggressive secularism’. These three participants saw this trend as a form of secularisation of the State and found it problematic. In contrast, the BHA and NSS claimed that England is not a secular state. The BHA representative said that ‘we do not have a secular state’, but he, too, admitted that ‘the Church is not as powerful as it was 200 years ago’ (E04BHA).

In England, too, the relation between the State and religion was an important factor. In interviews, this issue was discussed within the context of established religion and secularism.

4.3.3. Comparison

In both countries, the participants saw the relationship of the State and religion as an important factor shaping religious education policy. In Turkey, this relationship occurs within the frame of laicism, while in England, this was discussed within the frame of the established church and partly secularism. This itself exposes one important difference between England and Turkey: laicism and the state religion.

Even though this was a difference at first glance, there were at the same time common concerns. The first concern was state neutrality in the face of religious plurality. Some participants in both countries criticised their States for not having neutrality towards various religions. England was criticised for granting the Church of England privileges (E04BHA; E05NSS; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E18S1; E19S2), while some criticised Turkey for covertly having a state religion; Sunni Islam (T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T03LAIC; T05ATH; T07ESWU).

In both countries, laicism and secularism are interpreted differently (Kosmin, 2007; Kuru, 2009; Maclure and Taylor, 2011; Modood, 2012). In England, for some participants, secularism meant the removal of religion from the public sphere (e.g. E02ANG2; E07SUNNI), while others saw it as a manifestation of freedom of religion (E04BHA). For Turkish participants, the different interpretations and applications of laicism have had a direct impact on religious education policy. The participants complained that it was applied and understood differently and contradictorily, but it seemed that the participants themselves had different understandings of laicism and its influence on religious education policy.

In England, even though some participants called for the removal of the privileges granted to the Church of England and other religious groups (e.g. E04BHA; E05NSS; E18S1; E19S2) for most participants, the issue did not seem to be an urgent issue, as opposed to other issues such as the marginalisation of religious education by politicians, but in Turkey, the issue seemed more urgent, as more participants wanted religious education to be consistent with the principle of laicism.

Another important difference was that the laicism principle was often used as an 'obligatory reference' to criticise or support current religious education policy in Turkey, but in England, only small number of participants used 'secularism' in this way.

The State's relationship with religion (e.g. laicism or secularism) was directly related to secularisation and pluralisation, i.e. diversity, even though I separated and treated them as if they were distinct. They are interconnected. As Taylor (2009: 1153) argues, the State's relationship with religion 'has to do with the (correct) response of the democratic state to diversity' (see also Bhargava, 2010: 8). Therefore, the relationship between the State and religion will come up in the subsequent chapters again, especially when I explore secularisation and pluralisation, but this section suggests that the participants had different

understandings of what the 'correct' response to diversity means in practice and some had concerns that their respective States did not respond well to diversity in religious education.

Overall, State's relationship with religion was seen as an important factor shaping religious education policy in England and Turkey, but it was also open to different interpretations. The State's relationship with religion has something to do with pluralisation and secularisation, therefore this issue will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

4.4. The School System

The participants identified the school system as another national factor influencing religious education policy.

4.4.1. Turkey

According to participants, one of the most important factors shaping religious education policy in Turkey has been the country's central and unified education system. Fifteen participants (T01PRA; T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T04LAIC; T05ATH; T06ETU; T07ESWU; T08TEU; T10A1; T11A2; T12A3; T13A4; T16S1; T17S2; T20T3) argued that this has influenced religious education policy in Turkey.

The Ottoman Empire had a variety of schools and religious groups were free to open their schools (Adanali, 2002). Some participants stressed that this 'fragmented' school system was one of the reasons for the dissolution of the Empire (e.g. T08TEU), because different schools were raising individuals with very different views, values and visions, which was regarded as being detrimental to unity (see Kaplan, 1999; Kaplan, 2006: 39). Moreover, it was claimed that schools free from state control were open to the influence of foreign powers and nationalistic and religious fundamentalists. Consequently, in 1924, the Unification of

Education Act was introduced, placing all education and teaching institutions (including colleges, foreign schools, private schools and religious schools) under the control of a secular authority, the Ministry of National Education. This law laid the basis for a highly centralised and unified national education system in Turkey.

This central and unified system influences religious education policy in several ways, according to the participants. Religious education policy has become highly centralised, which leaves no room for local variation (T11A2). Moreover, since it is a laic state, it does not allow religious groups to participate in the preparation of the religious education curriculum. The religious education curriculum is prepared by a central authority, called 'The General Directorate of Religious Instruction' which is under the control of the Ministry of National Education. Moreover, the books used in schools are approved by the Ministry. Interestingly, the exclusion of religious groups was not found problematic by the Religious Affairs Representative, who argued that the formal school system should be under the control of the Ministry of National Education, partly because the society is not ready for the control of education by a religious organisation (T01PRA). Yet other religious and secular participants argued that religious groups and religious politicians have shaped religious education policy (T02ALEVI; E04LAIC; T03ATH; T07ESWU). So, for them, even though formally there is no consultation with religious communities, in practice, religious education policy has been devised by Sunnis according to the Sunni belief.

Moreover, all schools, state and private alike, are under the control of the Ministry of National Education. It means that the policies adopted by the Ministry of National Education are binding for 'all' education institutions, public and private alike (see Karakaşoğlu, 2007: 793). One striking example is that when religious education was abolished in state schools in the 1930s, the Ministry also sent a decree to private schools to call them to abolish their

religious education courses and shut those who did not obey the decree (see Okçabol, 2005: 23). That means that the fate of religious education in all schools has been at the hands of the Ministry of National Education, and when the Ministry abolishes religious education in state schools, private schools must abolish the course as well. Furthermore, it is illegal to learn about one's religion outside of state institutions and of institutions licenced by the State, the only exception being in the family (see Adanali, 2002: 19). Moreover, schools may not have a link with religious organisations, which was criticised by some participants (e.g. T11A2).

Central exams such as the University Entrance Exam also influence religious education. According to teachers in my sample, since religious education is not one of the major subjects assessed in these exams, the subject has been often ignored by both parents and students (see 6.6 below).

As some participants noted, this strict control of education makes education and religious education thoroughly political. Some participants criticised the State and politicians for exploiting the central system to advance their interests, rather than meeting the demands and needs of the society (T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T05ATH; T06ETU; T07ESWU; T11A2; T20T3). As stated above, the current system was a Turkish response to the diverse school system of the Ottoman Empire that was believed to produce people at odds with each other. Some participants claimed that if the Ottoman system represents one extreme of a school system, the Turkish one represents the other extreme. The Alevi Representative said that the State strictly controls education, including religious education, to produce 'terminal behaviour' which is 'obedience to the State' (T02ALEVI). Academic 2 said that 'the State does not trust its citizens; therefore, it sees its responsibility and right to mould its citizens'

and the State has used every means including religious education to mould individuals into 'obedient citizens who adheres to the laic state' (T11A2; also T06ETU).

Some participants called for local variation in religious education (T11A2) and the transfer of education control to religious and civil organisations (T03CHR; T06ETU; T11A2; T20T3), but the majority of the participants favoured the current centralised and unified system (T01PRA; T02ALEVI; T04LAIC; T05ATH; T07ESWU; T08TEU; T10A1; T12A3; T13A4; T16S1; T17S2), which might denote that the system is still popular, at least among the participants of this study.

However, this popularity does not necessarily mean that these participants support the current religious education policy. In fact, there were participants who favoured the central and unified system, but were critical of religious education policy. Some even demanded the complete abolition of the subject, despite supporting the central and unified system (T05ATH; T07ESWU).

4.4.2. England

In England 14 participants (E02ANG2; E03CATH; E04BHA; E05NSS; E06JEW; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E09AULRE; E10NASACRE; E11NATRE; E14A1; E15A2; E18S1; E19S2) argued that the education system has been one of the important factors influencing religious education policy in England. There are two interrelated issues here: local determination and the diverse school system.

Regarding local determination, religious education is the only subject whose syllabus is locally determined. According to some participants, this was the strength of religious education in England. Some participants noted that due to local determination, many changes in religious education had a 'bottom-up' character, which was seen positive by some

participants (E12REC; E14A1). For example, Academic 1 argued that changes that appeared 'bottom-up' during the 1960s and 1970s were acknowledged and ratified in the 1988 Education Reform Act. In that sense, local determination has provided an opportunity for innovation (see also Ofsted, 2010: 41) and has guided the national law. Moreover, some participants appreciated that local determination gave the subject a certain independence from politicians (e.g. E15A1). This was seen as a strength, because most participants saw politicians as having a narrow understanding of religious education.

Currently there are 174 agreed syllabuses (CORAB, 2015: 133). Some schools are required follow these syllabuses, and some are not. According to some participants, this has created 'ambiguity' in religious education policy (E04BHA; E19S2; E20T1). Moreover, most participants agreed that the introduction of new schools such as free schools and academies, put religious education in an ambiguous position. State Official 1 argued the current system has left many schools 'confused about the rules governing RE' (T18S1). State Official 2 said that 'the biggest challenge for religious education is the increasing fragmentation of education itself' (E19S2). The introduction of new schools that have relative autonomy regarding religious education was not popular among the participants of this study, who saw them as bringing chaos and uncertainty to religious education.

Returning to local determination, the participants noted that even though religious education is a locally determined subject, it is restricted by the central system. For example, agreed syllabuses must be consistent with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 (see also Long, 2016: 5). Moreover, the content of the subject, especially at Key Stage 4, is explicitly and implicitly determined by the specifications produced by the Awarding Organisations.

Despite these central elements, there was still a sense of dissatisfaction among participants with the local determination. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, there were calls for reform:

a significant number of participants argued that the local structure should be replaced by a central structure, i.e. the National Curriculum (see 6.7 below).

4.4.3. Comparison

An important difference between the Turkish and English education systems is that English religious education policy is locally determined through locally agreed syllabuses (in the case of community and voluntary-controlled schools) and through schools themselves (in the case of free schools, academies, voluntary-aided and foundation schools with religious character), while in Turkey there is a centrally administrated education system. Moreover, England represents a diverse education system, while Turkey represents a unified education system.

In England, some participants argued that the colonial, or post-colonial history of the British Empire partly shaped religious education policy. According to State Official 1, this has created 'a very uneasy liberal consensus which seeks to avoid giving offence to a plurality of (…) different religious groups' (E18S1). In Turkey, too, some participants argued that the rigid centralised control of the education system in Turkey is partly a Turkish response to the Ottoman legacy (Müftügil, 2011: 58-59). This shows, as comparative education scholars rightly argue (Kandel, 1933; Phillips, 2006; Phillips and Schweisfurth, 2007), understanding of national history is important to understand current education policies.

Moreover, the different education systems were an explanation for some of the differences between the countries (Bråten, 2013). For example, because of the decentralised system for religious education in England, the key factors influencing religious education have a 'bottom-up' character. For example, some participants argued the reason why secularisation and pluralisation were so influential in religious education in England was because they

were ‘bottom-up’ (E12REC; E14A1; E21T2). Due to the decentralised system, these forces were first addressed by some locally agreed syllabuses and later sanctioned in law. However, in contrast to the English system, religious education has had a top-down character in Turkey, where the changes in religious education policy have largely been made by politicians, which was criticised by the majority of Turkish participants.

However, it should be noted that even though Turkey and England have different religious education policy structures (central and local respectively), these differences sometimes blur. For example, in England, there is local determination, but at the same time, the religious education syllabus is restricted in the education acts by some important ways. In Turkey, there is a strict central system, but as we will see below, teachers still exert power, resulting in a significant mismatch between legislative policy and teacher practice on the ground.

Overall, Turkey and England have different school systems. There is more diversity in the school system in England that there is in Turkey. Moreover, in England, there is local determination, while Turkey has a central system. This difference matters as, in Turkey, the central and unified system means that even private schools do not have much independence. Moreover, even minority schools that have a right to teach confessional religious education are strictly regulated through measures that ensure all the books taught in minority schools are approved by the Ministry of National Education. In contrast, in England there is a variety of schools and different religious educations.

4.5. Particularities and Peculiarities

In both countries, participants claimed that England and Turkey have some ‘unusual’ characteristics. The participants used words like ‘different’ (*farklı*) (T03CHR; T07ESWU; T08TEU; T16S1), ‘interesting’ (E06JEW; E09AULRE); ‘unusual’ (E04BHA), ‘British

character' (T03CATH), 'odd' (E19S2) to describe the particularities and peculiarities of England and Turkey. In this section, I will explore some of these characteristics as well as some additional national factors.

4.5.1. Turkey

One unusual characteristic of Turkey revealed during the interviews was the role and power of one individual, Atatürk, in religious education policy. It is arguable that no individual has influenced religious education policy in Turkey more than Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. His surname, Atatürk, literally means the Father of the Türk, which was granted to him in 1934. Religious education was removed from the curriculum while he was the president of Turkey. When he died in 1938, religious education was still absent in schools, but his legacy has been continuing to influence religious education policy. In my interviews, many participants used Ataturk's words and statements to argue their case and to interpret religious education policy. Twelve participants (T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T04LAIC; T07EBES; T12A3; T13A4; T14A5; T16S1; T17S2; T18T1; T19T2; T20T3) mentioned Atatürk at least once during the interviews.

As Academic 3 argued, the debates over the place of religion in state schools have always centred around, among others, 'Atatürk's principles' (*Atatürk ilkeleri*). Even though my participants agreed on the importance of Atatürk's legacy, they did not agree on his impact on religious education policy. For example, the Atatürkist Thought Association representative lamented that 'opportunistic' and 'evil' politicians 'betrayed Atatürk's reforms' by introducing compulsory 'Sunni' religious education for their political interests (T04LAIC).

However, others disagreed. State Official 1 claimed that compulsory religious education was 'a part of the Atatürk's project of the new Republic of Turkey' (T16S1; also, T20T3). Academics 3 and Academic 4 recalled how they defended mandatory religious education in the commissions that prepared the 1982 Constitution by arguing that there was no contradiction between Atatürk's reforms and mandatory religious education (T12A3; T13A4). Interestingly, at that time a committee called '*The Science Committee with respect to Atatürk's Ideas about Religion and Laicism*' was established to investigate whether mandatory courses were compatible with Atatürk's idea of laicism (MEB DÖGM, 2003: 686). The committee concluded that religious courses should be offered in schools but did not state whether the courses should be mandatory or not.

In other words, for some participants, Atatürk's ideas and views shaped the current policy, while for others the current policy betrayed Atatürk's legacy, but both camps agreed that Atatürk's views and ideas were important for religious education policy.

I made a simple word search in official religious education curricula to see how many times the official documents mentioned Atatürk. The official English summary of the religious education curriculum mentioned Atatürk 25 times (MEB DÖGM, 2010b), and Turkish versions of the official religious education curricula for primary and secondary schools combined mentioned him 199 times (MEB DÖGM, 2010a, 2010c). The curricula mentioned religious figures, like Allah and Muhammad, more, but it was still telling that one statesman was mentioned so much in a subject curriculum devoted to religion.

4.5.1.1. 'Turkey is different'

Some participants stressed the peculiarity of Turkey (T03CHR; T07ESWU; T08TEU). The Education and Science Workers' Union and Turk Education Union representatives said that

'we are not like other nations' (T07ESWU; T08TEU), but like the issue of Atatürk, this was also appropriated in different ways. For example, the Turk Education Union used this to support compulsory religious education. He said that the Turkish nation is different from other nations: 'our system might not be suitable for others, but it suits us'. The participant argued that Turks want to learn their religion from the State, because

> we, as a society, have stuck to the principle of obedience to authority[2] to the extent that we expect everything from the State. (T08TEU)

He also highlighted that people 'trust the State' (T08TEU; also, T16S1). He repeated a Turkish saying: '*Ya devlet başa ya kuzgun leşe*' (which literally means 'either the State or a raven's carcass') which can be translated as 'either the State handles the issue or enemies take control of it' to stress the importance of the State in handling education policy. Therefore, he said, only the State must provide religious education, otherwise, people would learn about religions from the 'wrong places' – and this might lead to fanaticism and terrorism (T08TEU; also, T01PRA; T10A1; T16S1). For the Turk Education Union participant, these particularities necessitate obligatory religious education, sanctioned and controlled by the State (T08TEU).

However, for other participants, some peculiarities of Turkish nation necessitate the removal of religious education from the curriculum. The Christian participant argued that compulsory religious education should be removed from the curriculum.

> I prefer the complete removal [of compulsory religious education from state schools] for Turkey, not for [for example] Germany. The State has a different structure there [in Germany], [because] they experienced denomination wars and

[2] 'Obedience to the authority' here refers to a Qur'anic principle:

> 'O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority. If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.' (The Qur'an, 4: 59).

> learned their lessons. But in Turkey, still a significant number of people see religious education a device of oppression. (T03CHR)

For this participant, compulsory religious education might be a good option for more settled societies, but not for Turkey (T03CHR). Similar views were expressed by the Education and Science Workers' Union representative, who claimed that religious education might be a good idea for other countries, but not for Turkey, because it is impossible to have objective and neutral religious education due to politicians, public and teachers (e.g. T08ESWU).

4.5.2. England

In England, too, there were some peculiarities and particularities according to the participants. Contrary to Turkey, no politician, statesman or royal was mentioned as a reference point by the participants in England, even though politics and politicians were important factors in religious education policy according to the participants.

The English participants talked about scholars, scientists and scientific research. The participants noted that the ideas of Harold Loukes, Ronald Goldman and Ninian Smart were influential in religious education policy (see also Bates, 1984, 1994, 1996; Copley, 2008). Even though Loukes, Goldman and Smart focused on different aspects of religious education and indeed had different views about religious education, they agreed that religious education taught at schools at the time was irrelevant to society and to children in particular. Schools Council's (1971) *Working Paper 36* claimed that religious education was irrelevant to life, while Loukes (1961: 150) said that children found the subject 'childish' and 'irrelevant'. It is interesting to note that 50 years have passed and still some of my participants argued that religious education taught at schools is irrelevant. The NASACRE representative said:

> I think sometimes that the subject as we teach in schools is not always relevant. When I meet people who I do not know, they say to me what do you do? You know, professionally. When I tell them religious education, sometimes people say, 'that must be very hard because children and young people are not interested in religion'. They are, but quite often what they are not interested in is the questions that their teachers are asking them in the RE lesson. (E10NASACRE)

According to the participants, the ideas of the above scholars and others like Michael Grimmitt and John Hull have been influential in religious education policy (E02ANG2; E09AULRE; E11NATRE; E14A1; E16A3; E19S2; E21T2).

Moreover, the participants also referred to some scholars and researchers as reference points. This was especially the case, when the participants talked about society and religion. The participants who argued that there is persistence of faith, generally cited scholars like Linda Woodhead, Peter Berger and Grace Davie (E02ANG2; E10NASACRE; E11NATRE; E12REC; E14A1; T15A2). In contrast, participants who argued that religion is a minority activity in Britain cited surveys. For example, the National Secular Society stated:

> In the 2011 census around a quarter of the population in England and Wales reported that they have no religion. Other research suggests that two thirds of 12–19 year olds do not regard themselves as belonging to any religion. (…)
>
> The Pew Global Attitudes Project revealed stark global regional divides over the personal importance of religion, but in the UK, just 33% of people say religion plays a very important role in their lives. According to a similar Gallup WorldView poll, 73% of British citizens say religion is not important in their daily lives.
>
> In a poll for the BBC's Religion & Ethics Department young people placed religion near the bottom of their list of moral priorities. Only 4% said having a religious faith or belief was important for them. (see National Secular Society, 2013: 8 for references)

For the National Secular Society, these surveys show that religion is a minority activity in England and religious education 'attaches a disproportionate significance to the importance of religion in people's lives.' (National Secular Society, 2013: 8). The BHA representative also mentioned similar surveys and argued that 'if you look at opinion polls, [there are] only

10 or 20 percent [of people] with actual religious belief' (E04BHA). These references were cited as reference points but to support contradictory claims and arguments.

4.5.2.1. 'Odd'

Moreover, some participants talked about the particularities and peculiarities of British/English society. The participants talked about this to argue that there are inconsistencies in British society. For example, Anglican Representative 1 said that 'the average English person likes to have a Church just around the corner not to go to [laughs]'. Similarly, the Catholic representative said:

> the problem with this country is that it has laws based on the Ten Commandments, but many people do not believe in the God who gave the Ten Commandments [laughs].

As can be seen when the participants talked about this, they laughed and described this situation as 'inconsistency' (E01ANG1). For these participants, the country 'by nature has Christian roots and those roots need to be understood, even in community schools' (E03CATH). In other words, these participants saw, for example, secularisation as 'inconsistency', therefore, they supported both religious education in community schools and in faith schools as a way of exposing this inconsistency.

However, others approached the issue differently. For example, State Official 2 said

> Of course, there is always something slightly odd about the English situation. It is fact that churches retain a key role in one particular social sphere and that is education and to some extent also in the House of Lords, although Britain in many ways is one of the most secular countries in the world in terms of the influence of religion in public life. (E19S2)

Similarly, the BHA representative said

> England is unusual in having such a large number of state funded religious schools, which teach their own faith, and get their admission policy. (E04BHA).

For these participants, faith schools and the involvement of religious groups in religious education policy were inconsistencies, or 'odd', 'unusual' in a secular country. These two participants made it clear that they want the abolition of faith schools and curbing the power of religious groups in religious education policy, to remove these inconsistencies. As can be seen participants talked about inconsistencies, which, according to them, influenced religious education policy but the participants reached completely different conclusions about them.

4.5.3. Comparison

An obvious difference between England and Turkey is that in Turkey there was an accepted authority, whose ideas and views were referred to when interpreting, justifying and denouncing religious education policy in Turkey, but there was no such figure mentioned by English participants. In England, the participants also talked about politicians, but their views were not used to justify or criticise religious education policies. In England, some participants saw scientific research as authoritative. When participants talked about society and especially about secularisation, they referred to scholars and research as reference points, but there were different reference points for different arguments and claims.

This gives some glimpses of a stark difference between Turkey and England. Historically, it is the State and politicians that almost totally governed and determined religious education policy in Turkey, while scholars, at least in contrast to Turkey, played an important role in religious education policy in England. This does not mean that politicians have had no effect in England. As stated above, English participants also talked about politicians and their influence on religious education policy.

It should be noted that the existence of 'an accepted authority' – Atatürk – did not help the participants to reach a consensus over religious education policy, because Atatürk's views were used selectively to justify conflicting religious education policies. According to Müftügil (2011: 121) this might be due to two reasons: first, as a politician, Atatürk himself expressed conflicting views about religious education during his lifetime and second, his views have been 'interpreted' widely and 'appropriated' by different groups to justify their positions (see also Akboga, 2016: 783-4). In England, too, the acceptance of authority of scientific research and scholars did not make participants reach the same conclusions about society and religious education policy, because there were different scientific findings for different claims.

Moreover, in both countries, there were participants who described their countries as 'odd', 'different' and 'unusual'. The participants sometimes used these characteristics to argue opposing viewpoints. For example in Turkey both the ESWU and TEU participants claimed that Turkey is a different country from others, but the latter participants used it to support compulsory religious education, while the former used it as a justification for the removal of religious education from the curriculum (T07ESWU; T08TEU). In the next section, I will explore another national factor: teachers.

4.6. Teachers

Many participants in both countries mentioned teachers as an important factor in religious education policy.

4.6.1. Turkey

A significant number of participants in Turkey felt that teachers are a determining factor in religious education policy (T01PRA; T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T05ATH; T07ESWU; T10A1; T11A2; T12A3; T13A4; T14A5; T17S2). Some participants pointed to the lack of teachers (T16S1) and the lack of proper training (T01PRA; T10A1; T14A5; T17S2). For example, the Education Reform Initiative stated that

> Teachers who will be responsible for the instruction of the curriculum should be given in-service training that will equip them with the necessary attitudes and skills to implement the curriculum properly (ERI, 2007: 5)

Overall, however, participants talked about a more fundamental problem. Academic 1 said that teachers are the 'weak spot of the new education system'. Participants stressed that education always depends on the teacher you have, but especially in a subject like religious education, teachers are very important. This is because, the participants argued, teachers' own convictions have a huge impact on the way religions are taught.

The Christian representative said that religious education teachers 'saw themselves as [Muslim] missionaries', which makes it difficult for religious education to be attractive to children from minority backgrounds (T03CHR). Similarly, five academics suggested that some teachers have been trying to make children more religious through religious courses (T10A1; T11A2; T12A3; T13A4; T14A5). According to some participants, one of the reasons for this is the course programs and materials. For these participants, programs and materials should be changed to prevent teachers from proselytising (T10A1; T11A2; T13A4; T14A5). Academic 1 argued that the new books and programs 'should promote common values' (T10A1). Some participants noted that some teachers are resistant to change (T12A3; T14A5; T17S2). State Official 2 said that 'teachers are both the biggest actor and

the biggest barrier [to change] in religious education' (T17S2). Similarly, Academic 3 argued that 'our teachers (…) are afraid of different ideas; they want uniformity' (T12A3).

Moreover, the participants pointed to a disparity between official curricula and teaching practice. According to Academic 2, there are three reasons for the disparity. First, teachers have been graduating from Islamic secondary schools (i.e. Imam-Hatip Schools) and theology faculties that have Islamic education. Second, he argued that Turkey still has a homogenous religious population as opposed to the West, which means that teachers still encounter a homogenous classroom where they feel they should or can propagate Islam. Third, he noted that parents expect their children to 'internalise Islamic moral values' in the schools and they want teachers to do this (T11A2).

I asked teachers how they teach other religions to learn whether the arguments above are the case. Interestingly, all three teachers said that they teach other religions as 'distorted religions' and teach Islam as the only true religion (T18T1; T19T2; T20T3; see 6.3. below), but in the course programs, books and materials, other religions are not depicted as 'distorted' religions. Although my sample is not representative, it shows that some teachers defy the curricula and make the course more confessional.

Yet, the teachers themselves complained about official policies, politics and other factors. Teacher 1 said that due to laicism and EU laws, they cannot teach Islam properly, because, he said, laicism restricts the topics that can be taught in religious education (T18T1). As will be seen in Additions and Omissions (6.4 below), teachers and some other participants argued that due to wider factors, some 'important' religious topics are omitted and some 'unnecessary' topics are added to the curriculum. So, for them official religious education policy and wider factors such as laicism restrict teachers. Teacher 1 said that these policies

do not reflect the views of society and, he claimed, parents want their children to learn Islam properly (T18T1).

For the teachers the disparity between official policies and teaching practice is sometimes necessary to teach Islam properly, but other participants saw the disparity between official policies and teaching practice as a problem to be tackled, even though they did not agree about the solution. The Christian representative said that the only solution is that the State should leave (religious) education to religious and civil organisations themselves (T03CHR), but he also noted that this should not give radical groups an opportunity to brainwash children. The ESWU representative said that the solution is the prohibition of courses related to religion in state schools (T07ESWU). This participant argued that religious education teachers would always propagate their beliefs in the classroom and therefore it is almost impossible to have an objective religious education in schools (see also Altıparmak, 2013: 10-11). However, especially the academics proposed changes to the books and programs and an increase in in-service training to convince teachers that the courses are not for proselytising (e.g. T12A3; T13A4; T17S2).

4.6.2. England

In England, too, it was claimed that teachers are one of the most important factors in religious education policy (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E05NSS; E06JEW; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E09AULRE; E10NASACRE; E12REC; E14A1; E19S2). According to the REC representative, the reason why teachers are an important factor is because ‘any impact of those big factors [such as pluralisation and secularisation] are mediated through those who actually (…) teach it.’ (E12REC). In this sense, teachers act as mediators between official religious education policy and classroom teaching.

Some English participants pointed to the lack of teachers (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E08SHIA; E09NASACRE; E12REC; E20T1) and the lack of training (E08SHIA; E10NASACRE; E12REC; E14A1). The NASACRE representative said:

> If you have a syllabus, it does not matter how good it is if teachers are not trained in it, it is going to be either a piece of paper or nowadays website (…) I think for me training is much bigger issue than the syllabus (E10NASACRE).

For a better religious education, it was argued, teachers should be educated better. Moreover, some participants stressed the disparity between official policy and classroom practice, and the role of teachers' own religious convictions in this disparity (E14A1; E19S2; E20T1). For example, Teacher 1 acknowledged the disparity;

> there is a lot of disparity, and I think that there will always be that disparity to an extent because teachers will bring their perspectives to the subject, because it is a subject which is so much about belief and personal conviction. (E20T1)

He said that there is confessional teaching in some (non-faith) primary schools (E20T1). Interestingly some religious and secular representatives stressed the same issue, but with different concerns (E06JEW; E07SUNNI; E05NSS). The Sunni representative argued that some teachers are 'atheists, agnostics or even religion haters' who can 'use those opportunities to undermine belief in God' (E07SUNNI)

The Jewish participant expressed his 'shock' when he learned that an important civil servant responsible for religious education 'happily confessed' to be atheist (E06JEW). Moreover, the Sunni representative also said that 'the majority of teachers have Christian background' and 'mostly they just teach what they are comfortable with' (E07SUNNI). Similarly, the NSS claimed

> the personal faith of the RE teachers [is] a key factor in [parents'] concerns over the way RE is taught at a particular school. (…) religious education does provide an opportunity for those that do wish to proselytise in the classroom to do so [because

> religious education is a subject which is] heavily influenced by the head teachers and teachers involved in delivering the subject. (National Secular Society, 2013: 4)

As can be seen both the Sunni participants and the NSS are concerned with the influence of teacher's own convictions in religious education, but from different angles. For the Sunni and Jewish participants, the teachers with no faith can undermine belief in God, while for the NSS, teachers with faith can proselytise in the classroom.

Religious education teachers 'become RE teachers, since they love religion'. This was the statement made by a distinguished academic in the field of religious education during an informal meeting prior to the fieldwork. The academic argued that since religious education teachers love religion, the confessional teaching in English schools is more widespread than assumed by some academics. Even though it is difficult to know whether confessional teaching is widespread in English schools (according to Francis et al., 1999 a significant proportion of teachers, especially older ones, still has confessional aims; see also Smart, 1988: 3), one research revealed that religious commitment among subject leaders for religious education is much higher than the national average. The report stated that

> These data confirm the close association between responsibility for religious education as subject leader (…) and personal faith commitment. Jackson et al. (2010: 201).

In other words, religious education teachers are more committed to religion (at least regarding religious practice) than the national average, but of course this does not mean that these teachers proselytise in the classroom.

In my sample, almost all participants saw proselytism as a problem and agreed that the teachers' expertise, subject knowledge and in-service training should be increased to offset this problem, but some did not see these as enough. Teacher 1 said that 'there will always be that disparity' because religious education is about beliefs and values (E20T1). One

participant said that the reason for this disparity is partly the 'ambiguous school system in England where one third of all schools are not secular'. He proposed that faith schools should be abolished to remove this ambiguity (E19S2). Yet, the Sunni representative said that the solution would be that 'different faith groups should be taught by people of the respective religions or the abolition of religious education completely' (E07SUNNI)

However, according to some participants despite the teachers' own convictions the wider factors still influence teachers and classroom practice. In other words, teachers are not as autonomous as some argue. Some participants claimed that due to pluralisation, religious education has become much more difficult for teachers to teach (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E10NASACRE; E20T1; E21T2). For example, Anglican Representative 2 said

> Teachers are not confident, because they do not have a decent background. They feel very anxious about it, because they know religions matter to people (E02ANG2).

The NASACRE representative too acknowledged the need for more training for religious education teachers, but she said that the problem is not about having a decent background or not, the problem is 'it [religion] is a sensitive territory':

> They feel that (…) if they make a mistake in teaching history etc., it is not as bad as getting it wrong in RE. (E10NASACRE).

The participants used 'worried' (E01ANG1), 'anxious' (E02ANG2), 'not confident' (E02ANG2; E10NASACRE; E20T1) and 'confused' (E11NATRE; E18S1; E19S2; E20T1) to describe the state of religious education teachers. For example, Teacher 1 said that

> teachers do not have the confidence to even teach Christianity, let alone other world religions (…) The main reason is because the teachers lack any confidence in dealing with the subject [religion] (E20T1; see also REC, 2013: 51).

Teacher 2 told me how wider factors such as politics, secularisation and plurality influence their work in the classroom (E21T2). Moreover, some participants noted that some teachers especially in rural areas, are unaware of policy changes (E11NATRE; E14A1).

4.6.3. Comparison

Teachers were regarded as an important factor in religious education policy by participants, because teachers were seen as mediators between official policy and classroom teaching (Watson and Thompson, 2007: 3). In England and Turkey, in the ordinary state schools, that are my main focus in this thesis, teachers of religious education are selected by their academic qualifications, not by their religious backgrounds. Academic 2 called this 'secularity' of the profession and regarded this as an important milestone in 'educational' religious education (E15A2). Even though the latest reports on religious education are often concerned with the lack of teachers with specialist qualifications in religious education (APPG, 2013; Ofsted, 2013; REC, 2013), the participants of this study, despite sharing these concerns, were also concerned with a more fundamental problem: the influence of teachers' own convictions on the way the subject is taught (Zaki, 1982).

Some participants claimed that some teachers defy the official policies and exert an undue influence on the subject. In Turkey, all three teachers openly said that they ignore some policy directives, especially the directives about other religions and national elements in the textbooks. In other words, they act as active agents, by adding and sometimes removing content and information that they deem necessary. In England, one teacher said that there has always been disparity between policy/syllabus and classroom teaching but none of them said that they ignored official policies. Even though Teacher 2 was very critical about religious education policy in England, she did not say that she ignores it. This was an important dissimilarity between teachers in Turkey and England in my sample.

In education policy literature, there is a lively debate as to whether teachers have a power to reinterpret and in some cases defy official policy (Maguire, Braun and Ball, 2015: 486), some suggesting that teachers and school leaders have no scope to question fundamental objectives of policies (Wright, 2003).

My study found that there is a widespread concern for an undue influence of teachers' own convictions on the way religions and worldviews are taught in religious education. Moreover, as can be seen, especially in case of Turkish teachers, teachers questioned and defied some fundamental objectives of the curriculum. However, this does not show that teachers are independent from the rest of the world. As policy sociologists rightly pointed out, and as teachers in my sample reiterated, wider factors still shape teachers and classroom practice, but what this thesis found is that teachers are not passive receivers of the official policy, which is also expressed by previous comparative works (Bîrzéa et al., 2004: 23; Bråten, 2009; Matemba, 2011: 249).

Why do teachers defy official policies? According to Rein (1983: 117)

> when many key groups and individuals excluded from the arena in which policy is formulated, it is typical that the implementation phase of the political process is where policies can be modified to suit individual or group interest.

In this sense, it can be argued that the disparity in Turkey and England can be explained through the exclusion of key groups and individuals from policy formulation. Regarding Turkey, this was confirmed by Altinyelken, Çayır and Agirdag (2015: 475-476) who argued that in Turkey official policies are Western oriented but teachers still have strong Islamic tendencies. In other words, teachers defy the official policies, when they see these policies as not reflecting their deeply held values or the values of the society.

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter presented national factors shaping religious education policy according to the participants. Five factors were discussed: Politics, State and Religion, School System, Particularities and Peculiarities and Teachers. There are probably more national factors, but these were the factors mentioned by the participants. Furthermore, even though in this section, national factors were identified, separated and treated as if they are relatively discrete, it was evident that there were interconnected, complex and often overlap. For example, it was difficult to separate politics (4.2) from the State and religion (4.3), because the State's relationship with religion inevitably includes politicians.

These national factors were seen as powerful factors. For example, in both countries, politics was deemed as one of the most, if not *the most*, important factor shaping religious education policy. This is not surprising, given the fact that official religious education policy is made and shaped by politicians and governments. Moreover, teachers and national characteristics of Turkey and England were also seen important factors. In both countries, politics and teachers were seen as vital factors, and attracted criticisms of the participants. For example, teachers were criticised as defying official policies. Of course, this does not mean that they are completely independent from the rest of the world (Berglund, Shanneik and Bocking, 2016a: 3). For example, teachers are subject to the scrutiny, not only of the heads, inspectors, and national laws but also of pupils and parents (Hunt, 1983: 99). I can imagine that pupils, as 'active agents' (Smyth, Darmody and Lyons, 2013: 5) will speak out, if they realise that the teacher propagate his/her own views, because, they are not passive receivers (see Apple, 2000: 191; Moulin, 2013), but this might be difficult in cases when the teacher propagates in more subtle ways. Moreover, teachers are not immune to the effect of socio-political factors such as pluralisation and secularisation (Fancourt, 2012). Teachers themselves in this

study were critical of the national laws and some argued that the demands of parents and national laws restricted their manoeuvres, but it was evident that teachers were not passive receivers of official policies. This can be also said for politicians who are subject to both national and supranational pressures.

It should be noted that even though these factors were called 'national' factors, they were shared by Turkey and England. As discussed in the Methodology, 'supranational' might mean two things. It might mean that it belongs to a different level, or it might mean that it is a national factor but shared internationally. If we take the supranational in the second sense, these national factors might be also called supranational, because these factors were shared by England and Turkey. For example, in both countries there was a deep mistrust of politicians, which is a global trend, according to Rui (2014). I will talk about this issue in Chapter 7.

Moreover, throughout the Chapter, there were cross-case similarities (such as concern for classroom evangelisation), as well as within-case dissimilarities (for example some did not see teachers as propagating their own faiths). Yet in both countries, there was one important similarity: that is that wider factors, which I call in this chapter 'National Factors' were seen influential in religious education policy by the participants. Moreover, one issue recurs in the chapter: the participants had different accounts and perspectives about these factors, Even though sometimes we saw glimpses of consensus such as the participants' distrust of politicians or the concern for proselytism in the classroom, there were significant differences in emphasis and interpretation. For example, the participants criticised the politicians, but for completely different reasons. Laicism was seen as an important factor by the Turkish participants, but some claimed that it already influenced the subject (e.g. T01PRA), while some maintained that religious education policy in Turkey betrayed laicism (T04LAIC). In

other words, these factors dominated the concern of the participants, but the participants approached them in different and contradictory ways. This shows that the participants themselves were not 'objective' observers. Rather, they were, what I call, 'policy actors' who advocated or opposed particular policy approaches. In the next chapter, I will explore three factors that are often presented as 'supranational' factors in religious education from the perspectives of these 'policy actors'.

5. Supranational Factors

5.1. Introduction

The research question of the thesis first requires the identification of the supranational and national factors. This chapter explores supranational factors, namely supranational religious education policy, secularisation and pluralisation. The chapter starts with supranational religious education policy then it moves to secularisation and pluralisation, exploring whether they are factors shaping religious education policy in Turkey and England, with the help of interviews conducted with various policy actors.

The difference between the factors explored in this chapter and those explored in the previous chapter is that the previous factors all derived from the data. In other words, I did not ask about them specifically. In contrast, I specifically asked the participants about the factors that will be discussed here, because these three factors at hand presented as supranational or 'shared' factors in the main comparative religious education studies.

5.2. Supranational Religious Education Policy

This section explores whether supranational religious education policy, which is often presented as a supranational factor, is a factor in religious education policy in Turkey and England.

5.2.1. Turkey

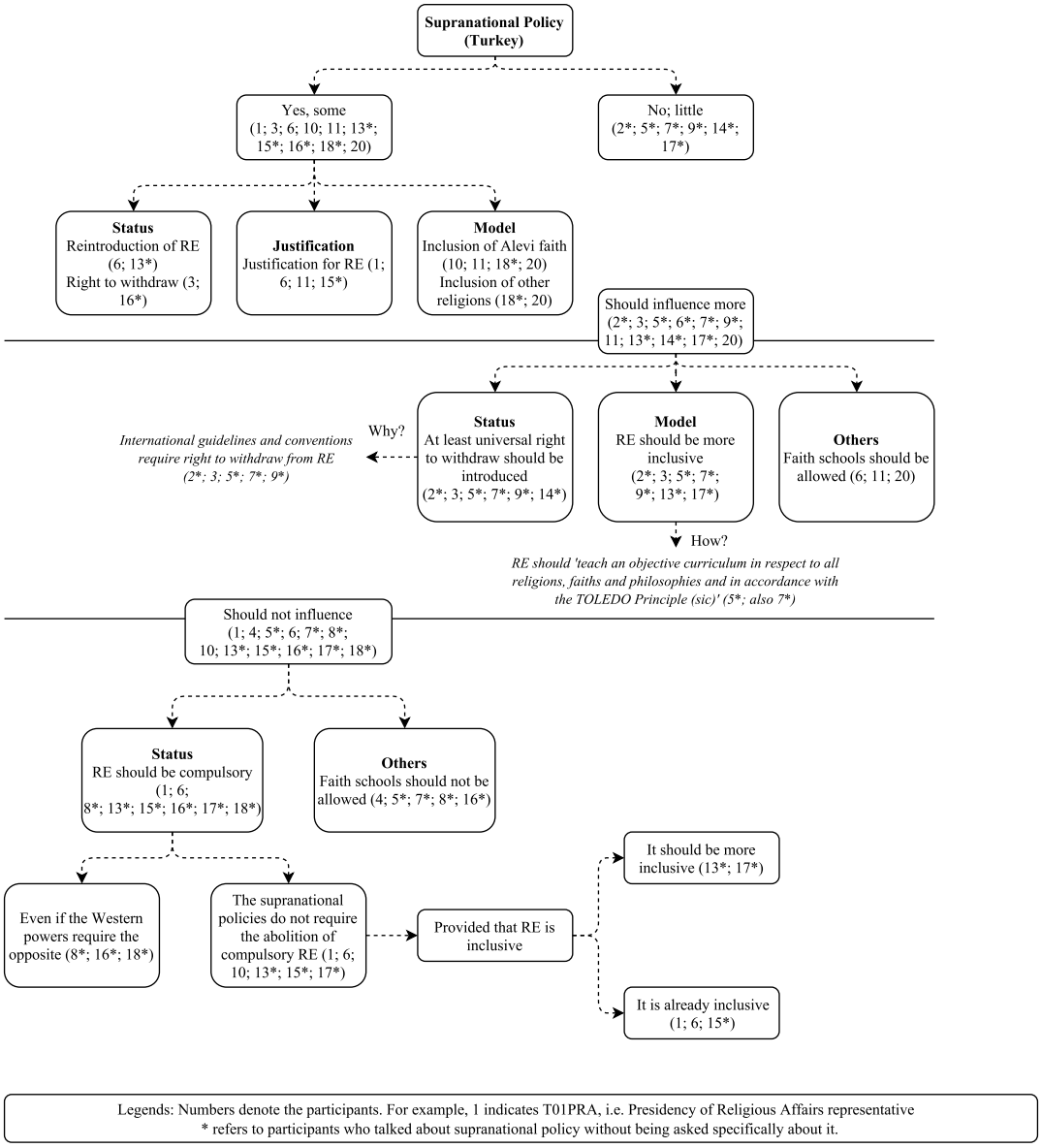
As stressed before, this chapter deals with the identification of the factors influencing religious education policy. The subsequent chapter will explore how these factors shaped

religious education policy, but an overview of whether and how these factors influence religious education policy should be given to understand these factors.

In the interviews conducted in Turkey, 11 participants talked about supranational policy without being asked specifically about it. Moreover, 10 participants argued that supranational policy has had an impact on official religious education policy in Turkey. Furthermore, 11 participants said that that supranational policy should have more impact on religious education policy in Turkey. Display 5.1. below gives an overview of how supranational policy influences religious education policy in Turkey.

5.2.1.1. Impact or No Impact

As can be seen there was no unanimity among participants as to whether supranational policy has had an influence on official Turkish religious education policy. While 10 participants argued that it has had an impact, six participants claimed that it has had little or no impact at all. Interestingly, all these six participants were those who talked about supranational policy without being asked directly about it. In other words, these participants wanted supranational policy to influence official religious education policy in Turkey and because of this, they talked about the supranational conventions and documents, without even being directly asked about them.



Display 5.1 Supranational policy and religious education policy in Turkey

5.2.1.2. What is Supranational Policy?

No participant used the term 'supranational religious education policy', but they talked about influence coming from outside, particularly from the West. They specifically mentioned four things:

A) The European Court of Human Rights (mentioned by 14 participants);

B) the supranational and international conventions and treaties (11 participants);

C) the European Union accession process (6 participants);

D) supranational guidelines such as *The Toledo Guiding Principles* (2 participants).

The European Court of Human Rights was mentioned the most by the participants. This was probably because the Court has made direct interventions in the Turkish religious education policy through two cases brought before the Court by Alevi families. In 2007 and 2014, the Court found that religious education classes in Turkey had not been conducted in an *objective*, *critical* and *pluralistic* manner. Hence, the Court demanded changes in religious education policy in Turkey (ECtHR, 2007b, 2014). Since the fieldwork was conducted before the second judgement was announced, the participants talked about the 2007 *Zengin* Case (ECtHR, 2007b).

Interestingly, the European Union accession process was also seen as a supranational factor in religious education policy by the participants. Even though the European Union has not published any guidelines regarding religious education policy yet, it supports the recommendations of the Council of Europe and monitors whether the decisions of the Court are implemented or not. Moreover, from 1998 onwards, the EU Commission's annual progress reports on Turkey monitor issues related to religious freedom. For example, *Turkey Progress Report 2015* stressed that:

> There is (…) a need to amend and implement the legal framework in line with ECtHR rulings, Council of Europe recommendations and EU standards. Particular attention should be given to the implementation of judgement on the exemption from compulsory religion and ethics classes (…). (European Commission, 2015: 63)

Supranational and international conventions and treaties were mentioned by 11 participants. For example, the Christian representative argued that due to the Lausanne Treaty, a peace treaty signed in 1924 after the World War I, the Christians and Jews have a right to withdraw

from religious education and to establish their own schools (known as minority schools) (T03CHR; also, T16S1).

It is interesting to note that supranational guidelines such as the OSCE's *Toledo Guiding Principles* were only mentioned by 2 participants. This indicates that these reports and guidelines were not very familiar to religious education policy actors I interviewed in Turkey.

5.2.1.3. The West

An important finding is that the participants associated the supranational religious education policy exclusively with the West, by which, they mean, Europe and the USA. Even the positive foreign examples given by the participants were almost all from Western countries. Countries from the East such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq were often mentioned as negative lessons. This is especially striking, given that the central topic of this study is religious education whose subject matter is religion (and/or faith) and regarding religion, Turkey shares more in common with the East than with the West.

I did not ask the participants specifically about their views about the West, but when the participants talked about supranational influence, they also revealed their views about it. Even though a slight majority of the participants expressed positive views or did not reveal their views, there were also participants who did not shy away from expressing their strong disapproval of Western influence. For example, four participants expressed negative views, pointing to the secret agenda of the 'West' (T04LAIC; T08TEU; T16S1; T18T1). The Laic representative argued that

> due to its unprecedented geo-strategic position, as a matter of fact, Turkey has often been targeted to be controlled through international conventions by the Western countries. (T04LAIC)

Similarly, the Turk Education Union representative said that 'it is known that the West does not want Turkey to be powerful again and Islam to set the world order'. He continued

> [but] they do not intervene directly, we know that they rather gradually do so through distorting our belief system, through causing degenerations in our morality. They change our perception of what is immoral and what is not. They try to justify this process through international conventions and agreements such as European Union law or international human rights standards. It was just a decade ago (…) that adultery was forbidden by law, but today it is allowed as a result of the EU accession process.

To him, religious education policy should not be changed at the request of Western powers (T08TEU). Likewise, State Official 1 accused the Western powers of 'creating sectarian splits' by supporting certain 'atheist Alevi groups' (T16S1; also T15A6) and Teacher 1 said that among others 'European norms, the European Union (…) are the barriers to ideal religious education in Turkey', since they do not allow schools and teachers to teach Islam properly (T18T1). It seems that these four participants see the supranational influence as not only negative but also dangerous, possibly a threat to the national unity of Turkey. However, it should be noted that what these four participants considered as policy imposition of the West markedly differed. For example, the Laic representative saw the Western influence dangerous because, according to him, this might lead to the transfer of education to 'religious orders', which would not and should not be acceptable in a laic Turkey (T04LAIC). For him, current religious education courses should be voluntary because they are not taught in an objective manner, which shows that his views on that matter were no different from the Court's decisions. However, the other three participants argued that the State should retain compulsory courses regardless of what the 'Western' powers think about religious education policy in Turkey (T08TEU; T16S1; T18T1). This shows that these participants objected to certain policies that, they thought, could be introduced because of the influence of the 'West'.

Moreover, there were participants who criticised some aspects of the supranational policy. For example, the Religious Affairs representative found the Court's decision wrong (T01PRA). Likewise, the former head of the Presidency of Religious Affairs was one of the fiercest critics of the Court's ruling on religious education. He argued that the Court's decision has 'no basis' because the Court's judges considered themselves as experts on religious issues without having any sound knowledge about religion and without consulting with religious scholars (Bardakoğlu, 2008). Interestingly, the PRA representative praised the human rights principles for widening religious freedom in Turkey, but criticised the Court which was set up to ensure compliance by the States with their undertakings of human rights principles (T01PRA).

Moreover, some participants accused the Court of making 'biased' decisions. The Alevi and the Education and Science Workers' Union representatives said that the Court made a 'biased' decision, because of 'the close relationship between the Turkish government and European authorities' at that time. The Alevi representative said that the Alevis' expectation was that the Court would order Turkish authorities to make the course voluntary, but instead the Court offered two options; either making the course objective, critical and pluralistic or providing appropriate arrangements for withdrawal and the Turkish authorities deliberately chose the first option by just adding little information about the Alevi faith into the curriculum, which was not enough to protect the rights of Alevis according to the participant (T02ALEVI).

Nevertheless, as stated above, some participants expressed positive attitudes towards the West and supranational influence and argued that the supranational conventions, guidelines and standards are the way forward for religious education policy in Turkey. In other words, Turkish religious education policy should be in line with these standards. Some participants

even praised Western influence for helping to widen the religious freedom in Turkey (T06ETU; T10A1; T13A4; T14A5). For example, the Educators Trade Union representative said that 'if Turkey has been left alone, these developments [such as the introduction of religious courses] would have taken ages.' (T06ETU). He meant that if the Western States and organisations had not forced Turkey to widen religious freedom, Turkey would still not have had religious courses in state schools.

I think that the attitudes of the participants towards supranational policy or the West show a dilemma. It seemed that some participants criticised the West when they saw it a threat to their policy preferences. The ESWU representative stressed this issue. She argued that in Turkey, foreign examples are being used selectively. For example, she continued, when the politicians want to introduce something, they use foreign examples that suit their policies (T07ESWU). This dilemma is also translated into the views of the participants regarding whether supranational policy has had an influence on the subject or whether the supranational should have an influence or not.

The participants disagreed over whether supranational policy had an influence on official policy or not, as can be seen in Display 5.1 above. The Court decision is a case in point. Some participants argued that the Court decision was properly implemented (T15A6; T18S1; T18T1) by making the subject more pluralistic. Some participants also claimed that the Court decision led to significant changes in the religious education curriculum that helped religious education to become more inclusive, but they argued that more can be done (T10A1; T11A2; T13A4; T20T3). Other participants found the changes insufficient and argued that the politicians failed to implement the Court's decision (T02ALEVI; T05ATH; T07ESWU; T09ERI; T13A4). For them, the politicians, particularly the current ruling party, is resistant to the demand for change coming from the Court.

Interestingly, the second Court decision (ECtHR, 2014), which came after my fieldwork, reiterated the first decision and demanded immediate changes in Turkish religious education policy. In other words, the Court found that its decision on religious education policy in 2007 was not implemented.

5.2.1.4. Not from Inside

As stated above, some participants argued that there was no or little influence on religious education policy from supranational policies. As a signatory state of almost all international human rights conventions, Turkey is expected to obey the principles embedded in these conventions, but according to these participants this was not the case. The Christian representative said that the EU accession process had some positive influence on Turkey, but overall 'international conventions are not complied with', because they came from the West, not from the 'inside' (T03CHR). He said that there are 'written laws' which are in line with international standards, but there are 'hidden laws' which are not quite compatible with the international standards (T03CHR). By 'hidden laws', he meant the way the State and state officials understand and implement international human rights standards. Similarly, the Alevi representative said that Turkey is a party to almost all international human rights conventions, but it either has ratified them with reservations or has not complied with them in action (T02ALEVI; also, T05ATH; T07ESWU; T17S2). In other words, these participants claimed that the principles and polices coming from outside are not 'internalised' in practice, even though they were internalised as a national law. This shows that even though human rights principles enjoy a popularity, the extent of their sincere application is doubtful (Freeman, 2004: 392). Possibly, because of this, the Alevi representative and State Official 2 argued that the real solution to peace and stability in plural Turkey lies in 'turning back to our culture again' (T02ALEVI; T17S2).

5.2.1.5. How Should the Supranational Policy Influence Religious Education Policy?

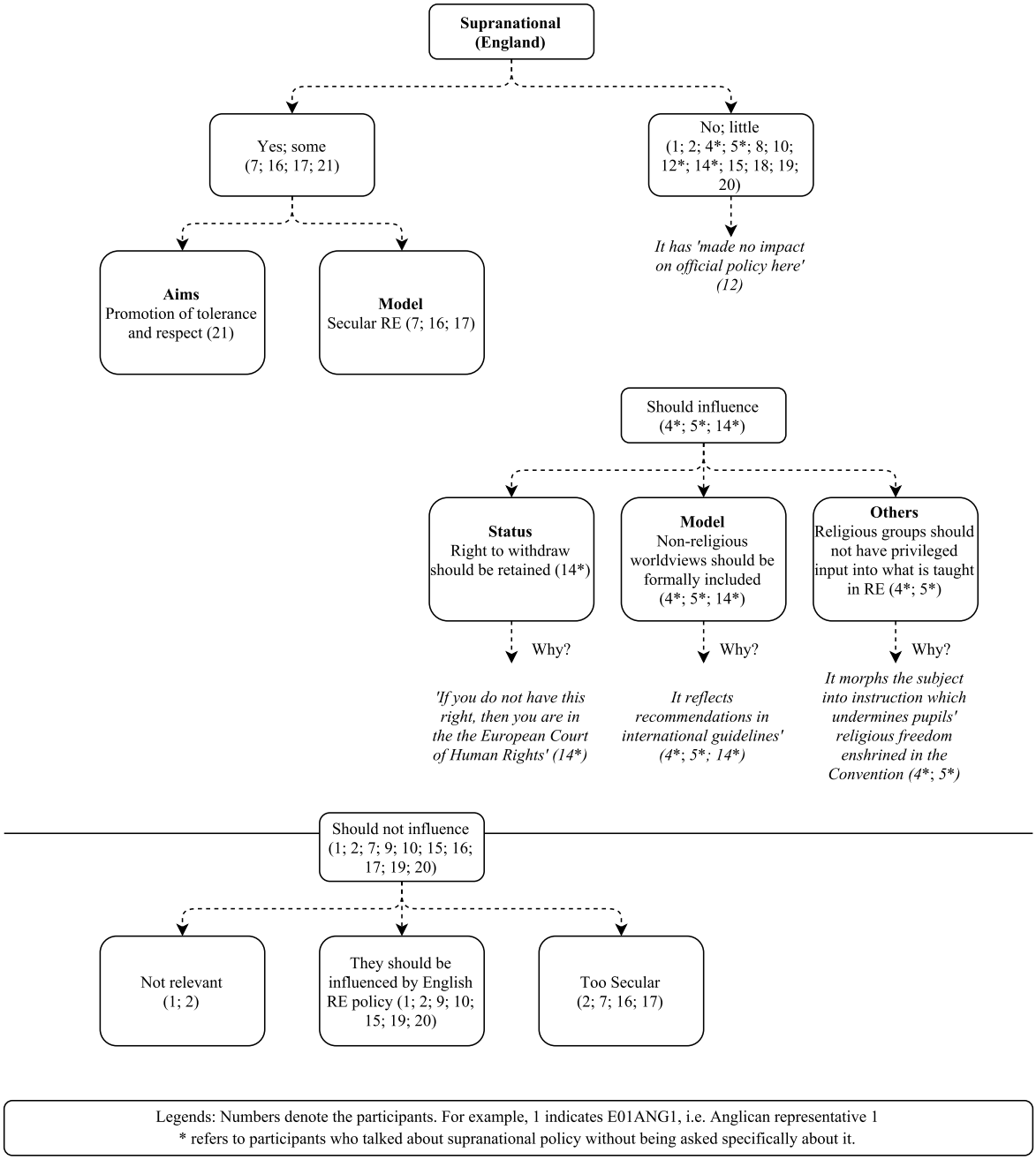
As can be seen in Display 5.1 above, some participants called for more influence of the supranational policies ('Should influence'), while others objected to this ('Should not influence'). The primary reason for this was that there were significant differences among the participants as to how to read and understand supranational policies. The majority of the participants argued their case with references to supranational policies, but they read and understood these policies differently. The status of religious education is the case in point. Five participants argued that the supranational conventions and guidelines do not require the abolition of compulsory religious education as long as it is taught in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. They cite the right to education clause of the European Convention on Human Rights and other international conventions and the Court decisions as an evidence of the permissibility of compulsory religious education (T01PRA; T06ETU; T13A4; T15A5; T17S2). However, some participants cited the same articles, but reached the conclusion that these require at least the introduction of the universal right to withdraw from religious education. For example, the ERI document, after mentioning Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights, argued that Turkey should introduce the right to withdraw from religious education (ERI, 2007: 4). This shows that the supranational policies were understood and read differently by the participants.

Is supranational policy a factor in religious education policy in Turkey? As stressed above 11 participants talked about it before I asked specifically about it. Regarding the official religious education policy, there is no agreement among the participants. Yet it seemed that the participants' stances towards religious education are informed and influenced by the

supranational conventions and guidelines, the Court decisions and the notions of the 'West', since the majority of the participants positioned their views on religious education policy in state schools in the context of supranational policies, but there were differences among them as to how to understand and read these principles.

5.2.2. England

In England, only four participants mentioned supranational policy without being asked directly about it (E04BHA; E05NSS; E12REC; E14A1) and only four participants argued that it has had an influence on official policy (E07SUNNI; E16A3; E17A4; E21T2). The majority of the participants argued that supranational policies made no difference. For example, State Official 2 said that 'from my perspective […] there is very little evidence that it is having any impact' (E19S2). This might be an indicator that the supranational policy was not an important factor in religious education policy in England.



Display 5.2 Supranational policy and religious education policy in England

5.2.2.1. How was the supranational religious education policy understood?

In England, it was supranational guidelines that were mentioned the most by the participants. Thirteen participants mentioned the supranational guidelines and recommendations such as the Toledo Guiding Principles and the Council of Europe's recommendations. Moreover,

eight participants mentioned the international conventions, particularly the European Convention on Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is important to note what was not mentioned. The European Court of Human Rights was only mentioned by two participants. One of them said that he was aware of the Court rulings but added that 'maybe you can tell me more about it' (E18S1). The European Union was not mentioned at all, as opposed to Turkey where it was seen as an important factor.

One important finding is that, according to some participants, the general education policy of the supranational organisations has had an impact on religious education policy. Three participants talked about international comparisons, particularly PISA, stating that they have had a negative impact (E03CATH; E09AULRE; E14A1). The Catholic representative described the PISA as 'totally skewed', arguing that

> Every country is different. How can you actually measure across the countries? I do not know. (E03CATH)

For them, this supranational influence was one of reasons behind the decreasing importance of the subject. In Turkey, no participant talked about international comparisons. In England too, there were participants who articulated negative views about supranational influence. Some participants criticised the supranational policies as being too secular (E07SUNNI; E16A3; E17A4). For example, the Sunni representative argued that in Europe:

> religion is viewed with suspicion. This is the psychology of international organizations. They are convinced that the secular way, which marginalizes religion and confines it to the private domain, is the best way. (E07SUNNI)

According to him, the supranational guidelines and conventions that influence religious education policy have been created within this context. He went on to argue that

> [They] distort religion [by] promoting certain perspectives [about religions], which they feel, are more cohesive and palatable to the European context. (E07SUNNI).

Similarly, Anglican Representative 2 said that:

> the European system has been heavily influenced by the French, who believe that laicism is the way you do this – which would not work here (E02ANG2).

For these participants being 'too secular' was negative, which can cause further secularisation, but for the BHA participant this was positive. He said that supranational guidelines were,

> ignored by the governments [because supranational guidelines were] too impartial and too secular (…) They [British Governments] do not want to be impartial. They want a particular religion to dominate. (E04BHA).

The BHA, Sunni and Anglican 2 representatives agreed that the supranational guidelines were 'too secular', but this was positive for the BHA representative, but negative for the Sunni and Anglican 2 representatives.

Nevertheless, there were also participants who praised the supranational developments and wanted them to be influential in English religious education policy. Academic 1 said that

> it is important to have [the Universal Declaration of Human Rights]. It is not a tablet stone, but it is a reference point for democratic discussions of difference within society. There are limits to what you can and cannot say and there are certain values that we must uphold. (E14A1)

The BHA representative criticised the politicians for not adopting European guidelines. The BHA representative and NSS documents referred constantly to international guidelines and conventions to make their case, especially for objective and pluralistic religious education and education (with a reference to faith schools). Moreover, Academic 1 criticised politicians for ignoring supranational policies (E14A1).

5.2.2.2. Influence

As stated above, there is almost consensus that supranational policies made no or little difference in religious education policy in England, according to participants. However, one point is important here. When I asked the participants whether supranational religious education policy has influenced religious education policy in England, they understood this question as the influence of latest guidelines and recommendations of the supranational organisations, and the participants agreed that these guidelines and recommendations did not influence religious education policy. Only four participants argued that the supranational conventions had an influence on religious education policy and for them this was a negative influence (E07SUNNI; E16A3; E17A4; E21T2). For example, Teacher 2 argued that the international guidelines and conventions 'absolutely influence how we see religions. It actually feeds into a rather vague agenda of respect for all' (E21T2). Moreover, some participants argued that international comparisons such as PISA has had a negative impact on religious education.

It is interesting to note that only three participants used the supranational guidelines and conventions to make their case (E04BHA; E05NSS; E14A1), but there were also participants who referred to human rights principles such as parental right to education (e.g. E07SUNNI) and 'equality' (e.g. 04BHA; E08SHIA).

5.2.2.3. 'They have a long way to go to catch up actually' (E02ANG2)

In my sample, seven participants argued that it is the supranational guidelines and recommendations that should be influenced by English religious education policy, not the reverse. For example, Anglican Representative 2 said that 'they have a long way to go to catch up actually. Initially they did not want anything to do with faith' (E02ANG2). If we

add these seven participants to those who saw the supranational level negatively (E02ANG2; E07SUNNI; E16A3; E17A4; E21T2), the number reaches to 11, which means that 11 participants either did not want supranational processes influencing religious education policy in England or did not see the supranational guidelines and recommendations as relevant to religious education policy in England. However, as I said earlier, even though the participants also mentioned supranational conventions and human rights principles, when they were asked about supranational religious education, they understood it as the guidelines and recommendations of European authorities such as the Council of Europe.

Then, is the supranational policy a factor in religious education policy in England? According to the majority of the participants, the recommendations and guidelines of the supranational organisations did not make much difference in England. Moreover, the participants, who argued that it made an impact, saw this as a negative one.

5.2.3. Comparison

It can be seen that the participants in Turkey and England focused on different aspects of supranational policy. While the Turkish participants mentioned the Court, international conventions and treaties and the EU accession process, the English participants talked about the international guidelines and conventions. The only similarity was the international conventions, but even this was different. For Turkish participants, international conventions and human rights principles were clearly seen as coming from a different level: the West, but for English participants, human rights principles such as the parental right to education, equality were not seen as coming from a different level. It was seen as a part of national human rights legislation, but there were also participants who saw human rights principles as coming from a different level (e.g. E07SUNNI; E21T2).

For the Turkish participants, the most important supranational factor was the European Court of Human Rights which was hardly mentioned by the English participants (only two participants). The European Union was not mentioned at all by the English participants. The English participants were more aware of international guidelines and recommendations, which were mentioned by only two participants in Turkey. International comparisons like PISA were mentioned in English interviews as a negative factor, but it was not mentioned in Turkey. This shows that what we call supranational influence was not the same for Turkey and England.

However, although the participants focused on different aspects of supranational policy, it was possible to detect common themes and patterns in them. One pattern related to the negative attitudes to supranational policies. Several participants in both countries expressed negative views about supranational policies, but it was the Turkish participants who were harsher in their criticisms. In England, no participant ever argued that the Western powers try to control England through supranational policies, but this was clearly articulated by four participants in Turkey. However, in England too, some participants criticised the supranational policies as being too 'secular', which might bring more secularisation. These criticisms resonate with criticisms of supranational policy by Arthur and Holdsworth (2012) and Gearon (2012). In the pioneering works, supranational policy was mentioned by Alberts (2007), Bråten (2009) and Willaime (2007), and it was often taken for granted and something that should be adhered to, especially by Willaime (2007) and Alberts (2007), but this study shows that there are policy actors who saw them not only as negative but also as dangerous.

Another pattern was concerning the geography of the 'supranational'. In both countries, some participants referred to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights which might be seen, as its name suggests, as a universal declaration. Apart from this, all the guidelines,

documents and conventions mentioned by the participants were from Europe. Given that Turkey and England are the members of regional organizations such as the Council of Europe, and the European Court of Human Rights, this may not be surprising, since memberships of these organisations require both countries to adhere to the standards articulated by these organisations, but it is clear that for the participants of this study, the supranational or global was understood as European or Western. So 'global' in religious education policy is not actually 'global', it can be called rather 'European' or 'Western'.

Another pattern was that the supranational policies were read and understood differently. There might be different reasons for this. One reason is, according to Akboga (2016: 789), that 'local actors easily appropriate global developments to support their local cultural and political interests'. In this sense, the participants appropriated the supranational policies to support their stances on religious education policy. Moreover, another reason might be that international policies themselves allow such different readings (Slotte, 2011). For example, the Court decision was understood in different ways in Turkey, which supports Relaño (2010)'s argument that there is no clarity in the Court rulings, especially about 'neutral and objective' religious education.

An overall difference between Turkey and England was that far more Turkish participants used the supranational policies to support their arguments than English participants did (11 to 3). Is this because Turkish participants are more receptive to supranational influence than English participants? This might be one reason, as claimed by some participants in my study. In Turkey, as Academic 4 argued (T13A4), modernisation or contemporary civilisation was often seen as 'Westernisation' (Berkes, 1964: 25; Kazamias, 1966). In England, there was a kind of belief in English religious education policy. State official 2 in England said that

> there is still tendency in religious education in England to think that the rest of the world might be influenced by our model, but there is not much for us to learn from anywhere else. (E19S2)

Anglican Representative 2 said that 'we are very insular in Britain' (E02ANG2). Of course this does not mean that the English participants were unaware of the European policies. Indeed, the participants were aware of them and even some participants told me their own personal contribution to these policies, but this contribution was seen as their contribution to Europe, rather than European contribution to English religious education policy.

However, there might also be another reason. This is the official religious education policy in both countries. It can be asserted that when official policy is seen as restrictive by the policy actors, it is more likely that the policy actors look abroad for support for their arguments (Kuburić and Moe, 2006a). This was especially the case in Turkey, where many participants criticised official religious education policy.

In conclusion, what we call supranational religious education policy differed from Turkey to England. In Turkey, the Court, the EU and international conventions were part of the debate over religious education policy, but in England, the Court and the EU were not mentioned a lot and the majority of the participants mentioned supranational recommendations and guidelines and argued that they did not make any difference to religious education policy in England. Moreover, the participants expressed different and contradictory accounts about supranational religious education policy and its influence on religious education policy. Some criticised it, while others praised it.

5.3. Secularisation

In this section, I turn my attention to secularisation and explore whether it is a factor influencing religious education policy in England and Turkey.

5.3.1. Turkey

In Turkey, only seven participants talked about secularisation without being asked and only six participants argued that secularisation had an influence on official religious education policy. Moreover, six participants argued that secularisation should influence the subject more. Yet the majority of the participants (13) disagreed, demanding that either secularisation should not influence the subject or the subject should counter secularisation. These different views about the influence of secularisation on religious education policy was partly because of different views about secularisation itself.

5.3.1.1. How was secularisation understood?

The vast majority of the Turkish participants (17) talked about, what one might call, individual secularisation. The participants talked about '*dinden uzaklaşma*' which can be translated as 'being distanced from religion'. For example, the Religious Affairs representative said that some people 'distanced themselves from religion', that is, religion no longer plays an important role in their everyday lives (T01PRA). The Turkish participants used the term '*dinden uzaklaşma*' to refer to decline in religious beliefs and practices and decline in the importance of religion in people's lives. For example, the Atheism Association stated that there has been a decline in religious beliefs and a rise in the number of people who define themselves as 'atheists, deists, agnostics and pantheists' worldwide (T05ATH).

Moreover, 8 participants in Turkey understood secularisation as a change in religiosity, that is, the way people practice and regard religion has changed over the course of time. For Turkish participants, this was a negative development, they called it fake/unnatural religiosity, or '*içi boşaltılmış dindarlık*' ('hollowed-out religiosity'). The Alevi and the Education-Union representatives said that the society claims to be religious, but this is an

'unnatural religiosity' or 'state religiosity' (respectively), meaning that, it is formulated and supported by the State, through its institutions, especially via the educational institutions (T02ALEVI, T07ESWU). According to these participants this development is not secularisation per se, rather it is a misuse of religion. The Alevi representative said that the State wants to foster generations with 'unnatural' religious beliefs that are compatible with the values of the State, by doing so, the State and politicians distorted religion by removing its true essence that was based on tolerance and understanding, and filled it rather with hate and intolerance (T02ALEVI).

Six participants saw this change as secularisation. Academic 3 pointed to ignorance among people and the role of religious leaders in distorted religiosity. She said that:

> professing themselves to be religious and desiring to protect their religious beliefs, people often end up maintaining wrong beliefs and values, partly due to ignorance about true religion (T12A3, also T17S2; T03CHR).

Moreover, some participants pointed to the increased 'this worldliness' among religious people, arguing that religious people live a very secular life but they still claim to be religious (T14A5; T20T3).

Furthermore, some participants pointed to the privatisation and marginalisation of religion. Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 said that people have religious beliefs, but they do not allow their religious beliefs to interfere with their everyday lives (T18T1; T20T3). This might be called 'privatisation of religion'. The Christian representative said that religion is marginalised: 'it does not bring a practical reward [in daily life] anymore'. Moreover, due to community pressure towards religious people, they are even afraid to tell that they practice their religion (T03CHR; also, T10A1). What the Christian representative said might be regarded as 'marginalisation of religion'.

5.3.1.2. Societal Secularisation

Secularisation is also understood as having a societal dimension and according to the participants this was related to laicism. Some participants used laicism and secularisation interchangeably. The Laic representative claimed that one of the main aims of the laicism principle of the Turkish Republic was to accomplish 'secularisation' (*sekülerleşme* in Turkish original). When prompted, he defined secularisation as 'the removal of social, administrative and personal decisions and practices from religious content [influence]' (T04LAIC; also, T07ESWU). For the participant, laicism and secularisation were hand in hand and positive developments, but the participant was not happy that secularisation has not accomplished yet in Turkey due to some 'evil' (*habis*) politicians. The Christian representative, too, saw laicism and secularisation as hand in hand, but regarded them as negative developments. He argued that

> Laicism itself is a religion (…) it has a belief system (…). It is a myth that laicism allows religious freedom, it either tries to destroy religion, if not, then it tries to control religion, and if not, then co-operates with religion, but this is not a friendly co-operation. (T3CHR)

However, the majority of participants drew a line between secularisation and laicism, seeing the latter mainly as positive or neutral, but regarding the former negatively. According to Zebiri (1998: 47) 'most Muslims see secularism [and laicism] as the antithesis of religion', in my sample, interestingly, this was not the case. Some even saw it as 'one of the Islamic principles' (T12A3), but there were participants who lamented that laicism has been sometimes applied in Turkey to secularise society. These participants were critical of the use of laicism to reach secularisation (e.g. T06ETU; T10A1; T11A2; T13A4; T16A5; T18T1). Academic 6 lamented that the State has 'imposed a secular lifestyle upon people' for a long time (T15A6).

5.3.1.3. 'Need for belief'

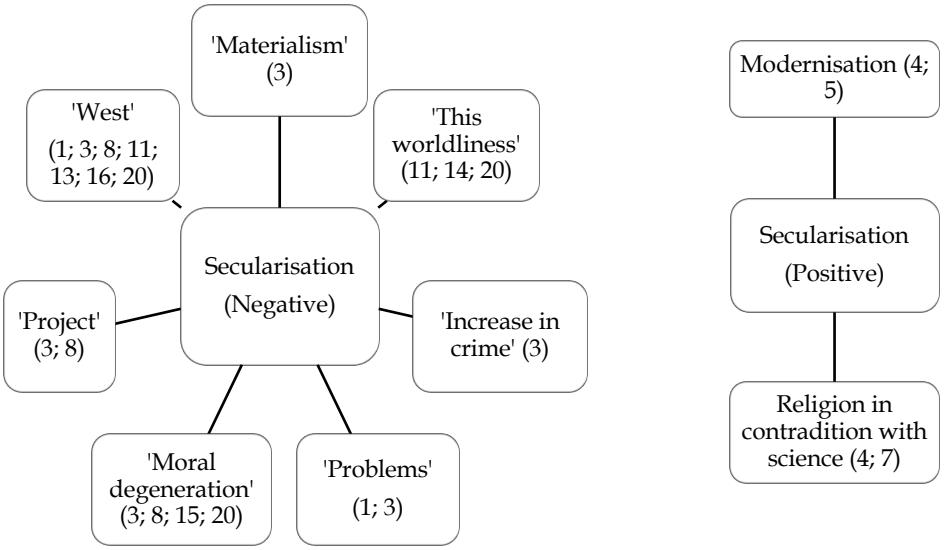
For the majority of the Turkish participants, secularisation was a negative development. Some Turkish participants asserted that humans have a need for belief. State Official 1 said that 'religion is a part of identity of individuals. It is impossible to imagine a society without religion in history' (T16S1). Teacher 1 said that 'everybody needs to believe in something' (T18T1). So for them secularisation was against the 'natural predisposition of human beings' ('*fitrat*' in Turkish which comes from Arabic '*fitrah*') which is inclined towards submission to the One God (T08TUE; T16S1; T18T1).

Moreover, some participants argued that there cannot be complete distance from religion. For example, Turk-Education-Union representative said that even the most irreligious (*dinsiz*) people observe some religious practices and respect religion (T08TEU).

Moreover, some participants expressed their doubts about secularisation. Religious Affairs representative questioned the reliability of surveys. He argued that 'religion cannot be measured with surveys. It has an inner dimension which cannot be measured with surveys' (T01PRA). He implied that surveys which show the decline in religious beliefs and practices are not reliable, but the participant himself used a survey to claim that Turkish society is a religious society (see below).

5.3.1.4. Negative and Positive Views

As stated above, secularisation was seen as a negative development by the majority of the participants. For example, the Religious Affairs representative described secularisation (i.e. distancing from religion) as a 'problem'. According to him, secularisation was one of 'the fundamental problems of the West' (T01PRA). Display 5.3. below shows negative and positive terms used by the participants when they talked about secularisation.



Display 5.3 A taxonomy of the ways secularisation is seen by the Turkish participants.

One interesting word here is the 'West', which was used by seven participants who linked secularisation to the West. For example, the Christian representative said that secularisation is the 'source of the problems in the West'. He further argued that Europe is no longer Christian; 'Europe became Pagan long time ago' (T03CHR). Some participants even argued that secularisation is a project of the Western powers to weaken society (T03CHR; T08TEU).

Moreover, secularisation was linked to 'moral degeneration', problems like drug, crime and materialism. 'This worldliness' is an important term here. Two participants used this term to refer to changes in religiosity and used this term with a negative connotation (T14A5; T20T3), but Academic 3 also used this term, but with a positive connotation arguing that 'Islam is itself this-worldly religion' (T12A3).

According to the Atheism Association, non-religious people face stigmatisation due to these negative attitudes towards secularisation in Turkey and this is why, they established the Atheism Association:

> All we are trying to do is to tell people what atheism [is], because our people think that Atheists are people who have orgies every night, rape animals. Atheists are believed to be not having any ethical values (…). For them [Turkish people], ethics is equal to religion. (Jones, 2015)

In my sample, only two participants (apart from the Atheism Association) said that secularisation is a positive development (T04LAIC; T07ESWU). The Laic representative said that secularisation is equal to modernisation. He said that 'secular society' is the same as 'modern society' and claimed that 'religion is in contradiction to science' (T04LAIC). There were also participants who did not express any views about secularisation, but they stated that the State should secure the freedom of every citizen whether religious or not (T09ERI; T11A2; T07ESWU).

Yet for the majority of the Turkish participants, secularisation was a problem that should be tackled and they argued that religious education should counter this problem. This brings us to another issue, that is, whether Turkish society is a religious or secular society according to the participants.

5.3.1.5. Turkish Society

Regarding religious beliefs and practices, almost all my participants claimed that the overwhelming majority of the Turkish society is religious. For example, the Religious Affairs representative said that

> Seventy-one per cent of Turkish people defined themselves as *very religious*. This figure is quite high comparing to the West. This shows that secularisation (…) had a limited effect on the Turkish society. (T01PRA) (emphasis added).

Moreover, some participants claimed that even people who define themselves as non-believers actually have Islamic beliefs and practices (T08TEU).

However, some participants, as seen above, claimed that even though people define themselves religious, this is an 'unnatural' (T07ESWU), 'state' (T07ESWU) 'hollowed-out' religiosity (T12A3; T17S2) or that people who define themselves as religious live a secular lifestyle (T14A5; T20T3). So for these participants, even though the society claimed to be religious, it is not 'real' religiosity.

Some participants pointed to the existence of non-believers in the society but only the Atheism Association argued that there has been a rise in the number of people who define themselves as non-believers; 'Something we have observed lately is that many of our Muslim friends have either converted to atheism, deism or agnosticism' (Aytulu, 2015), but they argued that there is perceivable 'community' or 'state pressure', therefore many of them

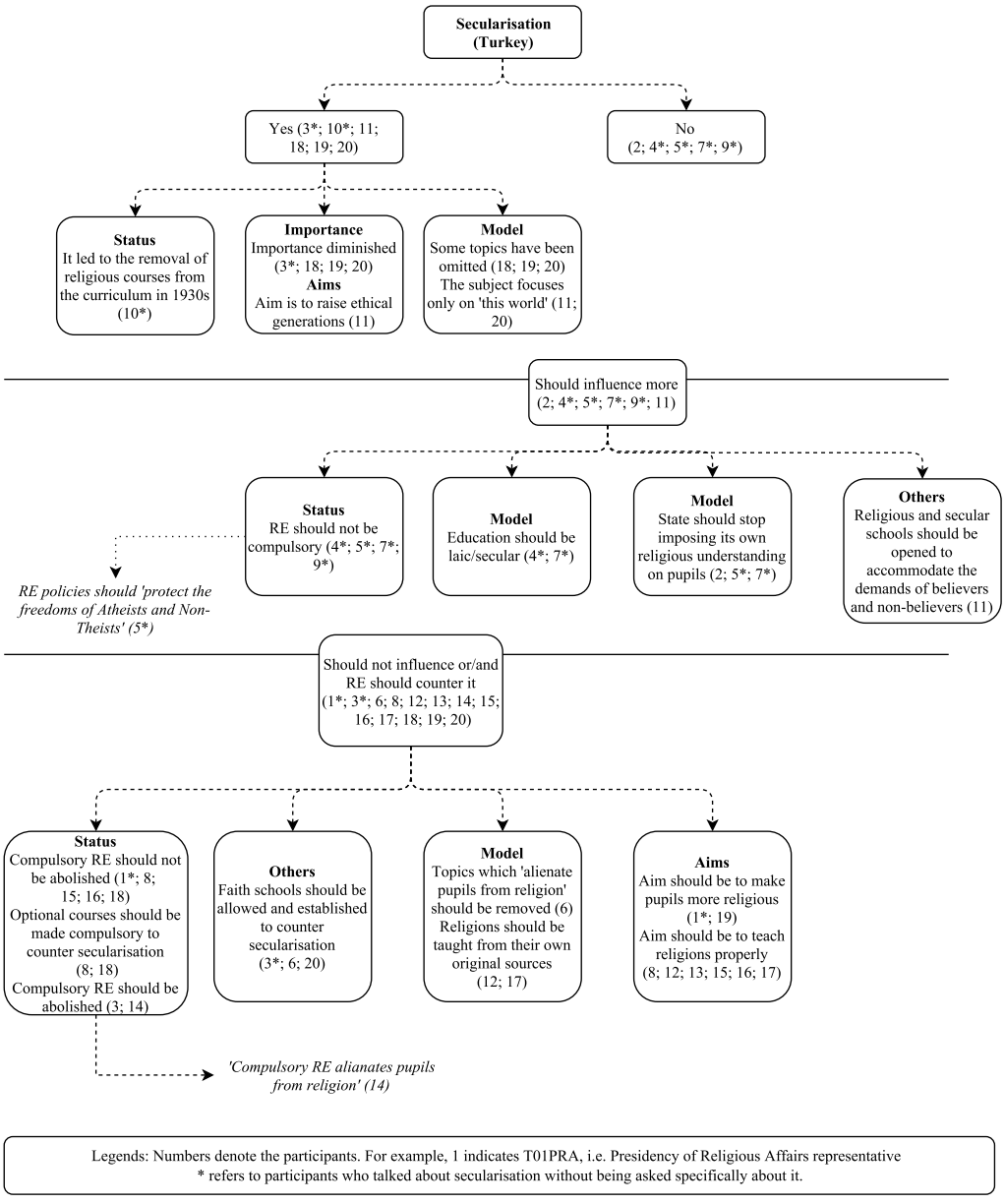
> do not even want to confess [they are Atheists], because they are scared to lose their job, they are scared to have trouble with their family as well. (Jones, 2015)

5.3.1.6. Influence

Six participants claimed that secularisation influenced official policy. For example, four participants argued that due to secularisation, the subject has a low status in the eyes of the State and society (T03CHR; T18T1; T19T2; T20T3). Interestingly three out of four of these participants were teachers who felt that neither families and children nor state officials gave enough importance to the subject.

As can be seen in Display 5.4. below the majority of the participants argued that secularisation should not influence the subject. Some even argued that religious education and schools should counter this trend. The Religious Affairs representative said that the compulsory religious education course should 'raise generations in light of the ethical principles of the Qur'an and Sunnah' (T01PRA). Academic 6 said that the more pupils

receive religious education, the less they commit crimes and unlawful things. He said that this is why the State made religious education compulsory, and this compulsion should continue to prevent children from moral degeneration (T15A6). Likewise, State Official 1 said that when children do not receive enough religious education, they become alienated from religion. Therefore, the State should offer more religious courses (T16S1).



Display 5.4 Secularisation and religious education policy in Turkey.

An important finding is that sometimes the participants offered the same solutions but with different expectations. For example, Academic 5 argued that religious education should be a voluntary subject, because compulsion 'alienates pupils from religion' (T14A5). So, for him the abolition of compulsory religious education would help religion in the long-term. In contrast, four participants who demanded the abolition of the compulsory religious education, saw this step as a way of accommodating differences, so that those who do not have belief would be protected from confessional religious education.

In conclusion, the Turkish participants mentioned different aspects of secularisation and had different opinions about secularisation, the majority seeing it as a negative development, something that religious education should counter. Regarding the official policy, only six participants claimed that it had an impact and this was seen as a negative impact.

5.3.2. England

In England, 13 participants talked about secularisation without being asked and almost all the participants agreed that secularisation had an impact on religious education policy in England. This might be an indicator that secularisation is a factor in religious education policy in England.

5.3.2.1. How was secularisation understood?

Like in Turkey, in England 17 participants talked about individual secularisation, by which they meant the decline in religious beliefs and practices. The BHA representative and NSS documents provided statistics that showed, according to them, religious practices and beliefs have plummeted dramatically (E04BHA; E05NSS). In my sample, the Christian Representatives also accepted this. They argued that there is a decline in religious practices and beliefs: church attendance and membership decreased over time (E01ANG1;

E02ANG2; E03CATH). However, there was a stark difference between what the secular and religious participants understood by individual secularisation (see the section 'English Society' below).

Moreover, some participants saw secularisation as privatisation or marginalisation. State Official 2 said that 'I suppose religion became increasingly privatised, personal matter rather than having a role in society' (E19S2; also, E11NATRE). This can be called privatisation of religion. Other participants talked about, what we can call the 'marginalisation of religion'. State Official 1 called it 'programmatic secularism' which 'refers to something deeper and more inimical to religions which is to try and make them invisible in public spaces' (E18S1; also, E14A1). For State Official 1, this is the aim of a small minority, but Anglican Representative 2 stressed that this is already the belief of public institutions:

> our public institutions believe that the only way you can deal with faith in the modern world is (…) to push it out (…). They find it very difficult to handle faith. (E02ANG2; also E17A4).

The Sunni representative went one step further and argued that this has already happened in England as in Europe: 'religion, through political power, has been confined to the private domain' (E07SUNNI). So, for him religion has already been pushed out.

Secularisation was also understood as having an institutional dimension. Some participants saw it as the decline of religious authority. Anglican Representative 2 argued that the authority of the priest has 'collapsed catastrophically', and she argued this was partly because of the inner problems such as 'child abuse stuff' and partly because the congregations 'are much more educated than they used to be' (E02ANG2). However, the BHA representative argued that despite the loss of the power of religious authority over the society, the religious organisations still have disproportionate influence over some social

issues such as education (E04BHA). For him, religious organisations should not have this influence.

The participants also talked about differentiation. The REC representative said that the State and the law are 'not guided by religious teaching' any more (E12REC). Academic 2 saw this an independence from Churches and 'a blessed relief' by which 'religious education could be managed by educational ideals and principles' (E15A2).

It emerged from the data that the understanding of secularisation differed markedly from participant to participant and this is clearly revealed well when the issue comes of how to label English society: is it 'secular', 'religious' or 'both mixed together'?

5.3.2.2. English Society

The Humanist Representative argued that England is an 'extremely secular country' (E04BHA) and the NSS document stated that Britain is one of the 'least religious countries in the world' (National Secular Society, 2013: 1). For them the country is secular in terms of religious practice, belief and the importance of religion. Some participants did not use terms like 'extremely secular' but still argued that England has a secular society. The Jewish, Sunni and Shia Muslim representatives argued that English society is a secular society (E06JEW; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA). They also argued that Jewish and Muslim societies also became secularised in England. For example, the Jewish representative said that Jews living in England are 'highly' secular (E06JEW). Moreover, Academic 1 argued that 'we experience secularity in this country, you know. Whether you are religious or not, it is there. This is the case everywhere' (E14A1).

However, for others the English society is 'mixed' (E01ANG1), or the evidence is 'mixed' (E09AULRE); 'complicated' (E09AULRE; E18S1); 'complex' (E01ANG1; E15A2);

'polarised' (E10NASACRE); or 'disputed' (E15A2), as State Official 1 said, 'whether it is [a] secular society is very complicated' (E18S1). These participants accepted that secularisation has increased in England at least in terms of self-identification as 'non-religious' and the decrease in religious practices, but they maintained that the majority of people still hold religious beliefs, despite their self-identification with non-religion. Teacher 1 argued that in his classroom, lots of pupils

> would say they are atheists (…) I do not think they necessarily are (…) When you look at their value systems, world views, you would identify them as either Christian or post-Christian but they would reject that because they do not self-identify with those institutions (T20T1).

This is also an important debate in academia, some argued that we need caution in interpreting 'self-identification' figures (Guest, Olson and Wolffe, 2012; Woodhead and Catto, 2012). Moreover, some participants argued that English society is still nominally Christian: some said that 'this country is [a] broadly Christian country' (E20T1); 'people are still formally Christian' (E21T2); 'they are nominally Christian' (E02ANG2); 'there is sort of [a] cultural Christianity' (E01ANG1); 'a broadly Christian-based culture remains dominant' (E16A3). These participants accept that there has been secularisation, especially individual secularisation, but they do not see English society as thoroughly secular. Rather they see persistence of faith in society in the face of secularisation. As can be seen, the same society is seen differently by different participants. For some it is 'extremely secular', while for some it is still 'nominally Christian'. A comparison between Humanist Representative and Anglican Representative 1 is useful here.

Hypothetical Questions	Anglican representative 1 (E01ANG1)	British Humanist Association representative (E04BHA)
Future of religion: is religion dying away?	'There was actually a reverse'. 'Christianity is growing in Africa'.	'(E)very generation becomes more non-religious'. 'If we had not had immigration, religion would have been dead in this country (…) Full stop.'
Is complete secularisation possible?	'People are inconsistent in their beliefs'. 'There are no atheists in foxholes'.	'Seventy percent said they are not religious, even on a cultural identity measure'.
Is England secular?	'We are not highly religious, but neither are we highly secularised' 'There is sort of [a] cultural Christianity'	'Britain is extremely secular country'.
Cultural Christianity or Cultural Atheism?	'Even secular people have a certain amount of Christian tradition.'	'Even religious people in Britain live a very secular life.'
Is secularisation exaggerated?	There is 'over-emphasis of secularisation'	No. In contrast, there is 'exaggeration' of the importance of religion.

Display 5.5 A comparison of the views of Anglican 1 and BHA representatives about secularisation.

Display 5.5 above compares Anglican 1 and BHA representatives' views on secularisation. As can be seen even though both participants accepted that there is secularisation, they saw it differently and this translated into their views on religious education policy. An obvious difference is that Anglican 1 representative supported current policy arrangements which gives Christianity and religions a lion's share, while the BHA representative opposed them, arguing that religion is a minority activity in Britain.

5.3.2.3. ‘Secularisation is contestable now’ (E18S1)

As can be seen, the majority of participants accepted that there is some sort of secularisation, but they also expressed their doubts about secularisation theory. State Official 1 in England argued that ‘secularisation is contestable now’. This seemed true at least among participants of this study. For example, a significant number of participants were critical of secularisation theory. They argued that secularisation theory predicted that religions would die away, but they argued that they have not. The AULRE representative argued that ‘religion has not disappeared, as some secularists predicted’ (E09AULRE, also E11NATRE). State Official 1 said that ‘religion does not seem to be disappearing. Secularisation is contestable now’ (E18S1; also, E08SHIA; E01ANG1; E02ANG2). There were also doubts over surveys, the Catholic representative said that ‘you can’t measure faith’ (E03CATH). Moreover, some participants noted the way people articulate their faith has also changed. The NASACRE representative argued that:

> In the past to define oneself as Catholic would mean you would go to mass every Sunday (…). Younger Catholics feel themselves equally committed to religion but that commitment is expressed in different ways, for them being a committed Catholic is not about going to mass every Sunday, it is about going to mass many Sundays, but not every time, but it is also about things like making a moral choice about where you shop for your food and what you buy. (E10NASACRE).

Furthermore, some participants expressed alternative explanations to secularisation. For example, Anglican Representative 2 said that what we are witnessing is ‘a big social shift’: ‘the notion of membership has disappeared; political parties are the same’. For her, rather than ‘secularisation’, there is ‘individualisation’, which affects almost every aspect of life, not only religion (E02ANG2). Anglican Representative 1 said that people ‘are inconsistent in their beliefs’. He reminded me of a saying ‘there are no atheists in foxholes’ arguing that:

> there is a well-known sociological survey finding that in time of trouble, people say that they pray to a God, who in an earlier question said they do not believe. People are inconsistent in their own personal positions (E01ANG1).

Moreover, some participants argued that people turn to religion at key moments of their life (E02ANG2; E09AULRE; E10NASACRE), while others argued that Secular and Humanist groups have always been 'quite small' (E15A2).

5.3.2.4. Views

A significant number of participants criticised, what we can call, secularisation theories, but there were also participants who criticised secularisation itself. For example, the Jewish representative said that people overlook the 'wisdom' brought by religions and this leads to problems such as 'alcohol' and 'lack of 'modesty' (E06JEW). Secularisation was associated with 'materialism' by four participants: two religious representatives and two academics (E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E16A3; E17A4). For example, the Shia representative said that even though people claim to have beliefs, there has been a denial of the 'soul' and 'hereafter' which reduces the whole life to this material world (E08SHIA).

There were also criticisms of institutional secularisation. The Sunni representative criticised Christians who 'happily accepted' the dichotomy between sacred and secular. He claimed that from the Islamic point of view, there is no such thing as the fragmentation between sacred and secular (E07SUNNI) However, the AULRE representative, without knowing that Sunni participant made such a comment, criticised such overgeneralisations, arguing that the relation between religion and the State is much more complex, and that there were also 'Christian movements [like Islamic movements], who tried to control the State' (E09AULRE). Moreover, marginalisation of religion by the State and politicians were also criticised by some participants (E02ANG2; E16A3; A17A4).

However, the majority of the participants in England did not express negative views about secularisation. Moreover, some participants saw secularisation as a positive development. The BHA representative said that people choose to leave religion when education 'lifts [their] head from narrow to the wide' (E04BHA). Moreover, some participants saw the divide between sacred and secular (or public and private) as a positive development. Academic 2 called it 'secularity' and argued that it 'is a blessed relief' (E15A2).

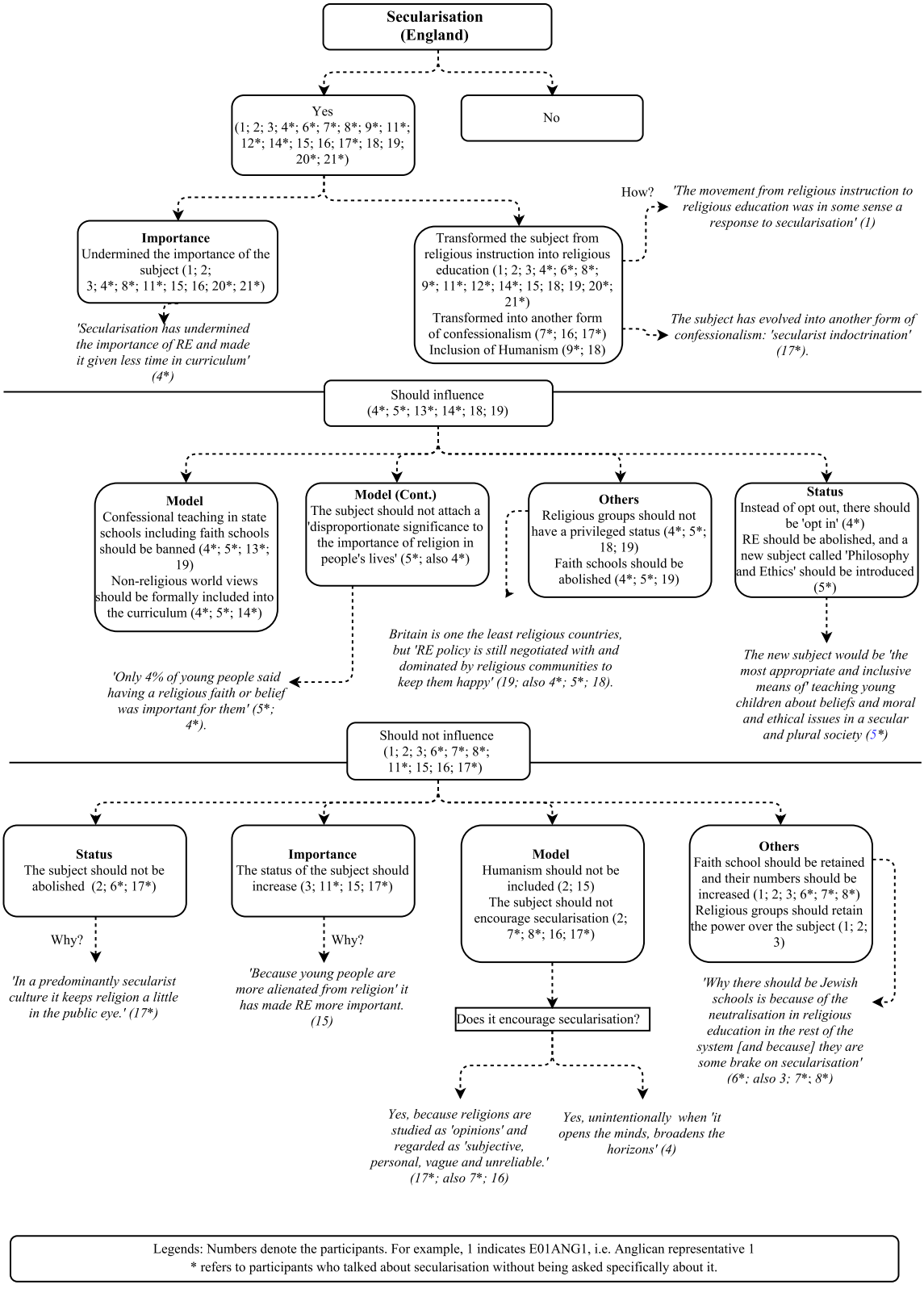
The difference of opinions regarding secularisation can be well seen in the example below. The Sunni representative seemed the fiercest opponent of secularisation. He said that 'secularization is a belief in the idea that there is no truth coming from the transcendental source' (E07SUNNI). For him secularisation is anti-religious. However, Teacher 1 put it in a different perspective: 'the idea of being secular is that there is no one religious perspective which is dominating' (E20T1). So, for him, secularisation of religious education is something that accommodates differences within society and helps religious education to present different religions objectively.

This example also shows that secularisation was used to mean different things by the same participants. For example, like Teacher 1, a significant number of participants used 'secularisation of religious education' to mean non-confessional religious education, which means that religions are presented objectively in RE classes and they are not under the control of the church (see Hull, 2003), but when these participants used 'secularisation' to describe society, they used it to mean the decrease in religious beliefs and practices. Moreover, some participants used secularisation and secularism interchangeably (E02ANG2; E03CATH; E07SUNNI; E09AULRE; E16A3; E17A4; E18S1). For example, the Sunni representative saw secularisation and secularism as closely related to each other (E07SUNNI).

5.3.2.5. Influence

Regarding the official religious education policy, almost all the participants agreed that secularisation had an impact on the subject, especially influencing the content and model of religious education. It is seen in Display 5.6 below that the way the participants see the society influences their position on religious education policy. For example, two secular representatives and two state officials argued that religious groups should not have a privileged status over the subject (E04BHA; E05NSS; E18S1; E19S2), because, they argued, Britain is one of the least religious countries in the world. However, Christian representatives argued that religious groups should retain the power, because England is still 'nominally' or 'culturally' Christian (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E5CATH). For example, the Catholic representative said that

> from our point of view, this county has by its nature Christian roots and those roots need to be understood, even in community schools. (E03CATH)



Display 5.6 Secularisation and religious education policy in England.

Moreover, five participants argued that the subject intentionally or unintentionally encourages secularisation, partly because its approach to religion (E02ANG2; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E16A3; E17A4; see the Charge of Confessionality). So for them, since the subject misinterprets and misrepresents religion (or in some cases being openly anti-religious as argued by the Sunni representative) it *implicitly or explicitly* encourages secularisation. However, the BHA representative argued that current religious education does not aim at making pupils more secular, but it has a 'secularising effect' when it 'opens the minds [and] broadens the horizons' (E04BHA). So for him, 'objective' religious education would liberate children and open up the possibility of further secularisation.

Then, is secularisation a factor influencing religious education policy in England? According to the accounts of the participants, it seems that it is a factor shaping religious education policy in England.

5.3.3. Comparison

In both countries, the participants were informed by secularisation. Moreover, as the literature claims (Berger, 1967; Casanova, 1994; Davie, 2007; Dobbelaere, 1981; Keddie, 2003; Tschannen, 1991; Wilson, 1985), secularisation was understood in a wide variety of ways by the participants. Secularisation meant different things to different participants.

Dinham (2015: 20) argued British people are 'ambivalent at best about religion and belief' (see also Copley, 2008; Copley, Freathy and Walshe, 2004: 11; Wright, 1993: 10). The findings suggest that there is also ambivalence about secularisation among my participants, which might be related to ambivalence about religion. If we look at the interviews, it is extremely difficult to reach a consensus about what secularisation is, how much secularisation there is, what secularisation looks like and more importantly, what to do about

secularisation vis-a-vis religious education policy. These ambivalences and disagreements remind us of similar debates held in the literature on secularisation (see 2.6.2 above).

One might ask why there were such controversies around secularisation, especially regarding how much secularisation there is. One reason might be that surveys and sources about secularisation say different things (Dinham, 2015: 25). My participants, especially in England, used and cited different sources to support their claims. Moreover, there is another reason that might be more telling. The deeply held worldviews and beliefs of the participants mattered (see Everington, 2016: 182). For example, possibly Turkish society is secular, but most policy actors I interviewed, saw secularisation negatively. Probably because of this Turkish religious education policy has an 'idealistic' stance (Felderhof, Thompson and Torevell, 2007) towards individual secularisation, and denounces it (see 6.3 below). Some participants criticised this. For example, the Laic representative argued that '*habis*' (evil) politicians allow religion, particularly Sunni Islam, to dominate the subject despite laicism and diversity within society, which hinders the advance of secularisation in Turkey (T04LAIC).

One issue is that in both countries, there were participants who mixed secularisation and secularism, even though some commentators warn us not to do so (Berkes, 1964; Casanova, 2007, 2009; Wilson, 1985: 11; 1987: 159). It means that there are policy actors who see these two as related and even going hand in hand.

One of the similarities is that participants were aware of different dimensions of secularisation, such as individual and societal (see above), but most participants in both countries understood secularisation as 'individual' secularisation, i.e. the decline in beliefs and practices. According to Casanova (2006: 7), secularisation as the decline of religious beliefs and practices is the most recent but at the same time the most widespread usage of

the term. Among my participants too, secularisation is mostly understood as the decline in religious beliefs and values.

From the views of participants, it can be detected that majority of Turkish participants saw Turkish society as a religious society, though some described it as a 'fake' religiosity, or some pointed to the rise of atheism (e.g. T05ATH), while in England almost all participants acknowledged that there is secularisation in England, even though there is no consensus on how much secularisation there is. This is an important dissimilarity, which indicates that secularisation is manifested differently in different contexts (Berger, 1999a; Berger, Davie and Fokas, 2008).

Moreover, another main difference between Turkish and English participants was that the majority of Turkish participants saw secularisation as a problem to be tackled. In Turkey, many participants openly expressed 'negative' views about secularisation. In England, those who expressed openly negative views about secularisation constituted the minority, but it was apparent that most participants criticised 'the secularisation theory', especially its prediction that religions would die away.

Moreover, in Turkey some participants who had negative attitudes towards secularisation associated secularisation with the West (seven participants) some even suggesting that it is the project of the 'West' (T03CHR; T08TEU). In England, no participant associated secularisation with Europe/West or argued that it is the project of Europe. However, as can be seen in the previous section and in this section, there were participants in England who criticised the European policies for being 'too secular'. Even though these participants did not say that secularisation is something that came from the West/Europe, they seem to argue that the European policies might further secularise religious education, education and then society. A further difference between England and Turkey was that according to the majority

of the participants, secularisation has dramatically shaped official religious education policy in England, but in Turkey, only six participants argued that it has made some impact.

In conclusion, secularisation was seen an important factor shaping religious education policy in England. In Turkey, only small number of participants claimed that it had an influence on official policy, but in both countries, the participants saw and interpreted secularisation differently, and this influenced their views on the relationship between secularisation and religious education policy.

5.4. Pluralisation

In this section, whether pluralisation is a factor influencing religious education policy in England and Turkey will be explored.

5.4.1. Turkey

Eleven Turkish participants talked about plurality without them being directly asked about it. Moreover, all the participants agreed that Turkish society is a plural society, but plurality meant different things to them, and these differences have had an impact on the way they see influence of pluralisation on religious education policy.

5.4.1.1. How was plurality understood?

Plurality was understood as an observable religious diversity manifesting itself in different religious communities such as Muslims, Christians and Jews. It was therefore often associated with religious minorities. 'Religious minorities' is a 'legal' term in Turkey and only certain groups can be labelled as 'minorities'. Under the frames of the Lausanne Treaty, the Greek Orthodox Christians, Armenian Orthodox Christians and Jews were formally

acknowledged as religious minorities by Turkish law. All participants accepted that there are non-Muslims as well as Muslims living in Turkey, therefore Turkish society is a plural society.

An area of dispute among participants was whether Alevism is a 'religious order' or a distinct form of Islam or a different faith. Even though I did not enquire about the nature of Alevi faith in the interviews, the views regarding the nature of Alevi faith were expressed spontaneously by some participants. Eight participants (T01PRA; T06ETU; T08TEU; T10A1; T15A6; T16S1; T18T1; T20T3) argued that Alevism is a religious order, *a sufi tariqah*, within Islam. A *tariqah* is not regarded as a denomination in Turkey, therefore most, if not all, *tariqahs* label themselves as Sunni, or as Muslim. When the Alevis are accepted as a religious order, then they are within the frame of Islam. For example, the Religious Affairs representative said that 'Alevism is not a path separate from Islam' (T01PRA). This has been also the official view of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Hürriyet, 2014). Similarly, State Official 1 argued that Alevism 'is a religious order within the frame of Islam' (T16S1). Yet, five participants (T03CHR; T04LAIC; T07ESWU; T12A3; T17S2) said that Alevism should be understood as how Alevis define themselves, rather than as defined and assessed by the State.

The Alevi representative did not specifically talk about the nature of Alevi faith in the interview, but from some of his statements, it seems to me that Alevism is a heterodox faith. I checked the participant's organisation's website to find out information about the issue. In the website, regarding the Alevi faith, there was one article: Mélikoff ([1998] 2005)'s article on Alevi faith, in which Alevi faith was described as 'heterodox' and 'syncretic'. Mélikoff ([1998] 2005: 7) argued that

> [Alevi faith] contain[s] elements from different origins, belonging to religions with which the Turkic people have been in contact: Buddhism, Manicheism, Nestorian or local Christianity.

From this, it is understood that Alevism is not simply a religious order. It is rather a distinct faith system. However, the literature on this issue warns us that there is no one definition of Alevi faith on which all Alevis could agree (Hurd, 2015: 87; Massicard, 2013: 4), which is the case for almost all faiths.

Even though this research is not about how to define Alevi faith, this debate has a direct bearing on the policy of religious education, because religious education is compulsory for Muslims in Turkey. It means that if the Alevis are assessed as an Islamic religious order, they then must constitutionally take the course and they cannot enjoy the right to withdraw from religious education, granted to non-Muslims. However, when the Alevi faith is assessed as a distinct faith that has elements from a diversity of religions, then Alevi children should be also exempted from religious courses. For example, in the case of *Hasan and Eylem Zengin v. Turkey*, the applicant argued that 'Alevism is a belief or philosophy influenced by other cultures, religions and philosophies' (ECtHR, 2007b, 9) and alleged that 'no teaching was given on his own faith' in religious courses (ECtHR, 2007b, 12).

Furthermore, another area of dispute was whether non-believers, e.g. Atheists, Deists and Agnostics should be regarded as a legitimate religious group. The debate here is not about whether or not there are non-believers in Turkey, but about whether the State should see them as a distinct religious (secular) group and thereby accommodate their needs by making some changes to religious education policy. Some participants argued that the State should make changes to accommodate the needs and desires of people who distanced from religion (see Secularisation).

So far, plurality has been discussed as what some call, traditional religious and secular diversity. However, some participants (T07ESWU; T11A2; T12A3; T17S2; T19T2) understood plurality as an increasing diversity, which manifests itself not only in the presence of different religious communities but also in the presence of individual diversity. This can be called modern or individual plurality. Academic 2 said that society has been pluralising: 'society has become even more heterogeneous' and 'the State should focus on the rights of individuals rather than those of groups (T11A2). Similarly, the Education and Science Workers' Union representative said that the State accepts religions and denominations as uniformed entities, but there are differences within them (T07ESWU).

5.4.1.2. Views

It should be noted that, as opposed to secularisation, none of the participants openly said that they see plurality negatively, rather the participants had expressed positive views about plurality. However, from the statements of some participants, it was clear that they did not see every diversity positively.

For example, the Religious Affair representative said that religions, especially Islam should be taught from their original sources, 'otherwise completely different beliefs emerge' (T01PRA). The Religious Affairs representative expressed these views when he was talking about the Alevi faith. According to him, Alevism was originally a part of Islam, but due to 'ignorance', some Alevis came to accept that it is a different faith, and for him this was a negative development (T01PRA). Some participants also expressed their disapproval of 'divergent faiths' (T06ETU; T08TEU; T16S1). When prompted, they said what they oppose is 'the radical and fundamental beliefs', which lead to increasing fundamentalism, terrorism and intolerance.

What is more, two participants accused the West of sowing divisions and hatred within society by fuelling sectarian splits in Turkey (T08TEU; T16S1). However, other participants stressed that plurality is something that should be valued. Some participants (T11A2; T12A3; T17S2) even argued that plurality is 'the will of Allah' and therefore an integral part of Islam (see Aslan, 2016 on this issue).

5.4.1.3. Turkish Society

All the participants agreed that Turkish society is a plural society, but what they understood by plurality differed markedly and these differences influenced their stances on religious education policy. For example, both the Atheism Association and Academic 4 argued that Turkey has a plural society, but Academic 4 also added that the vast majority of Turkish people still adhere to Islam; '98 per cent of the population' is Muslim, he said (T13A4). This was challenged by the Atheism Association who argued that the number ignores Atheists, Alevis and nominal Muslims (T05ATH). Some participants made a comparison with the West. Academic 2 said that Turkey still has a homogenous religious population compared to the West (T11A2).

As mentioned in the Secularisation section, some participants argued that there are barriers against pluralism in Turkey. The Christian representative lamented that Turkey used to have a more plural society in the past, but the number of Christians shrunk over time due to, inter alia, the State policies towards minorities (T03CHR). The Alevi representative said that the State 'assesses the legitimacy of religious beliefs'; acting as if it is a 'religious' authority and it does not approve some beliefs as 'legitimate' or 'authentic'. Hence the State does not recognise the plurality and thereby it harms plurality within society (T02ALEVI; also, T04LAIC; T05ATH; T07ESWU).

According to above participants this also leads to social pressure against plurality, which makes 'being different' a difficulty to bear in Turkey. The ESWU representative said that there is 'a community pressure', which makes the life difficult for those who are 'different' from what the State sees as 'legitimate' religious understanding (T07ESWU). The Alevi representative said that this pressure actually comes from the State, so it should be called a 'state pressure'. He recalled his own personal experience:

> When we moved to city, the first thing our parents told us was that 'never tell anybody that you had come from [the name of the town]'. They said this because our town had 98 per cent Alevi population, so if we had told our town, people would have recognised that we were Alevis. (T02ALEVI)

These participants argued that there is a hostility towards people who are different from what the State and society see as 'legitimate' religious understanding. Interestingly, according to Pew (2011: 4), as few as five per cent of the Turkish population expressed positive views about Christians and Jews. The Christian representative confirmed this, arguing that there is a 'difficulty of being Armenian, Greek and Jewish' in Turkey, which stems from history and state policies' (T03CHR).

The Christian representative said that some segments of society and the State still see minorities as the 'collaborators' of Western powers and he gave one interesting example: the ministry that deals with minority issues is still 'the Foreign Ministry', not 'the Interior Ministry' in Turkey, which shows, according to the participant, that minorities are seen as a threat and they are not seen as the citizens of Turkey. He said that in Turkey 'non-Muslim means non-citizen', but he also acknowledged that Muslims are also suffering under the state policies (T03CHR). In a similar vein, the Atheism Association stated that there is a discrimination against Atheists in the law and within the society. Regarding the law, they argued

> there is a double standard in Turkey, when an Atheist insults a Muslim, s/he is punished, but when a Muslim insults an Atheist s/he is applauded. (Association of Atheism, 2014b: 4).

Concerning society, they said:

> Atheists face hostilities (…) people do not even want to confess [they are Atheists], because they are scared to lose their job, they are scared to have trouble with their family as well. (Jones, 2015)

However, some participants noted that the Muslim majority has also been facing discrimination. The Educators Trade Union representative said that the Muslim majority is also facing problems concerning religious freedoms in Turkey such as the ban on the Islamic headscarf and beard. He said that even today, it is not possible for certain civil servants to wear the headscarf (T06ETU). The Christian representative also highlighted this issue, arguing that overall being religious is difficult in Turkey. There is a community pressure against religious people. He gave an example from his own community:

> There is hypocrisy. Let me give you an example from my community. [People would say] the Church is very important; it is our life etc., [but] when a young person decides to become a priest, everybody would stand against him [laughs]. When I decided to become a priest - meanwhile, my father and mother were religious people, they brought me to the church – my mother became ill, my father objected to my decision, because I was studying electronic engineering at [the name of the university], it was seen more prestigious. (T03CHR)

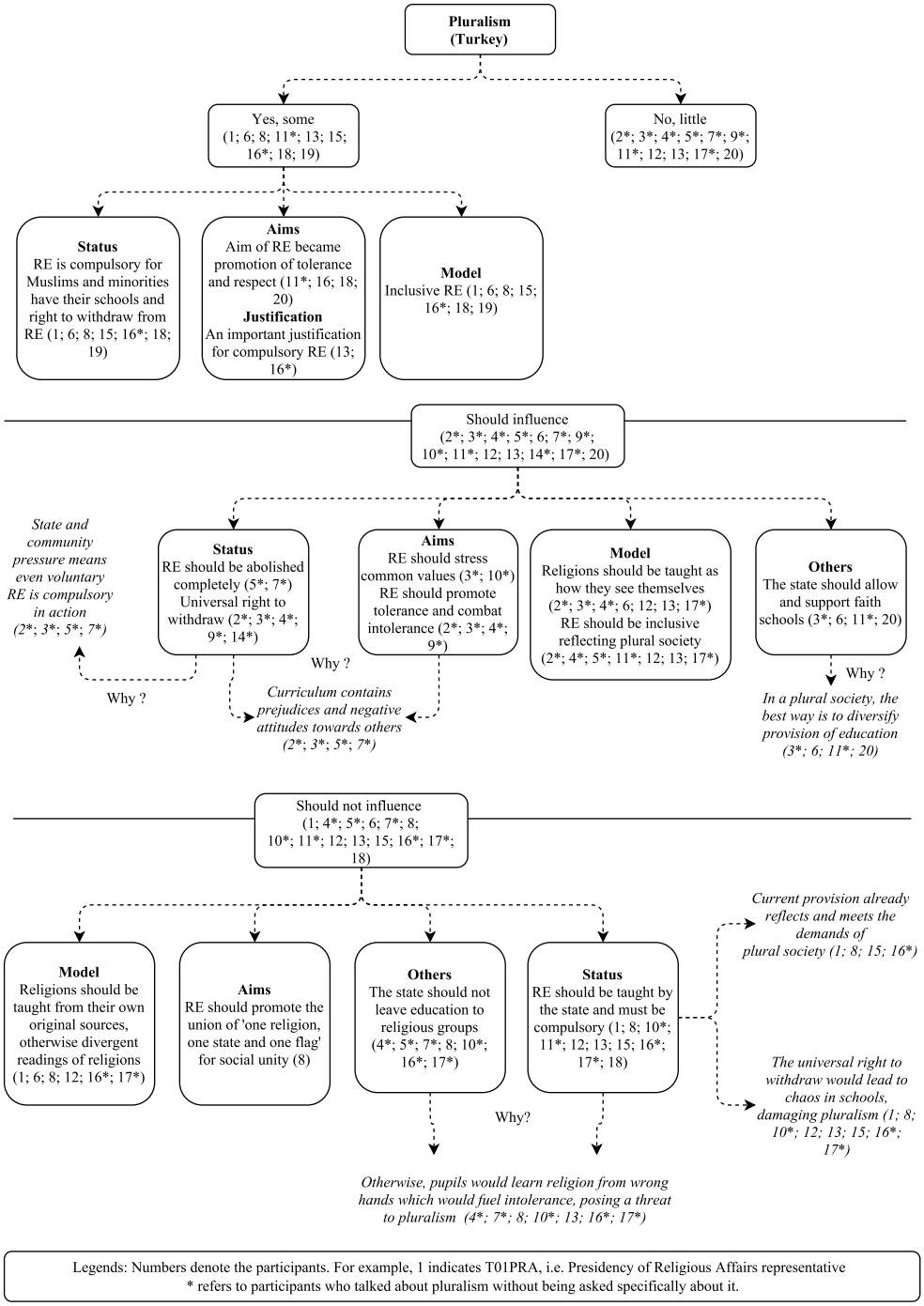
Moreover, Academics 1, 2 and 5 argued that in Turkey, since its inception, the State has been trying to create a new nation based on a single national culture, which has a single 'tamed' religion, and this has led to the oppression of differences and all religious groups including the majority have suffered by this oppression (T10A1; T11A2; T14A5). Yet, some participants acknowledged that the current conservative government has been taking steps to accommodate the wishes and demands of conservative (i.e. Sunni) people, but the

government is slow to accommodate the needs and demands of non-Sunnis (e.g. T11A2; T13A4).

5.4.1.4. Influence

The way participants saw plurality has influenced their interpretations of religious education policy in the face of plurality. As can be seen in the Display 5.7 below, there are different views about plurality's influence on religious education policy.

As stated above, all the participants saw Turkish society as plural, but they still differed as to whether plurality has influenced religious education policy or not. The status of the subject is a good case in point. According to some participants, plurality within society has already influenced the status of the subject, because the subject is compulsory only to Muslims, meaning that non-Muslims (read Christians and Jews) have a right to withdraw from the subject, whereby the subject respects the rights and freedoms of non-Muslims and what is more Christians and Jews have a right to establish their own schools where they can offer their own doctrinal religious education, which is not the case for Muslims (T01PRA; T06ETU; T08TEU; T15A6; T16S1; T18T1; T19T2). For these participants, plurality has decisively influenced religious education policy in this issue. However, some participants saw this as a rather limited respect for plurality, which ignores wider plurality within society, particularly Alevis, non-theists, and those who do not want to receive religious education from the State (T03CHR; T04LAIC; T05ATH; T07ESWU; T09ERI; T11A2; T14A5). The Atheism Association lamented that with this limited opt out possibility, the State 'dictates what or who constitutes as a valid and/or legitimate religious body or philosophical view' (Association of Atheism, 2014b: 8).



Display 5.7 Pluralisation and religious education policy in Turkey.

Another fault line can be observed on the issue of faith schools. In Turkey, it is illegal to establish schools with a religious character, but some participants argued that in plural societies, the best way to accommodate diversity is to diversify education and religious education provisions (T03CHR; T06ETU; T11A2; T20T3), others saw this as a dangerous

step. The latter camp argued that this would lead pupils to learn religion from 'wrong hands' which would fuel intolerance and dogmatic readings of religion and this would pose a threat to plurality (T04LAIC; T07ESWU; T08TEU; T10A1; T13A4; T16S1; T17S2). For both camps, the aim was to protect plurality, but there was no agreement as to how to achieve it.

As can be seen there is no consensus among participants regarding the influence of plurality in religious education policy, and this was partly because of their different interpretations of what constitutes plurality. Is a plurality a factor in religious education policy? For some it has already been a factor, but for others it is a candidate for being a factor in religious education policy.

5.4.2. England

In England, 17 participants talked about plurality without being specifically asked about it, which reveals that according to the participants, plurality is an important factor in religious education policy in England. All participants saw British society as religiously plural society. Moreover, they claimed that plurality has influenced official religious education policy; this influence was criticised by some, but found insufficient by others.

5.4.2.1. How was plurality understood?

Like Turkey, when the participants talked about plurality, the first thing that came to their minds was what we can call institutional/traditional plurality. Plurality was understood as an observable cultural/religious diversity manifesting itself in different religious communities such as Christians, Muslims, Jews and Hindus. Therefore, it was mostly associated with immigration. For example, Anglican Representative 2 said that the factors behind the changes in religious education were 'two fold': 'one came from a changing demographic in this country', that is, 'how to cope with children who came from other faith

backgrounds' (E02ANG2). Yet, some participants noted that Britain had already been plural before the arrival of the immigrants (early diversity). For example, the AULRE representative said that 'England has always been a mixture' (E09AULRE).

Plurality was also understood as modern/individual plurality (E02ANG2; E03CATH; E04BHA; E05NSS; E06JEW; E09AULRE; E10NASACRE; E13ACC; E14A1; E18S1; E21T2). State Official 1 said that there has been 'interior religious pluralisation' that is 'pluralisation is happening within religious communities [for example] over the issues of sexuality' (E18S1). Academic 1 made a distinction between 'organised world views' which can be understood as traditional plurality and 'personal world views' which can denote modern plurality (E14A1).

Moreover, plurality was also understood as a normative stance, i.e. pluralism (E03CATH; E07SUNNI; E11NATRE). The NATRE representative said 'there is also philosophical pluralism [which] is the recognition that there are variety of ways of shaping reality' (E11NATRE).

5.4.2.2. Views

Most of the participants had positive attitudes towards plurality. Some said that plurality created a 'wonderful educational laboratory' (E15A2) or some participants argued that it 'helped the boost of the whole religious dimension in this country' (E01ANG1). However, it was normative pluralism that attracted criticisms from two participants: the Catholic and Sunni representatives. The Sunni representative said that

> the idealisation of pluralism presumes the absence of one truth which is contrary to what the Qur'an is teaching which is based on the unity of God and of religion. Allah only accepts Islam, not pluralism. (E07SUNNI)

Similarly, the Catholic representative criticised pluralism for being 'relativist': 'they say that some people believe that God exists, and some do not and both are right [laughs]' (E03CATH). Apart from these two criticisms, some participants argued that pluralism should have its limits. These participants claimed that for the sake of community cohesion, religious education lost its critical stance, which results in avoidance of criticism and scrutiny of some problematic religious issues (e.g. E21T2).

5.4.2.3. English society

The participants saw English society as a plural society. For example, the state officials said that 'we accept the fact that there is plurality' (E19S2) and 'we can say that it is a plural society' (E18S1). Some participants shared their own encounter with plurality. These participants were either teachers at the time of interviews or had been teachers beforehand (E10NASACRE; E11NATRE; E12REC; E14A1; E15A2; E20T1; E21T2). For example, Teacher 2 said that the school she has worked in had children who 'come from different socio-economic, faith and cultural backgrounds' (E21T2).

However, some participants added that despite the plurality, 'a broadly Christian-based culture remains dominant' (E16A3). The Christian representatives especially stressed this and argued that, because of this, Christianity should be the 'main motif all the way through' in religious education (E02ANG2; also, E01ANG1; E03CATH).

In England, some participants, too, talked about the difficulty of being different in England (E03CATH; E06JEW; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E09AULRE). Interestingly, the majority of these participants came from minority backgrounds. Both the Shia and Sunni representatives said that there is an 'institutional racism' in England, that is 'ethnic minorities being treated unfairly and less equally' (E07SUNNI; also, E08SHIA). The Jewish representative said that

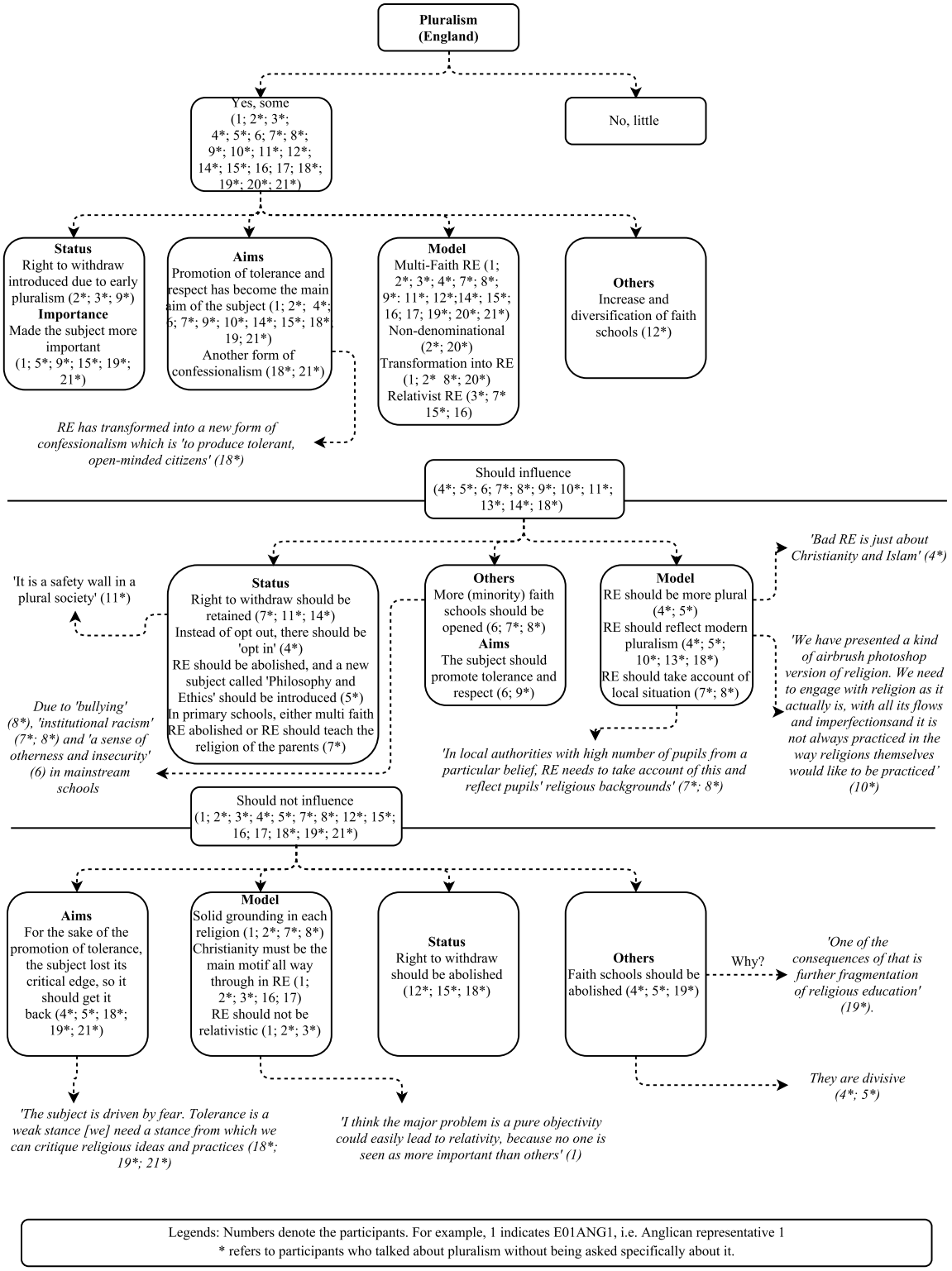
'the Jewish community was highly assimilated because there was a quite a lot of discrimination against Jews, therefore many people changed their names'. He said even today, despite that Jewish community being highly 'assimilated' and 'integrated', 'there is an underlying sense of otherness and insecurity', which is, according to him, one of the reasons behind the growth of Jewish schools (E06JEW).

The Catholic representative talked about the past and said that the Catholics were 'suppressed' in England (E03CATH), but for the AULRE representative there is still a disadvantage of being Catholic in England: 'still in this country, a Catholic cannot be a prime minister', let alone King or Queen (E09AULRE). Moreover, the AULRE representative claimed that the majority also feels pressure:

> English identity has become less secure (…) People become more worried about maintaining the English identity (…) there is a right wing feeling, a fear of other when you are yourself on the threat. (E09AULRE)

5.4.2.4. Influence

According to all participants, plurality has shaped official religious education policy, as the AULRE representative said it has 'massively, really massively' influenced the subject (E09AULRE). This can be seen in Display 5.8 below.



Display 5.8 Pluralisation and religious education policy in England.

As can be seen there was no participant who argued that plurality did not influence religious education policy, so there was a consensus among participants that plurality has been influential. Moreover, almost all English participants argued that they value plurality and want to protect plurality. In Display 5.8, there is a section called 'should not influence', this does not mean that these participants were against plurality. What it means is that these participants were against the use of pluralisation as a justification for particular policies. For example, 3 participants argued that faith schools should be abolished. I put these views here, because these participants argued that pluralisation has been used as a justification for faith schools, but, they argued, pluralisation should not be used as an excuse for faith schools.

One fault line was the status of Christianity in religious education. According to Christian representatives, Christianity must be the main motif all the way through in RE (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E03CATH; also, E16A3; E17A4), because for them, despite plurality, a broadly Christian culture remains dominant. However, for the Muslim representatives, there are also Muslims, and even in some local authorities, there are 'high number of pupils from a particular [minority] faith' and in these schools, the subject 'needs to take account of this' (E07SUNNI; also, E08SHIA). Moreover, the Secular representatives also opposed the idea that the subject's main motif should be Christianity, arguing that the society no longer adheres to Christianity (E04BHA; E05NSS). As can be seen these three different stances over the issue partly stems from the participant's different views about plurality within English society.

It seems from the interviews that plurality is one of the most important factors influencing religious education policy in England. There was almost a consensus among the participants on this issue. However, the participants differed as to whether plurality should further

influence the subject, and this difference partly stemmed from how the participants see plurality in England.

5.4.3. Comparison

In both countries, plurality was mostly understood as an observable religious diversity manifesting itself in different religious and secular communities. In other words, plurality was seen as the existence of different religious and secular communities. In Turkey, this was often associated with the official religious minorities of Turkey while in England, it was associated with immigration, but some participants also stressed that England has always been a mixture.

In recent decades, some commentators argued that modern religious education should focus on modern/individual plurality (Jackson, 2004; Skeie, 2006). However, the participants of this study claimed that religious education policy in both countries still ignores individual diversity. Moreover, what was interesting is that the majority of the participants of this study did not even mention individual diversity. They talked about different religious groups and communities, rather than individual diversity. Even though this does not show that these participants were not aware of or they do not accept individual diversity, this reveals that when plurality/pluralisation is mentioned, the first thing that comes to mind is the existence of different religious and faith communities in society and meeting the demands of these communities, rather than individuals.

One common theme was that pluralisation was viewed more favourably than secularisation and supranational religious education policy in both countries. Even though some participants talked about some dangerous forms of diversity and some criticised normative pluralism, overall plurality was seen as a value. This can be seen in the participants' views

about religious education policy. For example, in both countries, almost all participants offered policies that, they believe, would protect plurality. Even though these solutions were at odds with each other, their purposes were the same, that is, to protect plurality. This shows that plurality is central to debates about religious education policy (also claimed by Barnes, 2014; Bråten, 2009; Durham Jr, 2013; Felderhof, 1985a: 1-2; Willaime, 2007; Ziebertz, 2008).

This may not be surprising due to the fact that the fully-maintained state schools in both countries are open to all citizens regardless of their religion and belief. However, even though it seemed that plurality was valued, it was evident that plurality was understood differently by different participants across and within Turkey and England and this influenced the way the participants interpreted religious education policy in the face of pluralisation.

This has also been stressed by Davie (2014: 613) who argued that 'the term "pluralism" used to describe the very different situations found in modern Europe (and indeed beyond)'. This study suggests that the participants of this study not only used pluralism/plurality to describe very different situations found in England and Turkey, but also used it to mean different things within the same society. Then it can be argued that comparative religious educationalists cannot and should not delude themselves, as claimed by Anderson-Levitt (2003b: 17), that they are looking at the same factor just because a common vocabulary is used in different contexts (Gorski and Altınordu, 2008: 61; Schreiner, 2014b; Schweitzer, 2006).

Interestingly, an apparent difference between England and Turkey was that a significant number of participants talked about their own encounter with plurality in England. For example, both teachers in England said that their schools have pupils from different religious

backgrounds. However, in Turkey only a very small number of participants talked about their encounter with plurality. When I asked teachers about their experience with plurality, they said that they have only had one or two pupils from different religious backgrounds so far, but this account would not be accepted by some participants. They would argue that the reason why teachers did not encounter pupils from different backgrounds is not because there is a homogenous society, but because of the State, community and peer pressures. The Christian, Alevi, Atheist and ESWU representatives argued that due to these pressures, pupils from different religious and philosophical backgrounds often hide their identities. The Christian representative said that even though Christian parents have a right to withdraw their children from religious education, they often choose not to use it, in order to conceal their children's identities (T03CHR).

As stated above, in both countries, some participants talked about the difficulty of being different in Turkey and England. The majority of these participants came from minority backgrounds, which shows that in both countries, the participants who come from minority backgrounds still feel 'otherness'. The representatives of Alevi, Christian and Atheist communities in Turkey, and the representatives of Catholic, Jewish and Muslim participants in England sometimes felt as 'others' and 'discriminated against'. This had important bearings on religious education policy. As will be seen in the next chapter, these participants fiercely criticised official policy and sometimes demanded dramatic changes in religious education policy, but what we can call, the majority (e.g. Sunnis in Turkey) also felt discriminated against and criticised religious education policy.

In this section, whether plurality is a factor in religious education was discussed. In England, according to the participants, it was clearly a factor, but some participants argued that more can be done, and some participants criticised some effects of plurality on religious education

policy. In Turkey, there was no agreement. Some participants said that it is a factor, yet others claimed that Turkish religious education policy failed to accommodate the diversity within society.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter explored whether three supranational factors are shared by England and Turkey. It was evident that some factors were apparently more powerful than others in different contexts. It was plurality that was shared as a factor by Turkish and English religious education policies, even though in Turkey a significant number of participants claimed that plurality made little difference to religious education policy. Moreover, even though the participants in both countries expressed positive views about plurality, they still understood and interpreted it different and contradictorily. Supranational policy was influential in Turkey, but less so in England and secularisation was influential in England, but less so in Turkey.

Even though I have called these factors 'supranational', most participants saw secularisation and pluralisation as national developments, even though some Turkish participants linked secularisation with the West. Only supranational religious education policy was regarded as something that coming from a different level.

This chapter showed that these three factors were controversial in both countries. In Turkey, there were strong negative views about secularisation and the supranational organisations and Western powers. The majority of the participants in Turkey saw secularisation as something that should be resisted and a significant number of participants claimed that Turkish authorities should not bow down to the demands and commands of Western

authorities. In England, the majority of the participants saw supranational religious education guidelines and recommendations either irrelevant or negative.

The chapter suggests that questions about the nature and extent of these factors are dependent on the participant you ask; it was clear that policy actors saw these factors differently, and accordingly interpreted their influence on religious education policy differently, which makes it difficult to present a single narrative about these factors.

In this Chapter, the focus was on the factors themselves, and especially on how different policy actors saw and understood these factors. The influence of these factors will be discussed in the next Chapter.

6. Influence

6.1. Introduction

In the previous two chapters, I explored national and supranational factors shaping religious education policy in England and Turkey. This chapter explores the influence of supranational and national factors on religious education policy in Turkey and England (i.e. consequences) according to the participants of this study. The analysis of data is presented in six thematic sections that emerged from the data: 1) Religious Education Reform, 2) Charge of Confessionality, 3) Omissions and Additions, 4) Confusion, 5) Marginalisation and 6) Calls for Reform.

6.2. Religious Education Reform

This section presents how wider factors historically have shaped religious education policy reform. According to the participants, there have been attempts for religious education reform since the inception of religious education as a curriculum subject in state-funded schools and these attempts have been related to wider socio-political factors.

6.2.1. Turkey

In Turkey (the then Ottoman Empire) primary education became compulsory in 1824. As Academic 3 and other participants stressed, at that time there was no separation between secular and religious education (see also Bilgin, 1993); the whole education was religious in character and the decree asserted the religious character of education in the Empire. For example, education of Muslims was under the responsibility and control of *Şeyhülislam*,

Grand Mufti, the highest religious authority in the Empire (see Berkes, 1964). Other Ottoman *millets* (religious groups such as Jews and Christians) were free to open their schools (Adanali, 2002).

One hundred years later, the school system experienced a major reform with the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923. The whole school system was brought under the Ministry of National Education (then Ministry of Education) with a law called 'the Unification of Education' (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat*) in 1924. With this law, the responsibility for and control of education was passed into a secular authority, the Ministry of Education. For the new Turkish Republic, education was a 'national matter', not a 'religious' one (T13A4). The Presidency of Religious Affairs representative argued that this was the result of the secularisation of the State, which was later officially called 'laicism' (T01PRA). I asked him whether the responsibility for and control of education (and religious education in particular) should be transferred to the Presidency of Religious Affairs, as was the case in the Ottoman Empire. The participant's immediate reaction was 'Is the country ready for that?' The participant's impression was that the country was not ready for such a change, therefore, he went on to say that 'It is better to keep formal education under one hand [under the Ministry of National Education].' (T01PRA).

After the Law, within seven years (1924-1930) religious education classes were gradually removed from the curricula of primary and secondary schools. According to participants, religious education was removed from the curricula in the name of 'laic education' (*laik eğitim*). The Atatürkist Thought Association representative said that

> (…) the new Republic fought against bigotry and narrow-mindedness and attempted to modernise [the country], therefore the State preferred laic education [and abolished religious education].

The quote implies that it was believed at that time that religious education would hold back the process of modernisation in Turkey and that laic education would help Turkey to achieve modernisation. It means that there was a contradiction between modernisation and religious education. The participant later made it clear: 'religion is in contradiction to science' (T04LAIC). According to Academic 4, one of the influence of enlightenment ideas and secularisation on the Turkish intelligentsia and statesmen was the belief that religion contradicts science and therefore religion is a barrier to modernisation (T13A4; also, T12A3).

Moreover, the Atatürkist Thought Association representative argued that religious courses were eliminated from state schools to ensure that the State avoided siding with any religion or denomination. In this sense, religious education was believed to side with Sunni Islam and this was deemed unacceptable in a laic State with a plural society (T04LAIC). Two references here, namely, 'laic state' and 'plural society' are important, since, as we will see in other sections, they were constant reference points, often used to justify certain religious education policies. The return of religious education to the curriculum occurred in 1949, after its absence for 19 years. According to the participants, four interrelated factors played their roles in the reintroduction of religious education into the curriculum: relations with the West, introduction of multi-party system, security and moral degeneration.

According to the Religious Affairs and Educators Trade Union representatives and Academic 4 the relations with the West helped to widen religious freedom in Turkey (T01PRA; T06ETU; T13A4). Academic 4 argued that

> the reintroduction of religious education into state schools owed much to the relations with the West. (T13A4)

Turkey was governed by a single party from her inception to 1946. Even though there were attempts for the introduction of the multi-party system during this time, they all failed, and it was 1946 when Turkey introduced the multi-party system, largely because the Western democratic camp required Turkey to have a competitive political system to join its camp (confirmed by Erkem-Gülboy, 2010: 20-21; Eroglu, 1987).

Turkey's quest to join so-called the Western Democratic Camp hastened the change of its political system from a single party to multi-party system in 1946, which made the reintroduction of religious education in state schools possible. Academic 3 argued that

> the introduction of multi-party system was the most important reason behind the reintroduction of religious education

In this multi-party competitive political environment, in contrast to the single party system, political parties had to determine their policies according to the expectations of the citizens, at least in theory, in order to gain popular support (T12A3). For Turkey, it means that religion (and religious education) has become a factor in the electoral calculations of political parties as the participants agreed (see Çağatay, 1972: 41; Karpat, 1967: 238-239; Lewis, 2002: 422; Ozgur, 2012: 36). It was reported by Academic 4 that before the multi-party election, the then-prime minister Hasan Saka said that

> if we do not meet the demand for religious education, people would not give us any votes. (in Ayhan, 2004: 141)

Being a factor in the electoral calculations helped religious education to become a curriculum subject in 1949, but as the participants noted, it was a double-edged sword, because religious education has also become a 'politicised subject', which made the subject a battleground between conservative and laic parties.

Moreover, there was another reason for the introduction of the subject, that is, 'security'. Religious education was believed to offset threats coming from the Soviets and religious fundamentalism. There was a real or imagined threat coming from the Communist Soviet Union. The participants noted that some politicians thought that religious education could save youth from falling prey to Communism. Moreover, as State Official 1 noted, there was another security threat: religious fundamentalism. He argued that in the absence of religious education and religious schools between 1930 -1949 in Turkey, some families sent their children to 'under the counter' ('*merdiven altı'*) religious courses, or some even sent their children to Arab countries such as Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia in the hope of Islamic education. The problem was that, according to State Official 1, children were taught a 'different' understanding of Islam (e.g. more politicised or radicalised Islam) and this posed a threat to the laic Turkey. This made some politicians believe the necessity of allowing religious education in state schools to prevent radicalisation from thriving (see Wing and Varol, 2006: 31). The argument that if the State does not provide religious education, children will learn religion from 'wrong hands' ('*yanlış eller'*) or 'under the counter' either in Turkey or abroad and this would pose a threat to national unity has often been used by the proponents of religious education in state schools in Turkey (T01PRA; T08TEU; T10A1; T16S1). The participants invoked radicalisation trends in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq which have madrasas out of state control, to back up their arguments. For example, Academic 1 said that if the State does not provide religious education, people would learn it from 'wrong places' which would, in turn, result in increase in 'fundamentalism' as is the case in 'Afghanistan' and 'the Middle East' (T10A1).

This argument is also used by some politicians who support compulsory religious education in state schools. In 2014 in the face of the call of the European Court of Human Rights for religious education reform (ECtHR, 2014), the then-Prime Minister of Turkey Ahmet

Davutoğlu (2014-2016) invoked the advance of Daesh[3] and said that 'unregulated and unhealthy religious knowledge' can be 'the source of radicalisation trends' and added that 'a well-managed religious and ethical education is necessary to curb radicalism' (TurkishPress, 2014). In other words, the Prime Minister favoured regulated religious education over unregulated one due to fear of extremism, which supports Stoeckl (2015: 4)'s argument that due to the fear of radicalisation, European policymakers tend to reject the idea of unregulated religious education.

Returning to 1949, according to participants, during the debates over religious education, moral degeneration was also used as a justification for the reintroduction of religious education (see Jaschke, 1972: 83; Köylü, 2005: 56; Verschoyle, 1950: 67). According to Academic 4, some members of the Parliament suggested that reintroduction of the subject would halt moral degeneration among youth. In my sample, seven participants claimed that lack of religious education might lead to moral degeneration. They argued that if children do not learn their religion, this would lead to moral degeneration in society (T01PRA; T06ETU; T08TEU; T10A1; T15A6; T16S1; T20T3). Even though this view is criticised by other participants, because, they felt that, this view implies that morality is 'equal to religion' (T05ATH), it seems that this argument is also sometimes used by politicians who favour compulsory religious education in state schools. For example, in 2014 President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan claimed that if the government abolished religious education, 'drugs, violence and racism would spread among the youth' (Hurriyet Daily News, 2014).

These four reasons (relations with the West, introduction of multi-party system, threats coming from Soviets and radicalisation and moral degeneration) show that religious

[3] 'Daesh' has been used by international organisations such as the United Nations refer to terrorist organisation ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), which later declared itself as just IS (Islamic State).

education returned to the curriculum mainly because of political and social developments and needs. International developments played an important role by leading to a multi-party system which led political parties, even the governing People's Republican Party which abolished the courses in the first place, to determine their religious education policies to become electable. A religious course was believed to halt religious radicalisation, moral degeneration and the threat coming from Communism.

Nevertheless, despite these perceived political and social needs, the subject was only introduced into fourth and fifth grades in 1949 and its spread to other grades was quite slow: in 1956 the subject was introduced into the sixth and seventh grades. In 1967, the subject was introduced at the ninth and tenth and in 1976 into the eights and eleventh grades (Ayhan, 2004). In other words, it took 27 years for the subject to be taught from fourth to eleventh grades. According to Academic 3, every reform triggered an intense debate over the possibility of religious education in a laic state with a plural society. The opponents have argued that religious education is not compatible with a laic state and it harms plurality, while the proponents argued that religious education is compatible with laicism and it is good for plural society (T12A3).

Moreover, the subject has never been made available in the first three grades of the primary schools. Even today, the subject is still not taught in the first three grades of primary education. Moreover, until 1982, religious education had not been compulsory, i.e. attendance was dependant on the parent's wishes.

The next important religious education reform in Turkey occurred after the 1980 coup d'état when the Turkish military, headed by Chief of the General Staff General Kenan Evren, seized power, overthrew the government and dissolved the parliament stating the armed conflict between right-wing and left-wing youth groups as a reason and bringing order to

the country as an aim. Even though the Turkish military has been long known as the guardian of laicism and Atatürk's reforms (Ahmad, 1991), it was the military who made religious education compulsory without an opt-out possibility in 1982 for the first time since the 1930s in the Turkish Republic.

Academics 3 and 4 told me that they contributed to the debates during the preparations of the 1982 Constitution which is still in force. As stated above, the armed conflict among youth and failure of successive governments to halt the conflict was cited as a reason for the military coup. Hence, the arguments for compulsory religious education centred around national unity and prevention of future conflicts in *plural* Turkish society.

The academics 3 and 4 reiterated the arguments they put forward in favour of compulsory religious education, in the interviews. They said that, during debates, they argued that before 1982, the course was voluntary and this was leading to polarisation among students: on the one hand, pupils who opted out had been accused of being 'non-believer' (*dinsiz*) or 'infidel' (*imansız*); on the other hand, pupils who opted in had been branded as 'backward' (*gerici*) or 'religionist' (*dinci*) (also T16S1). Furthermore, they argued that compulsory religious education would bring about a number of positive effects such as national unity and loyalty to the state. Finally, it was also claimed that there was no contradiction between laicism and Atatürk's reforms and mandatory religious education (T12A3; T13A4). As can be seen religious education was presented as a cure for almost all social evils and that presentation seemed to work. General Kenan Evren who led the coup was reported to say that

> All of us believe in Allah, we have one Prophet, we read the same Qur'an. Then why is this separation? (in Eligür, 2010: 101).

The Generals seemed to be convinced that religious education would bring national unity. This was criticised by some participants in my study. They argued that the Generals fell into

the trap of 'Islamists' by introducing compulsory religious education (T02ALEVI; T04LAIC; T07ESWU). With the 1982 Constitution, the name of the subject changed from 'religious course' to 'Religion Culture and Ethics Knowledge'. The move was seen by the participants as a shift of the emphasis from 'religion' to 'culture and ethics' to make the course inclusive of all students. Most participants agreed that the course was planned to serve all pupils regardless of their religion. Therefore, the course was made compulsory without an opt-out possibility. From 1982 to 1990, the course was compulsory for all students, but in 1990 a decree issued by the Ministry of Education stated that children of Christian and Jewish parents did not have to take the course, pointing to the Lausanne Treaty, which granted Christians and Jews educational rights. Because of the treaty, Christian and Jewish children were granted a right to withdraw from religious education, which shows that international treaties have been influential in religious education policy in Turkey.

As one can easily recognise, I have not mentioned anything about the content or method of religious education courses yet. It was because the discussions over and reform of the subject centred around whether the subject has a place in secular state schools rather than its methods and content for a long time in Turkey according to the participants. Academic 5 argued that this

> took the time and energy of religious educators who often felt that they need to justify that the subject has a place in secular state schools, so the pedagogical and methodological issues have often received less attention. (T14A5; also T10A1).

However, the debates over the content and method of the subject came to the fore in the 2000s especially due to three related forces: supranational influence especially coming from the European Union (EU) and European Court of Human Rights, democratic steps taken by

the politicians and a demand for more accommodative policies, especially coming from Alevis.

In 1999, Turkey was officially recognised as a candidate for full membership of EU. As the participants noted, this prompted the question of whether the Turkish (religious) education system is compatible with the European Union norms (T10A1). The Ministry of Education started a process of program development for religious education. State Official 2 recalled that at that time there was a need for establishing an educational pedagogy for religious education. The new program was 'inclusive', adopting a non-denominational model and including objective material on Islam and other religions, and promoted tolerance and respect, the participant claimed (T17S2). Yet, the new curriculum faced a backlash from conservatives and Alevis. The participant said that

> We often encountered people's prejudice against the new program. They thought that politicians (…) had a clandestine agenda [to make religious education more secular]. (T17S2)

I personally remember the negative reactions of conservative media and organisations to the new program. The program was regarded as an attempt of the government to secularise religious education as a result of pressure coming from the West.

Another reaction came from Alevis who saw the program as yet another Sunni propaganda. As stated above, the program adopted, at least in theory, a non-denominational approach, which meant that the program did not include any denominational teaching. The Alevi representative criticised the program for not including any material on the Alevi faith and for being based on Sunni-Islam (T02ALEVI). State Official 2 told me that the program was not based on Sunni-Islam; it was based on 'the Qur'an' (T17S2). The dilemma here is how to define non-denominational religious education (see 6.5 below).

As stated above, the introduction of compulsory religious education was criticised by some participants. Alevi participant in particular was critical of compulsory religious education. Since the 1990s, Alevis demanded more accommodative policies and their particular concern was religious education policy (see Akbulut and Usal, 2008: 442; Müftügil, 2011: 213). During this time, Alevi families have made many attempts to seek recourse from national law and finally one Alevi family brought the issue before the European Court of Human Rights, arguing that the course violates their rights of education and religious freedom. At that time the new government under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan came to power and promised democratic reforms. According to State Official 1, the department immediately started to revise religious education program. For the participant, the revision was not made because of the pending Court case, but because that was 'right thing to do' (T16S1). However, other participants argued that the revision started because of the pending Strasbourg case (e.g. T11A2).

The new program was published in 2005, two years before the ECtHR's decision on Turkish religious education. The program for the first time, included information about the Alevi faith. Yet, the ECtHR did find that religious education in Turkey violates the plaintiff's right to education (ECtHR, 2007b). According to State Official 1, the ECtHR's decision was based on the previous program, and since the new program was introduced, the Court decision did not have any relevance. Yet, the Alevi representative was critical that Alevism still forms a small part of textbooks and religious education still does not meet the demands of Alevis. The ECtHR gave another verdict on Turkish religious education in 2014 and again decided that Turkish religious education violates the right to education of the plaintiff (ECtHR, 2014), which showed that the Court found the new program, again, inadequate.

Another important reform in religious education policy happened in 2012 when the government introduced optional religious courses. Initially, it was stated that there would be optional religious courses for different religions, but so far (as in 2018), three religious courses have been introduced: Holy Qur'an; Seerah (Life of Prophet Muhammed) and Basic Religious Knowledge. Some participants saw this as an overdue reform. Academic 6 argued that according to the Constitution, in state schools there should be both compulsory religious education and voluntary religious courses. The participant argued that with the introduction of optional religious courses, the government realised this Constitutional right (T15A6). For Academic 2, this reform was made at the request of conservative Muslims who demanded more religious education in state schools (T11A2). Yet some participants criticised this reform. The ESWU participant labelled this reform as 'backward' and 'religionist' and argued that all three courses are based on Sunni Islam, and they are compulsory in practice, due to pressure coming from the State and society (see also Eğitim Sen, 2013). The Christian representative at the time of interview was hopeful that the State would allow a similar course on Christianity, but as in early 2018, there is still no elective course on Christianity.

This very short Turkish religious education reform history shows that religious education reform has been undertaken mainly because of supranational and national socio-political developments in Turkey.

6.2.2. England

In England, the 1870 Elementary Education Act, for the first time, made provision of the elementary education and established 'school boards' to oversee schools. This date can be considered as the introduction of the state education system in England. Anglican Representative 2 argued that the churches at the time were divided on religious education

and fearful that other denominations would use religious education to take potential members away (E02ANG2; also, E09AULRE). She argued that

> Every school was expected to teach religion to children, that was not the debate. The debate was whose version of Christianity would be taught. (E02ANG2).

The struggle between Christian denominations largely shaped the debates over state education and religious education at that time (Cruickshank, 1963: Chapters 1 and 2) which resulted in specific articles regulating the subject: The Act permitted religious education (then Religious Instruction), but there was no obligation to provide it and when it was provided, it had to be voluntarily funded (section 97), with an opt-out possibility (section 7) and without denominational teaching (section 14) (U.K. Parliament, 1870). As Anglican Representative 2 said, a 'kind of Bible Christianity was invented for schools' (E02ANG2). These clauses can be seen as early examples of the subject facing the challenge of religious plurality in the society (Barnes, 2014).

These articles of the 1870 Elementary Education Act remained intact until the 1944 Education Act. As the respondents in England often reiterated, the 1944 Education Act opened a new era for religious education by making it the only compulsory subject in the curriculum, even though the Act kept the right to withdraw (section 25) (U.K. Parliament, 1944). The participants argued that, drafted at the time of the Second World War, the 1944 Education Act cannot be thought independent from the socio-political environment created by the War. As the BHA representative argued, the War was often depicted as a 'crusade' between Western Christian culture and 'godless' Communism and Nazism; and in that environment Christianity 'was seen as an important part of the West' and teaching Christianity was seen as an antidote to 'godless' regimes (E04BHA). Similarly, the REC representative argued that

> part of the reason for the legal settlement for the RE then was that (…) compulsory religious education which was assumed to be Christian and moral was a bulwark against these ideologies. If you had a population that was religiously literate, then it wouldn't fall prey to these two ideologies. (E12REC; see also REC, 2007: 2).

The participants noted that during the debates in the parliaments, religious education was often offered as a remedy for social ills and external threats. One MP said that

> (…) the evils that exist in our midst could not possibly exist if the population were brought up on a religious rather than a secular basis. (HC Deb, 1944).

Like Turkey, the subject was functionalised to save society from social ills and external threats. Another important factor that enabled the Act was religious settlement among churches. Churches experienced denominational rivalries and suspicion in the past, but by the time the Act was drafted, they seemed to come closer (E15A2) and were able to co-operate in drafting syllabuses (Percy, 1932a: 257). According to Anglican Representative 2, this was one of the unintended positive influences of secularisation in England:

> (…) horrendous dispute in [the] 19th century between Christian denominations; the relationship was appalling. And all the denominations did dreadful things to promote themselves (…). All of that disappeared and relationship between denominations is very different, because in a sense conflict was not between them but it was between faith-based life and secularisation. (E02ANG2)

Furthermore, the Act was also a 'political decision', the BHA representative argued, 'because [it was] the only way that state school system could be introduced with the agreement with churches' (E04BHA). According to five participants (E04BHA; E11NATRE; E12REC; E15A2; E19S2), the agreement with the churches resulted in the introduction of compulsory religious education. State Official 2 said that

> churches agreed to give up their schools on the understanding that religious education would play a key role in life of those schools. (E19S2)

In other words, the relationship between the State and churches played an important role in the introduction of compulsory religious education. Academic 2 said that

> [Even though] the influence of churches has declined (…) the tension or the alliance between religions and the State has all the time been the driving force in religious education (E15A2)

but he also noted that Churches are not and should not be a decisive factor in religious education (E15A2). According to the participants, the Act reflected pluralisation within society by stating that each Local Education Authority had to convene a syllabus conference consisting of four committees, two of which should be religious groups: The Church of England and 'other denominations' (section 29), but as can be seen, plurality was understood as plurality within Christianity.

Almost all participants argued that this understanding started to change and it was realised that a new form of religious education was needed in order to respond to immigration and secularisation from the 1960s onwards (see also Cush, 2016b: 55; Parker and Freathy, 2012: 388). The perceived settlement over religious education in the 1940s gave way to, according to the participants, problems and identity crisis in the 1960s onwards due to socio-political and educational developments (Copley, 2008). Teacher 1 argued that

> Christian education was breaking down because partly through secularisation and partly through immigration (…) in the 1960s and in the 1970s when we got an increasingly multi-cultural society. (E20T1)

On the one hand, socio-political developments such as pluralisation and secularisation started to influence the subject (see also Barnes, 2014: 58; Copley, 2008: 62; Jackson, 1990: 107). Pluralisation was evident at that time according to the participants. Some participants told me their own experiences of encountering pupils from different religious and cultural

backgrounds in classrooms either as a teacher or as a student (E09AULRE; E11NATRE; E12REC; E14A1; E20T1). For example, Academic 1 said that

> I was meeting children from Hindu, Sikh and Muslim backgrounds in schools and that was terrifically influential on me. I thought that RE ought to include something about all of these traditions and learning about them in [a] sympathetic way. (E14A1).

According to NATRE representative, pluralisation led religious educators to think that religious education should be reformed:

> The 1960s and the 1970s, when teachers faced visibly classes of children marked by variety. Now I go to religious education lessons, there are a lot of Muslim and Sikh young people coming in too. That [RE] has got to change. You can't, even if you do not want to admit (…) change. (E11NATRE).

Another socio-political development that shaped the subject was secularisation. According the participants, secularisation influenced the subject in at least two ways. On the one hand, it undermined the importance of the subject (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E03CATH; E04BHA; E06JEW; E11NATRE; E16A3; E18S1; E19S2; E21T2). Teacher 2 argued that

> When RE started in 1944, it had prestige and status [because] Vicar taught RE, people were interested in their souls and afterlife and all that kind of staff. Religion was prestigious, whereas it has not got that prestige [in the 60s onwards]. RE has lost its confessional prestige, but it has not been replaced by anything as prestigious. (E21T2).

On the other hand, as almost all participants agreed, secularisation played a role in secularisation of religious education. Academic 2 said that

> Religious education was secularised [and it was] part of the secularisation of society. [RE] was not in itself a religious activity [anymore]. It was an educational activity. (E15A2)

Yet the participants disagreed how far the subject was secularised. According to some participants, secularisation influenced religious education so much so that the subject has

become an agent of secularisation (e.g. E07SUNNI; E16A3; E17A4 see Charge of Confessionality). However, some participants argued that religious education has not completely secularised yet (e.g. E04BHA; E05NSS; E19S2).

Furthermore, as documented in the literature (Copley, 2008; Jackson, 2013) and reiterated in the interviews, there were academic studies that have had an influence on the subject. Anglican Representative 2 said that

> Piaget had a massive influence on the subject, that was translated into religious education terms by Goldman who argued that children are incapable of studying the Bible in early ages. Bible should be taught at the late junior stage. (E02ANG2).

The 1971 Schools Council's *Working Paper 36: Religious Education in Secondary Schools* (Schools Council, 1971) was particularly influential according to the participants. These developments shaped the subject at the local level, without any 'official' policy change. Teacher 1 argued that the subject became 'pluralistic, non-denominational, and non-Church of England subject' (E20T1), but the participant also noted that since religious education was (and continues to be) organised locally through locally agreed syllabuses, there were significant variations among syllabuses.

The next important religious education reform occurred with the 1988 Education Reform Act (U.K. Parliament, 1988). According to the participants, there were especially two forces at work at the time. On the one hand, religious education has much changed on the ground since the 1944 Education Reform. Socio-political changes such as secularisation and pluralisation since the 1940s meant that by the 1980s, many locally agreed syllabuses included the study of other religions and non-religious world views as well as Christianity.

On the other hand, there was a growing unease about liberal and multi-faith religious education (Thobani, 2010: 55 calls it 'neo-conservative' reaction). In the parliaments, some

members expressed their unease about the way religious education is conducted in schools. For example, one MP said that

> (…) religious education must not be a parade round a museum of religion. There must be faith. Those who teach religious education must believe in it. (HC Deb, 1988).

In my sample, some participants, too, expressed their unease. Anglican Representative 1 argued that 'each religious tradition objected to this (…). Our faith is misrepresented' (E01ANG1). The Act could be seen as a compromise: with the Act, the name of the subject changed from 'religious instruction' to 'religious education', which signified the prohibition of indoctrinatory teaching according to Academic 1 (E14A1). The representatives of faiths other than Christianity were officially given a place on the agreed syllabus conferences and the Act required the teaching of 'other principal religions' (Section 8.3) which meant that the Act reflected changes that had occurred on the ground.

Even though there has been a debate in the literature as to how to understand the religious clauses of the Act (Hull, 1989; Lundie, 2012: 24; Thompson, 2004a), some participants argued that the Act 'strengthened' and 'clarified' religious education provision (E01ANG1) and reflected 'changes on the ground' (E11NATRE; E12REC), Yet, some participants criticised the Act for its special treatment of religions (e.g. E04BHA) particularly Christianity (e.g. E07SUNNI).

As stated above, religious education was legally a locally determined subject with its locally agreed syllabuses. However, in 1994 and 2004 national, yet non-statutory, syllabuses were devised. According to the participants, they brought some kind of uniformity to local syllabuses. The latest attempt for a national, non-statutory, curriculum came from the Religious Education Council of England and Wales: *A National Curriculum Framework for*

RE (REC, 2013). Some of my interviewees participated in the preparation of the Framework. What these participants all stressed was that it was widely supported by faith community representatives, which shows that plurality is at the heart of the concerns of policy actors, but the Framework was partly criticised by the participants themselves for not clearly articulating the nature and aims of religious education (see 6.5 below).

Moreover, the participants talked about two developments that occurred after the 1980s and influenced religious education, which, I think, shows how politics shape religious education policy. In the first place, at the time of the Labour governments under Tony Blair, religious education assumed the role of promoting social cohesion, the participants argued (see Grimmitt, 2010). Teacher 2 said that 'Blair reinvented RE as multiculturalism', but she was critical of it. She said that 'that did not really serve RE well. It was not meaningful enough' (E21T2). In my sample, the participants were critical that the subject had been hijacked by a political agenda of promoting social cohesion. Some participants criticised it for distorting religion (E02ANG2; E07SUNNI) or throwing away the critical aspect of religious education (E04BHA; E18S1; E21T2; see 6.4 below).

In the second place, the participants argued that wider educational policy reforms by Labour and Conservative governments in the last 20 years, influenced religious education negatively. It was reported that a significant number of schools do not teach religious education at all, particularly new free schools. The participants criticised politicians for not doing enough to protect and support religious education. As can be seen, over-activity and inactivity of politicians vis-à-vis religious education faced a backlash from some policy actors I interviewed.

As can be seen in this section, which is a very short account of religious education reform in England, wider factors were influential in religious education policy reform in England.

6.2.3. Comparison

This section has presented a very short history of religious education policy reform in Turkey and England. It has not been possible to include all the historical developments concerning religious education reform in both countries; such accounts can be found elsewhere (see Ayhan, 2004; Copley, 2008; Thompson, 2004a).

However, even a very short account reaches similar conclusions. It was clear that religious education reform has been undertaken mostly due to socio-political developments, which seems to support Skeie (1995: 90) argument that 'social, cultural and political issues [have been] decisive for school organisation and curriculum formation [in religious education] (see also Chater and Erricker, 2013: 1). This was also the conclusion reached by some pioneering works (Bråten, 2009; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003). For example, Matemba (2011: 1) argued that the reforms and changes in religious education have 'been done not only to improve teaching and learning but also to attune the subject's content and pedagogy to the contemporary setting underscored by trends in society'.

In both countries, politics and the relation between the State and religion have been important factors. Religious education policy reform, by nature, was political. In 2013, Gearon (2013b: 25) argued that '(t)he guiding texts of English religious education are those of secular state rather than sacred scripture.' In both countries, the guiding texts of religious education policy were those of the secular state, since religious education has been under the control and the responsibility of the State, rather than those of religious authorities, even though this does not mean that religious authorities and other actors do not exercise any control over the subject

According to Gearon (2013b: 25), the control of the secular state over religious education 'raises questions of the extent to which religious education is a contributory factor in rather than a bastion against secularization'. This was the concern of some participants in my study, but there were also concerns for an undue influence of religious communities on religious education policy and for religious education's role of promoting religion (see 6.3 below).

During analysis, some parallels emerged in religious education reform in Turkey and England. For example, arguably the most important religious education policy reforms in Turkey and England occurred in the 1940s. Religious education returned to the curriculum after 19 years in Turkey, and compulsory religious education with the option to opt-out introduced in England. This might not be coincidental. The participants referred to the World War II and surrounding developments as possible factors in religious education reform. As can be seen religious education was positioned or intended to counter fascism, communism and dictatorial regimes. This is one of the similarities of religious education reform in both countries that show how international events and developments have shaped the fate of the subject.

Similarly, the 1980s saw significant religious education reforms in both countries. This also might not be coincidental. As stated in 2.6 above, in the 1980s, as Casanova (1994: 3) argued, religion 'went public'. According to one academic[4], who is also a senior officer in the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the 1980s were time, when 'the world woke up and realised that religion is still an important socio-political force'. According to that academic, religious education reform in the 1980s should also be read against this background. In other words, religious education reforms in the 1980s were made partly to control and harness

[4] An informal interview in Turkey.

religion and religious fundamentalism. In Turkey, some participants stated that religious education reform was made to curb religious radicalisation.

Regarding reforms in religious education policy in Turkey and England, there were also differences. In Turkey, according to the participants the relations with and expectations from the Western world played a major role in religious education reform (Busher et al., 2011: 339). In England, no participant argued that relations with and expectations coming from abroad influenced English religious education policy. This is one of the important differences between Turkey and England, but as stressed above, World War II which triggered debates over national identities and created a bipolar new world order, seemed to influence both countries' religious education policies.

Moreover, the influence of politics seemed more profound and decisive in Turkey than in England. Almost every major change in political scene has led to changes in religious education policy in Turkey. The 1920s saw the establishment of Turkey under the single party rule which abolished religious education. The 1940s saw the introduction of a multi-party system which resulted in the introduction of religious education. In the 1980s there was a military coup that led to compulsory religious education. In 2012, AK Party which has been in power since 2002, introduced elective religious courses along with compulsory religious education. Even though, in England too, politics influenced and shaped religious education reform, the data indicates that this is more profound and frequent in Turkey, compared to England.

Apart from these factors, secularisation and pluralisation were presented as important factors shaping religious education policy by the English participants, while in Turkey, Atatürk's principles including laicism and plurality within society were constant themes in religious education reform in England and Turkey.

As can be seen in this section, historically wider factors have shaped religious education policy in both countries. Even though there were sometimes different factors at work in England and Turkey, there were also parallel developments such as important reforms taking place in the 1940s and 1980s. We can conclude that the state of religious education in both countries was dependent on the state of the world within which religious education operates.

Yet this relationship was interpreted differently by different participants as could be seen in this section and will be seen in coming sections. There were religious education reforms in England and Turkey, and it is generally accepted that due to these reforms, religious education transformed from a confessional subject to a non-confessional one. This was my conclusion in my MA Dissertation (Hendek, 2011), based on the exploration of respective curricula documents (MEB DÖGM, 2005, 2006; QCA, 2004) and the relevant literature (Bilgin, 2002: 35; Hull, 1989; Jackson and O'Grady, 2007; Kaymakcan, 2007; see also Selçuk, 2013: 257). However, as will be seen in the next three sections, religious education policy reform was prone to contradictory interpretations.

6.3. Charge of Confessionality

As discussed in Terms and Limitations section, there are different models of religious education, such as confessional and non-confessional. In my sample, almost all participants agreed that religious education in *fully-funded* state schools *ought to* be inclusive of all pupils and free from indoctrination. For instance, Anglican Representative 1 said that confessional teaching is 'the responsibility of families [and] faith communities (…). Schools have educational job.' (E01ANG1). Similarly, Academic 3 in Turkey argued that 'compulsory religious courses cannot be doctrinal in laic state schools' (T12A3).

Moreover, some participants noted that religious education in England and Turkey has transformed into a non-confessional subject. The change of the name of the course from 'religious instruction' to 'religious education' with the 1988 Education Reform Act in England and from 'religion course' to 'religious culture and ethics knowledge' in 1982 in Turkey were steps towards non-confessional and inclusive religious education, according to some participants. For example, the Turk Education Union representative said that

> as can be understood from the name of the subject, it provides knowledge about different religions, not only about Islam. (T08TEU)

Similarly, Academic 1 in England argued that the law pertaining to religious education 'prohibits indoctrinatory teaching' (E14A1). However, the data suggests that there are still policy actors who accuse the subject of confessionality and indoctrination.

6.3.1. Turkey

In Turkey, the participants accused the subject of Islamic, Sunni, laic and civic confessionalities and indoctrinations.

6.3.1.1. Charge of Islamic Confessionality

According to some participants, religious education in Turkey is confessional. It is an Islamic religious education that aims at raising Muslim generations, marginalising other faiths present in the society. In other words, the subject neglects multi-faith society at the expense of raising a Muslim generation. In 2012, then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said his government was aiming at 'raising religious generations' (*dindar nesiller*). After receiving criticisms, he repeated his views

> We want to raise a religious youth. Do you expect from us, from the AK Party, which has a conservative identity, to raise an atheist generation? (Hürriyet, 2012).

These remarks, made by the Prime Minister of a laic Turkish Republic sent shock waves through the religious education community. During my fieldwork, which was undertaken just one year later, these remarks were drawn repeatedly to my attention by some participants. These participants were critical of this aim. They argued that in laic Turkey which has a plural society, this aim amounts to a blatant violation of religious freedom. They found it indoctrinatory because it marginalised and stigmatised the 'other'. The Prime Minister mentioned 'atheists' as 'others' in his speech, but, according to the Alevi participant, the courses 'demonise and marginalise' all groups who do not fit into the matchbox of the State's 'authorised religious generation' and the largest group who suffers is Alevis (T02ALEVI).

These participants argued that this is not 'true Islam' and the generations to be raised are not 'true' religious generations. Especially the Alevi and Education and Science Workers' Union representatives highlighted this issue. Interestingly these were two participants who argued that in Turkey there is a trend of 'state' or 'unnatural' religiosity which is fuelled by the State and politicians who want to use religion for their 'vested interests' (T02ALEVI; T07ESWU). The Education and Science Workers' Union representative changed the word '*dindar*' (religious) with '*kindar*' (revengeful) and mocked that the current system was raising 'unquestioning revengeful generations' not 'religious ones' (T07ESWU).

6.3.1.2. Anti-Atheistic Approach

As can be seen in the Prime Minister's remarks, Atheists were categorised as unwanted 'others'. As discussed in the section on Secularisation, the majority of the Turkish participants regarded secularisation and distance from religion as problematic and a significant number of participants regarded Atheism as a moral degeneration, so, for these participants, these remarks did not seem problematic, but some participants in my study

severely criticised these remarks. The Association of Atheism cried that in the textbooks, there are false and discriminatory remarks about Atheism. They showed the official ninth grade textbook as an example (Association of Atheism, 2014a) which states that

> Atheism, which is a reaction against faith in Allah, has been embraced by some Western philosophers, but has lost its intellectual basis and is weak nowadays. (…) Atheism may lead to degeneration of basic social and cultural values and alienate people from national and moral sentiments. (Türkan et al., 2012: 18-19)

Moreover, they argued that the official Religious Education Curriculum adopts a pro-religious approach, marginalising non-religious worldviews. The official English summary of the Curriculum of Religious Culture and Ethics Course stated that

> Religion is a required power-source and instrument in one's own struggle for existence. For instance, a human needs a roof to be protected from snow or rain. Like that; in order to prevent the erosion of values and corruption of morals, a human needs a religion and religious education to learn it properly. (MEB DÖGM, 2010b: 8)

The quotes show, according to a number of participants, religious education equates atheism with immorality and sees it a source of moral degeneration, which, according to these participants, amounts to indoctrination and fuels already existing prejudice against atheists (T02ALEVI; T05ATH; T07ESWU; T09ERI).

6.3.1.3. Attitudes towards Other Religions

According to the Christian representative, religious education contains 'distortions' and 'prejudices' against non-Muslims, which give rise to anti-Christian and anti-Jewish sentiments in society (see also ECRI, 2016, 8). Moreover, he added that Christianity is taught as 'distorted' religion by the teachers who 'proselytise' in the classroom (T03CHR). In Islamic texts, religions are classified as divine (*semavi*) and non-divine (*semavi olmayan*) religions. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are classified as divine religions, while Hinduism,

Buddhism, Sikhism and others are as non-divinely religions. The divine religions are then further subdivided into 'distorted' (*bozulmuş*) and 'undistorted' (*bozulmamış*) religions. Distorted divine religions are Judaism and Christianity that, it was argued, lost their original forms. This classification dismisses all religions except Islam, which is the only 'proper' and 'undistorted' religion (see Kaymakcan, 2006 for more information).

According to State Officials in my sample, the textbooks and curricula do not include expressions like 'distorted' religions anymore. Rather all religions are presented objectively (T16S1; T17S2). This change occurred with the 2000 curriculum (T17S2) which faced a backlash from conservative civil society organisations.

However, some participants argued that religious education in practice contains this classification (T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T07ESWU). When I asked teachers specifically about this issue, all three teachers said that they teach Islam as the only true and undistorted religion and teach Christianity and Judaism as 'distorted' religions. My sample includes only three teachers and therefore it is impossible to generalise from the data. Yet, other researchers also found similar results. For example, Kaymakcan (2011: 39) conducted large-scale research on religious education teachers in Turkey and found that 'ninety-three per cent' of religious education teachers believe that Islam is the only true religion. Even though, this does not show that these teachers teach as such, it is possible that despite the textbooks and curricula reforms, an understanding that presents Christianity and Judaism as distorted religions might be prevalent in practice in Turkey.

Some participants argued that in Turkey it is 'impossible' to have objective religious education courses. The Christian representative said that teachers 'saw themselves as missionaries' and 'the majority of population and politicians were happy with confessional

religious education' (T03CHR). This was also stressed by other participants. For example, Academic 2 said that

> T11A2: It has always been argued that the course is a culture course, but to be honest, it has never been a culture course.
>
> A.H.: Why?
>
> T11A2: Partly because of teachers. Teachers teach what they deem important and dear and want pupils to internalise and embrace these things. It is *learning religion* not *learning from* or *about religion*. (T11A2; the participant used these terms in their English originals)

This attitude towards other religions can also be seen among some participants. For example, Academic 6, as he informed me, is involved in the production of curricula and textbooks. He said that textbooks include objective information about Islam and other religions, but he claimed that when pupils have an opportunity of open discussion and exploration of religions, they eventually choose Islam, because 'it is the only true religion' (T15A6). This view is also openly expressed by the Turk Education Union representative (T08TEU).

6.3.1.4. Confessional Elements

Moreover, some participants noted that religious education is not totally confessional, but includes some confessional elements. For example, the Education Reform Initiative documents highlighted that phrases like 'our religion' (i.e. Islam), 'our book' (the Qur'an) and 'our prophet' (Prophet Muhammad) found in the textbooks and that curricula give disproportionate importance to Islam and marginalise others (see Yıldırım, 2012 for a similar criticism)

Moreover, some participants argued that the courses include memorisation of prayers which shows that the course contains confessional elements. The Christian representative told me that he learnt 'chapters from the Qur'an just everybody else' when he attended a state school

(T03CHR). He said that he still remembers some of them after 50 years, and recited one of them. These participants see this as a proof of confessionality. The majority of academics in my study found this practice problematic too, arguing that in a compulsory religious education course, these confessional elements should not have a place (T10A1; T11A2; T12A3; T13A4; T14A5).

Moreover, some participants criticised the subject of including religious practice. Even though officially no worship is allowed in the classes (T16S1), some participants argued that students are forced to pray in the classes (T07ESWU).

6.3.1.5. Charge of Sunni Confessionality

Another accusation against the course is that it is based on Sunni Islam and marginalises non-Sunnis, particularly Alevis. The Alevi, Laic, Christian, Education and Science Workers' Union representatives and Association of Atheism and Education Reform Initiative all claimed that the course ignores plurality within Islam by not including any information about Alevi faith. The Association of Atheism argued that compulsory religious education courses

> only teach Sunni Islam. This is not an objective religious education. No information on other beliefs or philosophies is taught or promoted. In fact, Sunni Islam is promoted as the ONLY faith (Association of Atheism, 2014b: 7) (capitalisation in original).

According to State Official 1, information about the Alevi faith was included with the 2005 Curriculum which provides general information about the Alevi faith (T16S1). The Alevi representative ridiculed it, arguing that there are just one or two pages devoted to Alevi faith. Moreover, he argued that the course does not accept the Alevi identity, but teaches it from the 'Sunni perspective' which sees Alevism only 'a religious order' (T02ALEVI). Furthermore, he argued that the course teaches Islam from a Sunni perspective. For example,

textbooks include a very detailed explanation of five daily prayers (*namaz* in Turkish), fasting in Ramadan (*oruç*) and pilgrimage to Makkah (*hac* or *hajj*) and these are taught as worship in Islam, but he argued that Alevis do not observe them:

> (…) we neither observe daily prayer, nor perform hajj, nor fast during Ramadan (see also ECtHR, 2007b, 9).

He argued that teaching these Sunni practices to Alevi children as 'Islamic principles' therefore amount to assimilation:

> So if it is not assimilation then what is the meaning of teaching these practices to our children (T02ALEVI).

The Alevi participant argued that compelling Alevi children to take part in this religious education course involuntarily is 'indoctrination by any definition' (T02ALEVI). These points were also raised by other participants who argued that the course is based on Sunni Islam (T04LAIC; T05ATH; T07ESWU; T09ERI).

Some participants disagreed. Some defended the lack of information about the Alevi faith on the grounds that the courses are designed to be 'non-denominational' (e.g. T15A6), while some argued that the course already includes information about Alevism (e.g. T16S1), These arguments also seem to be official arguments. The former argument was used in the 2007 *Zengin* case, when State Officials legitimised the absence of information about Alevi faith by arguing that the subject religious education

> did not take into consideration the vision of members of a branch [*mezhep*] of Islam or a religious order [*tarikat*] represented in the country and, consequently, these topics were not covered. (ECtHR, 2007b, 43).

After the Court decision, this time the latter argument was used by State Official 1 who said that the courses include information about Alevi faith (T16S1).

So far, the accusations of Islamic and Sunni confessionalisms were covered, but a significant number of participants disagreed (T01PRA; T06ETU; T08TUE; T15A6; T16S1; T18T1; T19T2; T20T3). They argued that the subject should not be considered as an Islamic education, since it includes information about different religions and general moral principles by taking the plurality present in the society into consideration. The teachers argued that no worship was allowed in or outside the classes and the course does not aim at making pupils more religious (T18T1; T19T2; T20T3; see also Bolay and Türköne, 1995: 166 for similar arguments). Teacher 3 argued that

> we teach religious culture, not religious education, due to laicism principle.

The participant argued that that should be changed, because that leads parents to find 'alternative places for religious education' (T20T3). Moreover, Educators Trade Union representative argued that

> There is no [confessional] religious education in Turkey. It is a culture course which gives a general information about different religions (E06ETU)

He argued that with these features 'the course is far from making pupils more religious' (T06ETU). Likewise, State Official 1 argued that some people criticise compulsory religious education on freedom of religion grounds, but, he stated:

> the purpose of this course is not to raise devout Muslims but to teach students common religious culture of the society. (T16S1)

Moreover, there were also some participants who accepted that religious education in Turkey favours Islam. For example, academic 6 argued that

> We teach religion according to Quran and Hadith. Our shared values are Quran and Hadith. (T15A6)

These participants argued that this is expected because Islam has moulded the Turkish society and culture and the vast majority of population wants their children to learn Islam (e.g. T01PRA; T06ETU; T15A6 and teachers).

6.3.1.6. Laicism, Nationalism and Atatürk

According to some participants, since the establishment of the Republic, education took on a central role in the process of nation-building and religious education curricula have been constructed according to the Atatürk's laic and nationalistic ideology. The Alevi representative argued that 'all segments of the society should be against' current religious education policy,

> because the State [aims at] raising citizens [who are] obedient to the State (…). The State has put these courses to use religion to control masses. (T02ALEVI)

Some participants argued that the course propagates a laic lifestyle. Academic 6 said that the school, including religious education 'imposed a secular [laic] lifestyle upon people' which leads to 'distance from religion' (T15A6). One academic argued that the State teaches religion not for religious reasons but for 'political reasons'. The aim of religious courses is 'to raise obedient and tolerant citizens' (T11A2). He argued that the State's intention has never been to increase religiosity, but rather to create a 'tamed' religion for itself. This 'tamed' religion is not Islam but a 'national Islam' (T11A2).

Similarly, Teacher 1 argued that the subject wants to create a 'laic society', a society that consists of people who 'have some ethical principles but do not put religion in the centre of their lives' (T18T1). The Educators Trade Union representative argued the Turkish State still 'has reservations about religion' which hinders the provision of proper religious education. Moreover, the participant claimed that the Turkish school curriculum includes

'elements that alienate children from religion' (T06ETU). These participants argued that religious education explicitly or implicitly indoctrinates pupils into laicism.

It should be noted that there were also participants who did not accuse religious education of being confessional. For example, the Religious Affairs and Turk Education Union representatives found teaching of Islam in the curriculum inadequate, but did not argue that the subject indoctrinates pupils into laicism (T01PRA; T08TEU). Moreover, Academics 1, 3, and 5 and State Official 2 found religious education biased towards Sunni Islam and argued that it includes some confessional elements, but they did not call this Sunni confessionality or indoctrination (T10A1; T12A3; T14A5; T17S2). Moreover, State Official 1 saw religious education neither Islamic nor laic confessional education (T16S1). As can be seen there were participants who did not accuse the subject of confessionality or indoctrination, but the majority saw some form of confessionality or indoctrination in Turkish religious education. The confusion was that the same religious education was accused of 'religious', 'Sunni', 'laic' and 'civic' confessionalities.

6.3.2. England

In England, religious education is also criticised and charged with confessionality and sometimes with indoctrination.

6.3.2.1. Is there such thing as a non-confessional RE?

First of all, three participants in my study stressed that there is no such thing as a 'non-confessional' religious education. The REC participant argued that

> every school has got a confessional position with regard to certain basic values (E12REC).

According to the REC participant these values 'cannot' be based on 'a single faith tradition' in community schools, instead they should be based on 'all faiths' (E12REC). Likewise, Academics 3 and 4 pointed to the same issue. The academic 3 said that the idea that 'education can be neutral' is 'mistaken' (E16A3). What these participants argued is that each religious education model is confessional, in the sense that it sides with certain values, therefore it is misnomer to call religious education 'non-confessional' which gives the impression that religious education is value-free. Then, if religious education is confessional, whose confessionality is prevalent?

6.3.2.2. Religious Confessionality

As documented in the Section on Secularisation (see 5.3), the BHA and NSS saw Britain as 'extremely secular' (E04BHA) and one of the 'least religious countries in the world' (E05NSS) in terms of religious practice, belief and the importance of religion, which makes religion a minority activity in Britain (E04BHA). The NSS, therefore, questioned the current religious education policy, arguing that that religious education places 'undue emphasis on religion' and attaches 'a disproportionate significance to the importance of religion in people's lives' (E05NSS). The BHA representative said that

> If you asked a class of young people who came through religious education, what percentage of the country [did] attend places of worship on average week? The real answer is six per cent. I guarantee that [these young people] would think 50 per cent or something. They got completely exaggerated sense of the importance of religion in society. (E04BHA).

Moreover, it was also argued that Christianity and other religious organisations are by law granted 'privileged input into what is taught in RE'; as a result, the subject 'too often morphs into religious instruction, or acts as a conduit for promoting religious belief' (National Secular Society, 2013: 3). The BHA and NSS expressed concern that religious education

provides an opportunity for religiously people to spread their views in the classrooms. They argued this is because religious education does not receive enough funding and the religiously active groups exploit this situation by offering schools free resources related to religious education (E04BHA; National Secular Society, 2013: 4).

Another issue that was found problematic by some participants is the exclusion of non-religious worldviews from the religious education syllabus and non-religious representatives from agreed syllabus conferences (E04BHA; E05NSS; E14A1; E18S1). According to the BHA representative, 'most of the schools do not teach Humanism'. He added that 'that is sort of distortion (…) misleading young people', because they only learn religions (E04BHA). As can be seen the subject was charged with bias towards religions, especially by the BHA and NSS, but there was a difference. The BHA representative used words like 'distortion' and 'misleading' but stopped short of accusing the subject of indoctrination, while the NSS used the words 'lack of impartiality', 'classroom evangelism', 'proselytization' to describe the situation (National Secular Society, 2013).

However, what the BHA representative and the NSS have in common is that both argued that there has been still resistance to full secularisation of the subject, which is, according to them, a must for such a secular and plural society as Britain. In other words, society is 'extremely secular', but religious education policy has not completely secularised yet, partly due to pressure coming from religious groups.

6.3.2.3. Christian Confessionality

Another criticism levelled at the subject is that it disproportionally gives more weight to Christianity than other religions. According to some participants, this could give a mistaken impression that Christianity is somehow more important than other religions. The Sunni and

Shia representatives were especially critical of this issue. The Sunni representative recalled one of the incidents he encountered:

> One parent came to me and said
>
> 'My six-year old son said [to me] that "I saw the God". I said that you can't see God. God is not seen. [My son then] said "I went to the church and I saw him on the cross".'
>
> So, can you see the obvious problem in all of these really? It is actually confusing the child. [It] creates a lot of confusion in the minds of young children. They do not understand their own religion, but guess what? Other religions are being introduced to them (…). It is *indoctrinating* the child from a parental point of view because the primary culture of the child actually happens not be Christian, they have an Islamic background. From my point of view, people have the right to raise their children according to their belief, it is not the schools' child, it is the parents' child (E07SUNNI) (emphasis added).

The Sunni representative raised two issues here. On the one hand, the participant argued, multi-faith religious education confuses young minds. The solution, the participant argued, is to teach pupils properly their own religions first, and then introduce other religions in later stages, or to remove religious education from the curriculum (see also Zaki, 1982: 35). On the other hand, both the Sunni and Shia representatives argued that despite the rhetoric of treating all religions equally, Christianity remains the first among equals in religious education not only in Church schools but also in community schools. They argued that in schools with a significant number of Muslim pupils, the syllabuses should 'take adequate account of or reflect' the children's religious backgrounds (E07SUNNI). The Shia representative argued that there are some community schools where ninety-nine percent of their intake is Muslim', but the syllabuses fail to reflect this (E08SHIA). This failure gives rise to 'indoctrination' of young children into Christianity according to the Sunni representative.

Moreover, the Sunni representative was also critical of teachers, arguing that the majority of them have a 'Christian background' and 'do not know Islam or other religions'. These

teachers, according to him, 'just teach what they are comfortable with' (E07SUNNI). Apart from Sunni and Shia representatives, some participants criticised religious education teaching especially in primary schools. Teacher 1 who was a secondary school teacher said that teachers in primary schools often 'expect [pupils] to be Christian'. He argued that even though the primary school teachers would say that we 'do not try to do that', in reality 'that's the impression the students come through with' (E20T1). This was also raised by State Official 2 who argued that 'many primary teachers are still unsure what precisely they are doing with this subject', and some of them understand the subject as raising Christians (E19S2). In my sample, none of the teachers would accept that they expect children to be Christian. In fact, Teacher 2 argued that the way they teach religious education leads to further pluralisation and secularisation (E21T2).

Moreover, some participants criticised, what they called the 'Christian bias' in religious education policy. The NSS argued that the law 'privileges Christianity' and this reflects 'the desire of the Church of England, which believes that religious education teaching in England should have a "central focus on Christianity".' (National Secular Society, 2013: 3). According to BHA and NSS, this is because in the face of decline in church attendance and membership, schools provide 'the only real opportunity to reach children with its message' (National Secular Society, 2013: 3). The NSS and BHA participant argued that this is also because of politicians who do not want to change legislation for 'fear of the condemnation of religious leaders, protecting their self-interest' (National Secular Society, 2013: 4).

However, other participants argued that it is fair that Christianity is given more time than other religions in religious education, partly because of cultural reasons. Anglican Representative 1 said that

> The typical syllabus gives 60 per cent of the time to Christianity and 40 per cent to other religious traditions. So it's got this balance. (E01ANG1)

Similarly, Anglican Representative 2 said that Christianity should be 'the main motif all the way through' in syllabuses (E02ANG2). These participants defended this, arguing that the majority of the population is Christian and Christianity has been a significant factor in the development of British culture (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E03CATH; E20T1).

6.3.2.4. Secular Confessionality

Even though some participants criticised the subject of being religious or Christian confessionality, others (and sometimes the same participants) accused it of secular 'indoctrination'. One participant argued there has always been a 'dialectic' relationship between religious education and factors shaping it:

> Religious education both responded to these factors and [became] part of the creating these factors (E11NATRE).

In this sense, this was expected. However, some participants criticised it, arguing that this 'form of confessionalism' is 'as controversial as more well-recognised religious forms' (E17A4).

One accusation levelled at the subject is that it undermines religion, because the lessons are used as a platform for criticism of religion (Moulin, 2015: 143). The Sunni participant argued that pupils were asked:

> 'If there is a God in the world, why is there so much evil?'
>
> Now what is the purpose of asking that question, you tell me, to an eight-year-old? I know the answer, they can ask me, but an eight-year-old child does not know the answer. What he is going to do is to have doubts in God. (E07SUNNI).

He argued that religious education in this way 'encourages the development of secular perspectives about religion', which are based on 'suspicion of religion' and 'negative feelings' about religion, but he immediately noted that this is not the case in every religious education lesson, it 'depends on who is teaching it', then added

> [If] atheists, agnostics or even religion haters [teach it], they [will] use those opportunities to undermine belief in God. (E07SUNNI)

Another criticism was that religious education distances pupils from faith by creating the impression that 'religion is what other people practice' (E16A3). Teacher 2 argued that RE teachers start with the premise that 'children really do not believe anything'. Moreover, according to her, religions were portrayed as something that 'other' people follow:

> This is what Christians believe, this is what Muslims believe. *We can't assume anyone believes anything.* Even more pluralistic. (E21T2; the participant's emphasis).

What these participants stressed was that religion is constructed as the distant 'other' in religious education, which might lead children to understand and construct themselves as 'secular', who have nothing to do with religion (see Sjöborg, 2013a, 2013b). According to Teacher 2, this creates more and more pluralisation and secularisation, because the way religions were portrayed has implications for the children (E21T2).

Three participants argued that, due to the influence of secularisation, religious education, as the whole school curricula, propagates a fact/belief divide (E07SUNNI; E16A3; E17A4). The Sunni representative, called this religious/secular divide (see also Mabud, 1992: 89-90; Zaki, 1982: 34). Academic 4 argued that the fact/belief divide regards scientific knowledge as 'valid'. In this way, the participant argued, scientific knowledge was sacralised but religious knowledge was portrayed as 'subjective, personal, vague, unreliable' and 'mere opinion' (E16A3; E17A4) and this 'indoctrination (…) has produced an increasingly

secularised society' (E17A4). The Sunni representative argued that people even do not recognise that they have been indoctrinated into secularisation:

> ask [teachers] to make a distinction which subjects are secular, which are religious, these are people who have been teaching for five, ten years whatever (…) The vast majority of them will put basically physics, biology and so on secular. (…) Now that dichotomy of religious and secular actually is a secular construction, so you accept that categorisation which essentially secular you did not know it is secular. You hold very secular belief without knowing you embraced it.

For him there is no such thing as the fragmentation between sacred and secular:

> God created everything; to believe that anything can exist outside the realm, power and authority of God is actually *kufr* [blasphemy] (E7SUNNI).

These three participants were critical of education system and religious education. They used words like 'indoctrination' (E16A3) 'secularist indoctrination' (E17A4), 'secularist agenda' (E17A4), 'secular construction' (E07SUNNI), 'secular belief' (E07SUNNI) and 'conditioning' (E17A4) to describe religious education and education in England and argued that this is unacceptable, because, according to them, the fact/belief divide indoctrinates children into the idea that religion is 'vague' and 'unreliable' (E07SUNNI; E16A3; E17A4; see also Ashton, 2000; Cooling, 2010; Watson, 2014). They also noted that while society is aware of the dangers of religious indoctrination, secularist indoctrination receives less attention (see also Copley, 2005).

Another criticism which is related to fact/belief divide was the charge of relativism. Furedi (2004: 4) defines relativism as 'a perspective that contends that conceptions of truth and moral values are not absolute but are relative to the persons or groups holding them'. In interviews conducted in England, relativism was used in two different ways. Some participants used 'relativism' to mean that religious education gives the impression that

religions are equally false, i.e. they are all 'mere opinions', which are 'unreliable' (E16A3; E17A4; E07SUNNI).

Yet some participants used 'relativism' to mean that religions are presented as equally true in religious education, arguing that religious education policy did not allow for a critical enquiry for the sake of promoting social cohesion, tolerance and respect. Teacher 2 argued that this is 'almost relativistic' (E21T2; E03CATH; E18S1). These participants did not see it as secular confessionality per se, but 'civil' confessionality.

6.3.2.5. Civil Confessionality

Another charge of confessionality levelled at the subject was civil confessionality, that is, the State has been using the subject to produce a certain kind of citizen. State Official 1 argued that

> I think RE (…) in this country has abandoned one of form of confessionalism that aimed to produce a Bible reading, devout Conformist Anglicans, and has taken up another form of confessionalism which is to produce tolerant citizens. I think that while there is a very small step in good direction, it is still form of confessionalism. (E18S1).

This issue was also raised by BHA, State Official 2 and Teacher 2 (E04BHA; E19S2; E21T2) who argued that the subject was separated from critical analysis of religions for the sake of community cohesion. According to these participants, teachers and pupils should have freedom to criticise some aspects of religion, but the State prevents the teachers from doing it. According to State Official 2, this 'undermines the intellectual credibility of the subject' (E19S2). The remedy suggested by the BHA presentative, the State Officials 1 and 2 and teacher 2 was that religious education should have a critical element. This issue will be explored in the next section, suffice it to say that this separation from critical analysis amounts to a form of confessionality according to these participants.

However, in England too, there were participants who did not accuse religious education of confessionality. For example, none of the representatives of professional religious education organisations argued that religious education is 'confessional', even though they see some problems with religious education (E09AULRE; E10NASACRE; E11NATRE; E12REC). Moreover, Academics 1 and 2, Anglican Representative 1 and Teacher 1 did not use the words like confessional or indoctrination to describe religious education in England, (E01ANG1; E14A1; E15A2; E20T1). In this sense, a significant number of participants did not see religious education in England as confessional or indoctrinatory, as opposed to Turkey.

6.3.3. Comparison

It has long been recognised that the relation between wider factors and (religious) education is one of reciprocal influence; that is, religious education (Copley, 2005; Fancourt, 2012; Moulin, 2016; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003: 4-5) and state education in general (Becker, Nagler and Woessmann, 2014; Dobbelaere, 1981; Mocan and Pogorelova, 2014; Norris and Inglehart, 2011: 185) are both influenced by and contributory towards wider factors. Then, it is expected that religious education would contribute to the socio-political environment within which it operates and by which it was shaped. Yet, in interviews, in both countries religious education policy was 'criticised' by the participants for being an agent of wider factors. Terms with negative connotations such as 'indoctrination', 'assimilation', 'secularist agenda', 'distortion', 'misleading', 'classroom evangelism', 'proselytization', 'conditioning' and 'neutralisation' were used to describe religious education policy.

In both countries, the criticisms fell into three broad categories: religious, secular and civil confessionality. Religious confessionality can be further divided into religious confessionality and denominational confessionality like Sunni confessionality. When the

participants charged their respective religious education policies of religious confessionality, they claimed that the subject has resisted to the forces of pluralisation, secularisation and international human rights standards. For example, the Turkish participants who charged the subject with Sunni confessionality argued that the subject ignores and marginalises Alevi faith and other religions and world views. In other words, religious education does not reflect the plurality within society. An interesting finding is that in Turkey, among some participants there was a concern for 'Sunni' indoctrination, but in England, no participant mentioned 'Protestant' or 'Anglican', or 'Church of England' confessionality, even though what was non-denominational was 'Protestant in its general standpoint' (Chadwick, 1997: 10).

In contrast, the participants who charged the subject with secular confessionality claimed that the subject was enmeshed in wider factors, so much so that it is now acting as their agents. Academics 3 and 4 in England claimed that the subject has been influenced by secularisation so much so that it could be labelled as 'secularist indoctrination' which helps to produce 'an increasingly secularised society' (E17A4).

In his seminal work, Terence Copley (2005: 6) argued that

> While European history has made westerners very cautious about the dangers of religious indoctrination, they are culturally less ready to receive and examine evidence for secular indoctrination. (see also Poulter, Riitaoja and Kuusisto, 2016: 74; Watson, 1993: 21-22).

This might be true for the wider public, but it does not seem to be the case among my participants who openly expressed their concerns about secular indoctrination as well as religious indoctrination.

Moreover, some participants accused the subject of civil indoctrination. According to these participants, the State and politics have hijacked the subject to promote social cohesion, tolerance and respect in England and to create obedient citizens who have some moral foundations but do not put religion in the centre of their lives in Turkey. This issue will be explored in the next section, but it was clear that this was also seen as a form of confessionality.

The difference between two countries is that in England, there were more participants who were concerned about secular indoctrination than those who argued that there is religious indoctrination, which reflects a growing literature that are concerned about secular confessionality in English state schools (Barnes, 2006, 2014, 2015; Barnes and Wright, 2006; Cooling, 2010, 2012b; Copley, 2005; Gearon, 2013c, 2014; Mabud, 1992; Moulin, 2009, 2011, 2015, 2016; Thompson, 2004a, 2004b; Watson, 2007; Zaki, 1982). In contrast, in Turkey, there were more participants who raised their concerns about religious and Sunni confessionality/indoctrination taking place in schools, which reflects a growing literature which accuse religious education in Turkey of Sunni, confessionality/or indoctrination (Akbulut and Usal, 2008; Altıparmak, 2013; Çınar, 2013; Dündar, 2012; ECtHR, 2007b, 2014, 2015; Erol, 2015; European Commission, 2014, 2015; Gürcan, 2015; Meral, 2015; MRG, n.d.; Müftügil, 2011). Of course there are also other studies that are concerned with religious and civic confessionality in England (e.g. Chater and Erricker, 2013; Grayling, 2014) and secular and civic (including *Kemalist*) confessionality/indoctrination in Turkey (Bolay and Türköne, 1995; Bozan, 2016; Dilipak, 1991; Gür, 2016: 9; Shively, 2008, 2013). Moreover, another difference was that there were more Turkish participants than English participants who accused their respective religious education polices of confessionality or indoctrination; 13 (T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T04LAIC; T05ATH; T06ETU; T07ESWU;

T09ERI; T11A2; T13A4; T15A6; T18T1; T19T2; T20T3) to 10 (E05CATH; E04BHA; E05NSS; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E16A3; E17A4; E18S1; E19S2; E20T1) respectively.

Whether there is actually secular or religious indoctrination in England and Turkey is a matter of further research, in my interviews, the religious education policies of Turkey and England were charged with both indoctrinations.

The limitation of this section is that it did not give enough space to those participants who did not argue that there is religious or secular confessionality. In this sense, the section has a 'negativity bias' (Rozin and Royzman, 2001), which shows that there are still a significant number of policy actors in Turkey and England who charged their respective religious education with confessionality and indoctrination and this shows that more can be done in religious education policy to address the concerns of different policy actors. The next section will also have a 'negativity bias' by exploring omissions and additions.

6.4. Omissions and Additions

In both countries, some participants argued that religions are not taught as they are in religious education courses. They argued that there are serious omissions from and additions to religious education: on the one hand, religions are restricted and limited to certain themes and phenomena, leaving some important, and controversial parts of religion out; on the other hand, religious education is hijacked by social and political topics which have limited relevance to religions.

6.4.1. Turkey

According to some Turkish participants, the subject distorts and misrepresents religion by omitting some parts of it. It was argued that this has two aspects. On the one hand Islam was

divorced from its socio-political ambitions. On the other hand, criticism against and negative aspects of religions are avoided in order to promote social cohesion or to please religious communities, in this case, Muslims.

6.4.1.1. Laicism and Taming Islam

It has long been recognised that the 'secular state', as Tulasiewicz (1993: 21) argues, may prevent religious education from teaching religious principles that conflict with secular principles. According to some participants this is the case in Turkey (see also Aşlamacı and Kaymakcan, 2017: 287; Kaymakcan, 1998, 2006; Shively, 2008; Thobani, 2010: 29-30). Some participants argued that religious education was guaranteed a place in laic state schools so long as and insofar as it does not promote any views which are seen contradictory to laicism and nationalism, two founding principles of Atatürk's Turkey. In this sense, laicism principle restricts and controls the way the subject presents and teaches religions. For example, Academic 2 argued that in Turkey

> There is no separation of the State and religion [in Turkey]. The State was separated from religious influence, but religion was not separated from the influence of the State.

He gave religious education as an example:

> It still is not possible to teach legal aspects of Islam. (T11A2)

By 'legal aspects', the participant meant the prohibitions and punishments in Islam, such as the *hadd* punishment for theft which is to cut off a hand. According to one teacher, textbooks still do not mention

> important topics such as commandment of headscarf, prohibition of interest and alcohol and Islamic principles about the relationship between women and men. (T18T1; see also Shively, 2013: 214)

Moreover, Academic 2 also claimed that religious education 'only focuses on this world, leaving off the afterlife', which is one of the central themes in Islam (T11A2; also, T20T3). Teacher 1 said that

> We only teach what the State wants, rather than what should be taught in religious education. (T18T1)

These participants criticised the State and politicians, arguing that religious education was used to instil values compatible with laic state, leaving off religious values, ideas and norms which are regarded as conflicting and questioning laic and nationalistic values. However, omissions were not always 'bad' for religion. According to some participants, there were omissions which aimed at favouring religion. State Official 2 said that

> We teach religions as if they always preach peace, [but] they sometimes command wars. I think we should find the balance and be honest to children. They should learn the reality of life (T17S2)

For State Official 2, the courses omit violence caused by religions (see also Yıldırım, 2012: 10). Similarly, Education Reform Initiative suggested that religious education courses still do not provide any information about religious violence (ERI, 2012: 111). The Education and Science Workers' Union and Alevi representatives argued that this omission was intentionally made to make religion, Islam, look nice to children, so this was related to the aim of raising 'religious' (*dindar*) generations, or in the Education and Science Workers' Union representative's words, 'revengeful' (*kindar*) generations who, according to the participant, would cause more violence in the future (T07ESWU; T02ALEVI; T05ATH).

Another form of omission, according to some participants, is that religious education does not acknowledge differences within Islam. It was argued that Islam is taught as if all Muslims believe and practice the same thing. The Alevi representative argued that an 'authorised version of religion' is taught in religious education courses that ignores plurality

within Islam (T02ALEVI). According to the Alevi participant, this also amounts to Sunni indoctrination which was discussed in the previous section (also, T04LAIC; T05ATH; T07ESWU).

6.4.1.2. Additions

On the one hand the subject omitted certain aspects of religion, on the other hand, it was filled with topics unrelated to religion, some participants argued. In Turkey, especially teachers criticised the subject of including topics completely irrelevant to religion. According to teachers, there are units about 'Atatürk', 'laicism', 'national holidays', 'love for motherland' in religious education, and these topics account for a significant part the official textbooks (T18T1; T19T2; T20T3). According to Teacher 1, these topics account for the half of the subject (T18T1).

According to Teacher 3, when they did not cover these topics, they faced charges from the Ministry of National Education (T20T3). He himself recounted two incidents he encountered. Teacher 3 informed me that in Turkey every teacher must make a plan that shows the topics to be covered in the lessons. The participant said that once he did not put anything about Atatürk in his plan; when one inspector saw this, he was threatened with a penalty, so he put Atatürk in his plan. Another incident happened when another inspector came to lesson to observe him;

> I taught a topic from the textbook, as we usually did. Everything was fine, but towards the end of the lesson, the inspector said to me that 'now share your views about Atatürk with the pupils'. The inspector had no right to say such a thing, but [they do]. (T20T3)

According to Teacher 3 and Teacher 1, these irrelevant topics are one of the most important barriers to proper religious education in state schools (T20T3; T18T1). The three teachers

in my sample all complained about topics such as Atatürk, laicism and national holidays in religious education courses. When I asked them whether they actually cover these topics. Teacher 2 said that he tried to avoid these topics. Teacher 1 said that even when they tried to cover these topics, they faced reactions from students;

> If a student says 'My teacher! What on earth does this topic has to do with religion?', then we cannot talk about *religious education* in these courses. (T18T1; the participant's emphasis)

The issue of irrelevant topics in religious education was also raised by other participants (T03CHR; T06ETU; T08TUE; T11A2; T14A4). For example, the Turk Education Union representative claimed that religious education includes many things, therefore 'there is little [information about] Islam in the course' (T08TUE).

According to the Christian participant, the books used in minority schools should be approved by the Ministry of National Education. I asked him whether they face difficulties in obtaining approval for the books, he said that

> They have a template. *Vatan, millet Sakarya*, so and so. If we write them, they do not intervene in the rest of the book.

The phrase, '*vatan, millet, Sakarya*' (motherland, nation, Sakarya) is a famous phrase in Turkey which refers to patriotism, and can be used with negative and positive connotations. So, the participant meant that when their books follow the official template and cover topics related to love for motherland, they can get approval easily.

In short, some Turkish participants claimed that there are omissions and additions in religious education. Even though this issue was not mentioned by all participants, it was still mentioned by a significant number of Turkish participants.

6.4.2. England

In England, there were criticisms against the subject that it omitted some important aspects of religion and was colonised by topics irrelevant to religious education (see also Cush, 2016b: 66-67). Some of these criticisms were raised in relation to the aim of social cohesion. Most participants were critical that the subject was hijacked by a political project of promoting social cohesion. The participants noted that they were not against the aim of social cohesion itself, but what they were against was distortion of religions for the sake of community cohesion and leaving little time for actual study of religions.

According to these participants, this aim distorts religions in two ways. Firstly, it did not touch issues which might 'offend' religious families and pupils (see also Chater and Erricker, 2013: 71; REC, 2013: 55). This issue was touched above, now I will expand on it. According to State Official 1,

> The guiding ethic [in religious education] too often is simply a desire to avoid causing offence (…) to plurality of different racial, ethnic and religious groups which exist in this country. (E18S1)

According to him, this stance results in the loss of critical edge of the subject:

> It inhibits many teachers from being critical about religious ideas and practices. (E18S1).

This issue was also raised by other participants who argued that the subject lost its critical edge (E04BHA; E05NSS; E19S2; E21T2). According Teacher 2, that made the subject

> simplistic like respect all beliefs, [raising her voice] RESPECT ALL BELIEFS. What about, you know, bad beliefs? What about Islamic State [Daesh]? We are not going to respect their beliefs. What sort of policy is that? Stupid. So, RE suffered and it lost its rigour. (T21T2)

The BHA representative was also critical about this. He argued that

> RE often gives the impression that religion is generally good, religious people believe nice things. Religious people are lovely people. [For example] it is not an unusual question on GSCE paper, something like 'Give different reasons why Christians and other religions care for environment and compare them'. The question is not 'do Christians care for the environment? Yes, No? and How?' (E04BHA).

In this way, the participant argued, the subject does not allow 'full discussion of different elements of religions and beliefs' because the aim is to tell 'nice things' about religions. According to BHA representative this is one of the negative impacts of pluralisation on religious education policy (E04BHA).

Some participants highlighted the difficulty faced by religious education teachers: teachers are afraid to upset religious pupils and families. The participants used adjectives like 'worried' (E01ANG1), 'anxious' (E02ANG2), 'not confident' (E02ANG2; E10NASACRE; E20T1) to describe the state of religious education teachers. Teacher 1 said that teachers are afraid of inquiry, because when they open sensitive and controversial issues, and 'if a student says that all Muslims are terrorists, they do not know how to deal with that', therefore they often avoid controversial topics (E20T1).

Secondly, it was argued that religions were distorted because the subject neglect their socio-political ambitions and truth claims (see also Barnes, 2006: 410; Barnes and Wright, 2006; Conroy et al., 2013: 124; Wright, 2004, 2007). For example, the Sunni representative argued that a 'sanitized' version of Islam is taught in religious education;

> They want to present a more sanitized version of Islam. Some people calling [it] European Islam, you know what I mean, which they are comfortable with, as opposed to say a more politicized form of it, yeah.

The participant worried that

> So perhaps submitting [Islam] to the idea of public and private [dichotomy where religion belongs to private domain]. It distorts Islam [by] fit[ting it] into the matchbox of secularism, matchbox of Christianity, because it is distortion. Islam should be explained in the way that it is, you can disagree with that which is fine, you only study a little bit anyway, so you do not have an opportunity to understand all of Islam. Islam should be understood as a way of life, not a something belonging to private domain (E07SUNNI).

For the participant, religious education teaches a 'sanitised' version of Islam. Some participants, too, expressed that religions are distorted in religious education. These participants pointed to thematic teaching, which, according to them, gave the impression that all religions are the same (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E03CATH).

6.4.2.1. Additions

There were also criticisms that there were additions to religious education (see also Copley, 2008: 10-11; CORAB, 2015: 34; Dinham, 2015: 30). State Official 2 said that

> One of the things we discovered is that [there is] not enough religion in religious education, because especially in secondary schools, philosophical, environmental and ethical issues are discussed in RE. (E19S2).

Ofsted (2010, 2013) reports raised similar concerns, arguing that religious education courses focused on social, moral and philosophical issues at the expense of a proper study of religions and that there was a tendency to sanitise religions:

> It was rare to find topics related to, for example, the study of deeper aspects of religious belief, the controversial nature of religion, or the changing patterns of religion and belief in the contemporary world. (Ofsted, 2013: 14)

Furthermore, some participants criticised the additions that favoured religions. The NSS and BHA participant argued that the subject attributes a greater role to religion than it actually plays in people's lives (E04BHA; E05NSS). They claimed that there are additions to religious education and they described it as a problem, but for them the problem was not that

there was little religion in religious education, on the contrary, the problem was that many issues are added to religious education which gives the impression that they are 'specifically religious concern[s]':

> Environmental issues should primarily be covered in geography lessons, but where the ethical aspects are explored, it is inappropriate for environmentalism to be presented as a specifically religious concern. (National Secular Society, 2013: 7).

As can be seen, like Turkey, in England too, some participants pointed to omissions from and additions to religious education.

6.4.3. Comparison

As can be seen in both countries, there were concerns about omissions from and additions to religious education. The concern here was that they hindered a proper systematic study of religion. These omissions and additions were attributed to wider factors by the participants. Some commentators argued that against massive social change, religious education policy has been changed and sometimes adapted into something else entirely, to make the subject relevant to contemporary society (see Copley, 2008: 10-11; Freathy and Parker, 2013: 246-247; Kay, 2000b: 33; Moulin, 2015: 135-136). Some participants' accounts seemed to support this claim. These participants argued that these omissions and additions were done to make religious education useful or to make it look useful to secular state and plural society.

In both countries, there were similar concerns. For example, in both countries, some participants argued that the subject was hijacked by politicians to be used for socio-political projects and populated by irrelevant topics. These accounts give some weight to Dinham's (2015: 30) argument that in Europe religious education 'is primarily intended to perform a specific social function – to connect across difference' in the face of 'growing diversity' (see

also Levitt and Muir, 2014: 218-219). In some cases, this take the form of security: the use of religious education for security purposes; which makes religious education lesson, what Gearon (2013a) calls '*Counter Terrorist Classroom*' (see also Gearon, 2017a). Whether religious education should have such a specific function and whether it is successful in this function were matters of debate among my participants.

Moreover, according to the participants, some aspects of religions were omitted from religious education. Of course, as some participants admitted, it is not possible to teach every aspect of religion in a course which often has one hour a week, but the participants argued that, the topics omitted are important topics that should be covered, such as truth claims and socio-political ambitions of religions, which is 'indoctrination by omission' according to Watson (1992a: 2). Some participants argued that in this way, religions were 'tamed' and 'sanitised' (Kay, 2000a; Shively, 2008, 2013) and fitted into 'matchbox of secularism' (E07SUNNI).

The issue of omission in school textbooks and education policy is hardly a new problem (Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 12; McCulloch, 2004: 68). These issues were also raised in previous comparative studies. Matemba (2011: 250) lamented that religious education in Scotland and Malawi side-lined religious issues in favour of issues that 'frankly should not be the concern of RE at all'. Moreover, Alberts (2007: 25-28) argued that study of religions should include analyses of religious conflicts and a critical assessment of religions (see also Watson, 2012: 19), to offset the so-called 'clash of civilisations' (Huntington, 1993) and future conflicts.

However, what this study found is that there were cross-case and within case similarities and differences. For example, some participants claimed that religious education lacked a critical assessment of religions for the sake of community cohesion and not offending

religious believers (e.g. T17S2; E18S1). These participants would support Alberts' plea that religious education should include a critical assessment of religions. Yet, some participants disagreed, claiming that contemporary religious education already includes criticism of religion, because it studies religions from a secular perspective which sees religions as 'mere opinions' that are not 'reliable' (e.g. E16A3) and it implicitly or explicitly undermines 'belief in God' (E07SUNNI)

The issue of omissions and additions is closely related to the topic of the next section, that is, confusion, which is the result of the collision of opposing factors and actors that seek to shape religious education policy. It is my contention that when the subject does not have a clear aim and thereby tries to cover many aims and things, it ends up in having something from everything and fails to cover adequately many of these (see Conroy, 2012; Conroy et al., 2013: 220; Zaki, 1982: 37). This results in omissions and additions as well as confusion. The next section explores confusion.

6.5. Confusion

In interviews in both countries, one issue was recurrent: confusion about religious education policy. According to some participants, this was due to the fact that various and contradictory factors and rival actors have influenced religious education policy in both countries and this has created confusion which has had a negative impact on the subject.

6.5.1. Turkey

Some participants claimed that there is confusion about religious education policy in Turkey. According to Academics 2 and 5 and Teacher 2, the confusion over religious education policy partly stems from the uneasy marriage between religion and laic compulsory state

education (T11A2; T14A5; T19T2). Academic 5 argued that teaching of religion requires 'delicacy' which, inter alia, means 'being free from coercion', reminding me a verse from the Qur'an: 'There is no compulsion in religion' (Qur'an, 2: 256). The participant went on to argue that, in contrast, the compulsory secular school system that is based on assessment and examinations, forces pupils to take and pass a course even if the pupils do not like it. According to the participant, religious education does not quite fit into this system.

The participant gave the situation of teachers as an example: religious education teachers face 'paradox' and 'confusion' in this system: when they give grades according to children's test scores, they are afraid of alienating pupils from 'religion' because pupils generally like the courses that they score high grades in, but when teachers give grades generously, then pupils do not show the same dedication and respect to religious education as they show to other courses (T14A5).

Of course, the confusion here revolves around the question of whether religious education has a duty to make pupils love religious education, and more controversially, religion. For some participants of this study, this is indeed a duty of religious education. For example, Teacher 2 mentioned the same problem, saying that when there is no examination in religious education, pupils do not regard it as an important subject, but the exams push children to learn and memorise information that would help them in exams. Neither scenario 'helps us to reach our aim', Teacher 2 argued, who saw the aim of 'good' religious education as 'making children more righteous' (T19T2).

According to Academic 2 and Teacher 1, and State Official 2 some parents want religious education teachers to instils Islamic values (T11A2; T17S2; T18T1). Academic 2 who was a religious education teacher in the past, talked about 'awkward' situations when teachers face reactions of parents whose children received low grades from religious education, like

'Is not my child righteous [Muslim] enough?' (T11A2). The participant argued that some parents mix assessment in religious education with religiosity, which puts religious education teachers in 'awkward' situations. Academic 2 said that one solution to this problem that teachers tend to give high grades to entice students (see Jokić and Hargreaves, 2015; Müftügil, 2011: 196).

The confusion here is that some parents and teachers mix Turkish religious education with religious upbringing. That might be a misjudgement by teachers and parents, but as some participants argue, the religious education policy itself might give that impression. As some participants argued, religious education policy itself aims at raising religious generations (e.g. T02ALEVI; T07ESWU). In my sample too, some participants argued that the aim of religious education is to raise religious pupils. Interestingly some participants argued that the aim of religious education is to teach religions in the right way, but they added that if this is achieved, pupils will become righteous Muslims anyway. The Turk Education Union representative said, 'Islam which is taught in the right way will be embraced and practised by pupils' (T08TUE; also, T01PRA; T15A6). However, other participants objected to this. They said that religious education in Turkey does not have a religious aim, rather its aim is to give pupils knowledge about different religions (T06ETU; T12A3; T14A4; T14A5; T17S2). Some of these participants lamented that the subject does not have a religious aim (e.g. E06ETU), while others said that in a compulsory subject in laic schools, a religious aim has no place (T12A3; T14A4; T14A5; T17S2). As can be seen there seems also confusion among participants regarding the aim of the subject.

6.5.1.1. Religion is Confusing

Two participants talked about, what they argued, is the confusion inherent in religion. For these participants confusion around religious education policy does in fact stem from

religion itself. The Atatürkist Thought Association representative argued that 'religion is in contradiction to science' (T04LAIC). It means that teaching religion alongside secular courses confuses the minds of young children, because they represent two different mind-sets. As stated above, this was one of the reasons behind the abolition of religious courses from the curriculum in the 1920s, when the Turkish statesmen and intelligentsia believed that religion contradicts science and therefore religion is barrier to modernisation (T13A4).

Moreover, the Education and Science Workers' Union representative highlighted that religious education in early years is problematic. The participant said that therefore they are against religious courses, inter alia, on pedagogical grounds;

> Our opposition to religious education [complete removal of religious courses] not only stems from equality principle [of laicism], but also stems from our pedagogical understanding. Religious education at an early age is problematic, since religious knowledge is abstract and therefore it is not suitable for children. (T07ESWU).

For the participant, abstract religious knowledge is not suitable for young children. As discussed above, in Turkey there is no religious education course from first to third grades of elementary schools.

According to Academic 4, some of the Republican elites and educationalists have been influenced by secular thinkers such as Rousseau who argued in his book 'Emile' (Rousseau, [1762] 1979) that children cannot understand abstract concepts before the age of 16 and that they are unable to believe until that age. According to the participant, the absence of religious education in the first three years of elementary education has been a remnant of that understanding. Even though the representative of the ESWU did not provide any age from which receiving religious knowledge would be suitable, it is clear that she did not see the fourth grade when pupils are 10/11 years old as suitable for receiving religious

knowledge. Probably, that's why she said that as a Union, they were in favour of complete removal of religious courses from the curriculum (T07ESWU).

6.5.1.2. Opposing Actors and Factors

Some participants argued that religious education that is intended to serve all pupils regardless of their religious beliefs tries to please everyone and this leads to confusion. Academic 5 argued that

> religious education has a curriculum which tries to please everybody, Sunnis, Alevis, Laics and so on (T14A5).

State Officials 1 and 2 talked about the difficulty in pleasing everybody in terms of religious education policy (T16S1; T17S2). According to Academic 2, this resulted in the subject containing non-confessional and confessional elements at the same time, which has a confusing effect (T11A2).

Moreover, some participants argued that actors have different expectations from the subject, which results in contradictions. For example, Academic 2 recalled that some families demanded more Islamic oriented teaching from him when he was a teacher (T11A2). Similarly, Teacher 1 said that he 'met many parents who wanted more Islamic religious education for their children' (T18T1). As can be seen in the section on Charge of Confessionality, these different expectations sometimes result in teachers' departure from written textbooks (see also Müftügil, 2011: 211).

6.5.1.3. Denominational or Non-Denominational

The data shows that there is a confusion over the interpretation of religious education policy. The issue of non-denominational teaching is a case in point. The official English translation

of the curriculum stated that a 'non-sectarian' approach was adopted in the religious education curriculum, which means that the curriculum is 'not based on any denomination' (MEB DÖGM, 2010b: 2). Some participants in this study called this 'supra-sectarian' (*mezhepler* üstü) approach, which centres around Islam, maintains unity of Islam and excludes formulations belonging to and information about any denomination. For example, Academic 6 argued that

> In our country, there is no denominational teaching. We teach religion according to the Qur'an and Sunnah. (T15A6)

However, this understanding has partly changed and the curriculum now includes information about specific denominations, notably about the Alevi faith. This was partly because of the accusations of some Alevis that religious education is based on Sunni Islam and there is no information regarding the Alevi faith (ECtHR, 2007b). In my fieldwork, the Alevi, Atatürkist Thought Association, Education and Science Workers' Union and Christian representatives all argued that religious education is based on Sunni Islam, and there is little information about the Alevi faith (T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T04LAIC; T07ESWU).

There are two issues here. On the one hand, what some participants perceived as Islamic teaching was perceived as Sunni teaching by others. On the other hand, the exclusion of information about denominations was seen as a supra-sectarian approach by some, but sectarian approach by others. Of course the second confusion was related to the first one, because, the participants saw the exclusion of information about Alevi faith as sectarian, because they claimed the subject is already based on Sunni Islam, i.e. it already contains information about a specific denomination. That seems one of the biggest confusions religious education face in Turkey (see also Kaymakcan, 2010).

6.5.1.4. Atatürkist Laic Patriot Sunni Muslim Pupil

As can be seen in the previous sections, religious education was accused of different confessionalities, indoctrinations additions and omissions. Some argued that religious education in Turkey indoctrinates pupils into laicism, while others argued that the subject is seeking to raise religious generations. If all these accusations are true, this kind of pupil is raised: an 'Atatürkist laic patriot Sunni Muslim' pupil. Even though some might see these qualities as complementary, others will see them contradictory. In this study, some participants saw them as contradictory, then two scenarios emerge. First, there is contradiction and confusion in the interpretations of the participants about religious education policy. Second, religious education policy is itself full of contradictions which give rise to different confessionalities and interpretations.

6.5.2. England

Participants in England, too, noted confusion. They used words like 'ambiguity/ambiguous' (E09AULRE; E19S2), 'confused/confusing/confusion' (E01ANG1; E04BHA; E07SUNNI; E18S1; E19S2), 'contradiction' (E19S2), 'mishmash' (E01ANG1), 'paradox' (E19S2), 'muddle' (E18S1) and 'unclear' (E05NSS) to describe state of religious education policy in England.

In England, too, some participants pointed to the uneasy relationship between religion and schooling, which results in confusions and paradoxes. The participants noted that the school system is based on examinations and assessment and its primary aim is to equip children to find jobs. The participants noted that religious education does not quite fit into this system. The Shia representative argued that

> [I]t is difficult to quantify [good religious education]. If a child goes on the bus and does not get up for elderly person, how will you quantify that? Quite fearful [things are] going on the buses (E08SHIA).

Likewise, the REC representative argued that religious education is not regarded as an important subject by politicians, 'partly' because

> it is hard to see results of good RE. Politicians want what becomes apparent in terms of passing exams and getting jobs. Where is religious education fitting that? It is hard to see. So, they do focus on what is measurable and economically beneficial (E12REC).

Catholic representative criticised the politicians for being 'too concerned with results'. He argued that 'They want ticks that do not make a better person' (E03CATH).

For these participants, it is difficult to quantify good religious education with the existing assessment methods applied in schools, which results in marginalisation of religious education on the one hand, and in religious education's quest for adapting to the current system on the other, which results further confusions and contradictions.

6.5.2.1. School system

Some participants argued that the school system in England creates confusion over religious education policy. State Official 1 argued the introduction of different kind of schools has left many schools 'confused about the rules governing RE'. He continued to argue that this situation is exacerbated by the fact that 'guidance coming from the Department [for Education] itself is confused' (T18S1). According to some participants, this confusion especially stems from faith schools (E04BHA; E05NSS; E11NATRE; E19S2). State Official 2 argued that

> Religious education in non-faith schools is predominantly driven by secular values. In other words, it is [an] open investigation of religion without any assumption of

> belief, but in Church schools, religious education has other function to do with nurturing faith, supporting Church life. So, there is (…) an ambiguity.

According to him, that is one of the problems of religious education policy in England;

> I think that ambiguity is part of our problem for religious education, because it leads to considerable confusion about the nature of the subject in public imagination and to some extent in teachers' minds (E19S2).

He argued that the existence of different types of schools makes it difficult to clarify the nature of religious education both in the public imagination and in teachers' minds. The BHA representative argued the fact that the same subject is not taught in all state schools 'undermines' the status of religious education (E04BHA; also, E19S2).

Some participants argued that teachers are confused (E19S2; E20T1). State Official 2 argued that 'many primary teachers are still unsure what precisely they are doing with this subject' (which was confirmed by Ofsted, 2007, 2010, 2013). Other participants also pointed to confusion of teachers, but some argued that this is not related to the existence of different schools, but it is related to lack of training (E11NATRE; E18S1). The NATRE representative said that

> Ordinary RE teachers (…) struggle to make sense of what they are trying to do in the classroom. (…) I started teaching in 1973 and I struggled to make sense of what I was doing in the school because I had no real background at all. (E11NATRE)

Moreover, some participants claimed that, as with State Official 2, there is a confusion about the nature of religious education in the 'public perception', which undermines the status of religious education in the curriculum. It was argued that some families see religious education as a confessional subject. Academic 2 said that

> You see the attitudes of parents [who say that] 'my child is not going to become a priest, why does he need religious education?' (E15A2)

The NASACRE representative argued that 'we need to educate people about religious education, what it is and what it is not' (E10NASACRE). Other participants also raised this issue, arguing that families do not understand the subject well enough (E07SUNNI; E11NATRE; E12REC).

Yet some participants argued that official religious education policy itself facilitates ambiguity which sometimes result in confessional teaching. The National Secular Society stated that

> The partial and evangelist nature of some RE teaching is facilitated by a degree of ambiguity about the specific aims and purpose of religious education. (National Secular Society, 2013: 5)

According to NSS, this ambiguity provides an opportunity for some religious and belief groups to regard religious education as 'advertising space' in schools (National Secular Society, 2013: 5).

6.5.2.2. Opposing actors

In England, some participants contended that religious education policy is shaped by rival actors. The AULRE representative gave an example from the preparations for A National Curriculum Framework for RE (REC, 2013)

> The thinking behind the national curriculum framework was that it was in theory agreed to by all religious and secular bodies and [that] they accept that this is a very good framework for RE. No dissenting, absent voices. (E09AULRE)

He said to me that when they devised the Framework (REC, 2013), their 'deliberate policy' was 'to try and be as inclusive as possible' (confirmed by Chater, 2014: 258; REC, 2013: 9). It meant that, the participant continued, 'policy was actually owned by and somehow shaped by' different groups. The participant argued that this resulted in an 'uninspiring'

document (E09AULRE). For the teacher 1 who was also a part of the process, that meant a not 'straightforward' religious education curriculum, because, he argued, 'You will get quite divergent opinions about religious education depending on who you speak to'. It means that, Teacher 1 argued, it was difficult to 'define religious education more clearly' (see also Chater, 2014: 263).

6.5.2.3. 'Mishmash'

The term 'mishmash' regarding religious education first appeared in the debates in the parliaments in the wake of the 1988 Education Reform Act (Homan and King, 1993; Hull, 1991). In my fieldwork, Anglican Representative 1 used the term, arguing that one of the problems of religious education is 'confusion'. He said that pupils learn celebrations, buildings and beliefs and they

> end up with the general view about [for example] festivals, no idea which one was related which religious tradition; so, it becomes mishmash. (E01ANG1).

Similarly, Anglican Representative 2 argued that this teaching, which the participant called 'thematic teaching', 'misrepresents' religious traditions, because it assumes that 'all faith [traditions] are basically built upon similar lines' (see also Barnes, 2006). The same issue is also raised by the Sunni representative, who saw this issue not only 'confusing' but also 'indoctrinatory' (E07SUNNI). For these participants, this is an effect of the politics of pluralism on religious education policy. In the pursuit of social cohesion and inclusion of various religions and worldviews, religious education misrepresents religions which results in confusion in the minds of children. According to the teacher 2, since the subject lost its Christian confessionality, 'it lost its meaning and it has not quite found it yet'. According to the participant, since then, the subject has moulded into various forms, sometimes 'reinvented' as 'multiculturalism', or 'anti-racism' or 'anti-poverty' (E21T2).

Interestingly, not all participants thought that there is a confusion over subject. According to some participants, there has been be a growing consensus over the subject. Teacher 1 said that the subject has 'become more established' now, because there is a 'significant consensus' that the subject should be 'pluralistic and non-denominational', but the participant also acknowledged that the nature of subject can be 'define[d] (…) more clearly' (E20T1).

Moreover, like in Turkey, there was a confusion in the accounts of the participants in England. English religious education, too, was accused of religious, Christian and secular confessionalities and indoctrinations at the same time.

6.5.3. Comparison

In both countries, the data revealed that there is confusion over religious education policy. On the one hand, some participants in England and Turkey claimed that there is confusion. For example, in England some participants used words like 'ambiguity', 'confusion', 'contradiction' and 'vague' to describe English religious education policy. On the other hand, from the accounts of participants, it was clear that there was confusion in the interpretations of policy actors.

One reason for this confusion seemed to stem from the collision of various factors and actors that shape religious education policy. The participants argued that various actors seek to shape religious education policy and as a subject, at least in theory, inclusive of all religions and faiths, religious education tries to please everyone. This also leads to confusion over the aims and content of religious education. In the section on 'Charge of Confessionality', it was seen that the same subject was accused of religious, secular and civil confessionalities. If we take the possibility that religious education policy is shaped by various actors and

therefore religious education policy tries to please them, then it might be argued that religious education policy in state schools may not itself adopt a particular religious or secular confessional approach, but in order to please different religious and secular groups as well as to implement the state policies, religious education policy might end up as a policy that includes something from every group, which in turn leads different actors to accuse religious education policy of different confessionalities. Shively (2013: 213), for example, argued that Turkish religious education 'ironically' has two contradictory strands which give rise to both religious/Sunni and laic/nationalistic confessionalities.

It should be noted that the problem of confusion in education policy is not something new. Ball and others argued that policy inevitably includes 'incoherence, contradictions and inconsistencies' (Bowe, Ball and Gold, 1992: 2), because it is 'the product of compromises at various stages' (Ball, 1993: 11). In other words, collision of contradictory factors and actors result in contradictory and confusing policies (see also Ball, 2013: 9; Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 34).

This study seems to support these arguments. Moreover, as some participants implied, it might be argued that religious education policy may, to a certain extent, seek refuge to 'confusion' and become 'strategically vague' (Carter, 2012: 436) to meet contradictory demands made on the State by opposing factors and actors. This seems the case in both countries' official religious education policies (Lundie, 2012: 24), because there are different interpretations of the same policy. For example, in Turkey there was a debate as to whether the constitution really stipulates 'compulsory' religious education (compare Altıparmak, 2005; Ayhan, 2004); or in England there was a debate as to whether the Act requires instruction or how many hours should be spent on Christianity (compare Hull, 1989; Thompson, 2004a).

The problem of confusion over religious education is raised in religious education literature (Baumfield et al., 2012; Baumfield and Cush, 2013: 231-232; Conroy, 2016; Fancourt, 2015; Matemba, 2011: 36; Teece, 2011; Watson, 1992a). Moreover, there are several reports in recent years, which indicated that there is a confusion over and contradiction in religious education policy and they have called for a change in policy to correct these problems (Clarke and Woodhead, 2015; Commission on Religious Education, 2017; CORAB, 2015; Dinham and Shaw, 2015; Ofsted, 2007, 2010, 2013).

I argue that it is difficult, if not impossible, to solve the confusion and contradiction around religious education policy in common state schools, not least because of two reasons. Firstly, as the thesis shows, religious education policy has been shaped and will continue to be shaped by contradictory and rival factors and actors. As the policy sociologists rightly pointed out, the collision of contradictory factors and actors would most probably, if not inevitably, result in contradictory and confusing policies (Ball, 2013: 9; Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 34). Secondly, there are, as can be seen throughout the thesis, and emphasised by the policy sociology literature (e.g. Codd, 1988: 239) different interpretations of and expectations from religious education policy, by different policy actors and stakeholders, who would naturally reach different conclusions about religious education policy.

6.6. Marginalisation

The majority of the participants in both countries argued that religious education is a marginalised subject. In other words, despite the reforms and efforts to make religious education useful or look useful to society, religious education is still a minor subject.

6.6.1. Turkey

In Turkey, most participants agreed that religious education is a low priority in state schools. Several reasons were mentioned for the low priority.

6.6.1.1. 'Forced labour' (T03CHR)

The Christian representative recounted his own experience;

> I remember of taking religious education course in the school. I attended religious education even though we [Christians] had a right to withdraw. We studied other lessons during religious education lessons; we did not give any attention to it.

The Christian representative said that pupils were not interested in religious education, they saw it as a 'forced labour' ('*angarya'*), because religion was not seen as bringing any 'worldly reward', as opposed to other courses (T03CHR).

Teachers in my sample agreed with this. They confirmed that most children were not interested in religious education. The teacher 3 echoed the Christian representative, arguing that this was because pupils were interested in 'worldly things' which bring 'fame and reputation', and religion was not something that bring 'fame and reputation' (T20T3). Some participants argued that this is especially the case in areas where the population distanced itself from religion. The teachers 1 and 3 argued that even though overall the subject is always a low priority among pupils, in areas where laic people predominate, pupils are less interested in religious education (T18T1; T20T3). Similarly, the academic 5 argued that even though parents give importance to religious education for moral reasons, they do not see it 'as important as other subjects such as Maths', because other subjects 'are regarded as important for career reasons' (T14A5).

Moreover, the Christian participant argued that religious education is a low priority even among religious people. He called this 'hypocrisy', because religious people seem to value religion, but at the same time they do not see religious education as important as other subjects.

6.6.1.2. Minor Subject

Teachers in my sample criticised the school system for the low priority of religious education. They argued that the school system which is based on examinations and assessment is oriented toward economic goals, therefore, they argued, pupils are only interested in courses which are useful in exams, but the teachers also reported that with the latest educational developments[5], the status of religious education rose slightly. Teacher 1 said that

> In the past, pupils in the eighth grade were not interested in the course but now 5 or 10 pupils per class [approximately out of 30 pupils] are interested. (T18T1)

However, the teachers also noted, especially Teacher 2, being a subject which is studied for exams would not help the subject in the long term. Teacher 3 said that majority of pupils only want to learn what would help them in the national exams, and they still 'ignore the commands and prohibitions of religion' (T20T3; also, T19T2). As can be seen, teachers in particular blamed the school system for the misfortune of religious education in state schools.

[5] In Turkey, there are national exams to enter secondary school and university. In the past, there was no question from religious education in the university entrance exam, but with a change in 2013, there are now 5 questions from religious education, as opposed to 40 questions from Turkish, 40 from Math, 40 from Science, 15 from History, 11 from Geography and 8 from Philosophy. In secondary school exam, religious education has been one of the six courses tested nationally since 2013, but the system changed again in the early 2018. In the new system, there will be 10 questions (out of 90) from religious education.

6.6.1.3. Compulsion and Alienation

In Turkey, Article 24 of the Constitution, which is under the title of 'Fundamental Rights and Duties', states that religious education is a compulsory subject (TBMM, 1982). According to the law, only non-Muslims have the right to withdraw from religious education. In other words, it is a constitutional *right* and *duty* for a Muslim to get religious education from state schools. According to some participants, this is one of the reasons for the alienation from religious education (T14A5; T17S2). Academic 5 suggested that 'compulsion alienates pupils', so he argued that the courses should be voluntary or elective (T14A5). However, State Official 2 pointed to the bias against religious courses. The participant said that all courses in school are compulsory, but only religious education is called 'compulsory' as if other courses are voluntary courses. The participant suggested that religious education community should not use the word 'compulsory' to correct this bias (T17S2).

6.6.1.4. Laicism and 'Psychological Legitimacy'

Even though religious education is compulsory by law, according to some participants, it still lacks 'psychological legitimacy'. Academic 1 argued that due to laicism, religious education teachers and religious education lack 'psychological legitimacy', even though it has 'legal legitimacy'. He said that some segments of society still see religious education and religious education teachers as threats to laicism. The participants argued that

> today the most important problem of religious education is that religious education teachers still do not have psychological legitimacy, some people still see them as those who undermine or threat to laicism principle. Even myself as a religious education lecturer, when I go to some places, some sees me as a threat to laicism principle. This problem reduces the efficiency of the course. (T10A1)

Moreover, some participants claimed that objections to religious education has undermined the legitimacy of the subject (T10A1; T14A5). Academic 1 argued that

> Campaigns for the removal of the subject from state schools have effectively undermined the legitimacy of the subject. (T10A1)

6.6.1.5. Alienation

The Alevi participant repeatedly claimed that religious education ignores religious plurality, particularly Alevis, within society and it has been used to 'assimilate' Alevis into Sunnis. This influenced the Alevis so much so that, the participant argued, even if there was a major religious education reform, the Alevis would not want to learn their religion from state schools.

> I think no Alevi would want to take these religious courses, since the past [practices] created a syndrome, a psychology among Alevi people. They do not want to learn their religion from the state schools, they want to learn it from our *cem* [*jem*; assembly] houses. (T02ALEVI)

For the Alevi representative, the ideal option, therefore, for the Alevis is a voluntary subject (i.e. opt in), which Alevis would not have to attend. For the Alevi participant, the failure of the State to reflect and accommodate plural society in religious education has resulted in an alienation from religious education. This issue was also raised by Academic 5 who argued that compulsory religious education alienates pupils, who do not want to take the course, from religious education and from religion (T14A5). In other words, the current religious education policy in Turkey alienates some children and families from religion.

Moreover, for some participants the subject was far from meeting the demands of the (Sunni) majority. Academic 1 argued that the failure of the State to provide adequate religious education has been one of the reasons for the rise of religious groups and orders who

provided Islamic religious education out of state control (see Shively, 2008; 2013 who documented the retreat of some conservative Muslims into home-based Qur'an courses).

Moreover, a significant number of participants in Turkey argued that their voices were marginalised. The Alevi representative criticised the State and politicians;

> when the State determines religious education policies, it does not consult any organisation which oppose some state policies (T2ALEVI)

The lack of consultation in religious education policy making process was one of the few areas that the most participants in Turkey agreed. Only State Official 1 and academic 6 argued that there is enough consultation with relevant stakeholders (T15A6; T16S1).

6.6.1.6. Not An Important Subject

Some participants argued that religious education is not an important subject in the first place. These were the participants who demanded the abolition of religious education from state schools (e.g. T05ATH; T07ESWU). Moreover, some claimed that religious education is not as important as other subjects (T04LAIC; T09ERI). For these participants, it is problematic that religious education receives more attention from politicians than other subjects. This was also criticised by some participants who saw religious education as important. Academic 5 argued that excessive political support and interference harm religious education (T14A5).

As can be seen the majority of the participants argued that religious education is a low priority and pupils are alienated from religious education. The participants mentioned secularisation, the State's mishandling of religious education, marginalisation of plurality, and excessive political influence as reasons for these problems. Yet, some participants did not see the current situation as a marginalisation of religious education. Rather, they argued

that religious education is not an important subject, but it is still promoted as an important subject by the politicians (T05ATH; T07ESWU).

6.6.2. England

In England, too, there was almost a consensus among participants that religious education is a low-key subject in the curriculum.

6.6.2.1. Poor Provision

Some participants argued that the reason why the subject has low priority is because there is poor provision. The National Secular Society claimed religious education is regarded as 'a low priority' by many schools, making a reference to a survey that found that former pupils 'regard RE as the least useful subject on the curriculum', because of 'poor provision'. (National Secular Society, 2013: 5-6).

6.6.2.2. PISA, League Tables and RE

According to some participants, religious education is not considered as important as other subjects. For example, the Sunni representative argued that

> In this country, there is kind of hierarchy of subjects; and I am afraid RE is not one of the top ones at all. It is rather at the bottom somewhere. (E07SUNNI).

The Catholic representative argued that other subjects are more important in the eyes of politicians and society 'because of their financial possibilities [and] because of the contribution they make to economy' but the participant criticised this: 'but at the end of the day, even if are poor society, it would be important that people are good, good citizens' (E03CATH).

Some participants argued that international tests like PISA have been responsible for the marginalisation of the subject (E03CATH; E09AULRE; E14A1). The AULRE representative said

> I have got massive issues against PISA. What is it trying to do? How can it shape the national curriculum across the world? You've got three subjects that are dominant and then all other subjects fall away from that. (E09AULRE)

Some participants argued that accountability has become the mantra of education policy, which has resulted in league tables, but when this accountability only measures secular subjects, it marginalises religious education. The REC representative said

> The EBacc[6] which is GCSE-based subjects is not just about curriculum and learning, it is being used for the accountability of schools and when schools know that they are going to be held accountable on these GCSEs, why would they bother with the other subjects? Head teachers ignore the subject [RE]. Being statutory alone is not enough. (E12REC)

6.6.2.3. Debates and Marginalisation

According to some participants, the debates over religious education in state schools, especially the calls for an end of religious education have been one of the reasons for the marginalisation of the subject (see also Barnes, 2014: 13). Anglican Representative 1 claimed that social changes like secularisation 'created a slight nervousness among some religious educators that the subject was going to disappear', because of the attacks on religion (E01ANG1).

According to the participants, secularisation has undermined the importance of the subject (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E03CATH; E04BHA; E06JEW; E11NATRE; E16A3; E18S1;

[6] The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a school performance measure, which only measures 'the core academic subjects' which are English, Mathematics, History or Geography, the Sciences and a language (DfE, 2016).

E19S2; E20T1; E21T2). The participants noted that so many people considered the subject as an 'anachronism' (E20T1), 'waste of time' (E18S1) and 'doubts began to be expressed about the nature and worth of RE in schools' (E11NATRE). The Catholic representative argued due to 'secularisation' and 'distance from religion', pupils do not see religious education as relevant to their personal lives (E03CATH). The NASACRE representative approached the issue from a different angle, arguing that pupils are 'interested' in religion, but they do not see religious education 'relevant', because

> they are not interested in (…) the questions their teachers are asking them in the RE lesson. I think there is appetite for theological questions, religious knowledge questions [such as] how [did] the world begin? But teachers have a different agenda (…) we are trying to teach them (…) when the Buddha was born (E10NASACRE).

6.6.2.4. Alienation

Some participants claimed that religious education policy itself alienated people from religious education in state schools. These were participants who called for more faith schools. The Catholic representative said that

> It is important for us in a secular society that we can have schools where people of faith can talk about believing. In community schools (…) you can only talk about the facts of religion; you cannot engage with [religion]. (E03CATH)

Faith schools, especially voluntary-aided and independent schools, can form their own religious education and nurture children in a specific faith. Moreover, as especially the Muslim and Catholic representatives stated in the interviews they can form the whole education around religion (Shah, 2012). This of course presents an option to families who want a more serious religious education for their children (see also Ahmed, 2012; Burke, 2007; El-Sawah, 2006 for the retreat of some religious families into home-schooling). Yet some participants were unimpressed. Some argued that the existence of faith schools is one of the reasons for the low priority of and confusion around religious education in state

schools (see the previous section, especially comments of state official 2 and BHA representative).

In England, too, there were participants who argued their voices are marginalised in religious education policy. Most participants in England agreed that there is consultation, but some argued that it does not make a difference because, as the Jewish representative argued, 'policy tends to be often decided already' (E06JEW). Moreover, there were even participants who argued that there is consultation with 'wrong' stakeholders, such as too much consultation with religious communities (E04BHA; E05NSS; E17S1; E18S2) or consultation with secular organisations which 'solely exist to remove the privileges of faith based schools' (E02ANG2). Moreover, there were complaints that some voices were side-lined. For example, the NATRE representative told me that during the preparation of *A National Framework for RE* there were complaints that

> people who come from Christian background and want a more powerful Christian education were side-lined (E11NATRE).

6.6.2.5. It is not that important

Moreover, some participants argued that religious education should not be regarded as important as literacy and numeracy (E04BHA; E05NSS; E10NASACRE; E19S2). State official 2 argued that politicians and society do not see the subject as important as literacy and numeracy:

> I would suggest rightly so. There is a lot of rhetoric around religious education that suggests that it is incredibly important subject that is dealing with some of the most important issues in life. I think it is very exaggerated claim. (E19S2)

The participant argued that this is very exaggerated claim because 'most people' do not see it in that way and the subject is 'not certainly as important as key core skills for life which would be Maths and English' (E19S2).

6.6.3. Comparison

According to the participants there was a marginalisation of religious education in both countries and this was precipitated by a set of interlocking factors. The participants argued that marginalisation of religion, objections to religious education, over-emphasis on secular subjects and mishandling of religious education policy in state schools all gave rise to the marginalisation of religious education.

In both countries, some participants argued that the subject does not attract much attention from pupils partly because religion is not seen attractive anymore by a significant number of pupils. In other words, the state of religion directly influences the state of religious education in both countries. This is important because most English participants stressed that religious education is an 'educational subject' in England, it is not a 'religious subject', meaning it does not have religious aims such as raising religious generations, but it was evident in the interviews, the state of religion, especially its importance (or unimportance) in the eyes of public and politicians still shapes the fate of 'educational' religious education.

Some participants argued that one of the reasons for the marginalisation was that the subject has still attracted considerable objections from diverse actors (Cruickshank, 1963: 54). Some prominent educationalists, politicians, journalists have called for the end of religious education in state schools (Dündar, 2012; Grayling, 2014; Hargreaves, 1994; White, 2004). In my sample, too, some participants in Turkey called for the abolition of the subject (e.g. T05ATH; T07ESWU). Moreover, in both countries, there were participants who argued that

religious education is rightly a minor subject compared to core subjects. For these participants, this is nothing but expected in state schools in secular societies.

These objections or lack of appreciations have made religious educators 'defensive' (Barnes, 2014: 14). As some participants (e.g. T14A5; E18S1) noted religious education community has devoted a great deal of their energy and time to justify the place of religious education in state schools or to show that it is a vital subject. Even the participants of this study, especially those who supported religious education in state schools have attempted to justify the place of religious education in state schools. This finding confirms May and Johnston (1968: 82) who reported 50 years ago that 'showing the relevance of [RE] to life' has already become 'an important part of [the RE] teacher's work'. According to Barnes (2014: 14), this has created 'a sense of vulnerability', or according to Orme (2014) a 'victim mentality', which, I think, further exacerbated the marginal status of religious education.

Furthermore, in both countries, religious education enjoys a special protected legal status, but according to the participants, even this status does not rescue the subject from being a marginal subject in the curriculum. Some participants even claimed that this protected legal status is one of the reasons behind marginalisation (e.g. T12A3).

This is hardly the first study to suggest that there is marginalisation of religious education. In 1926, the then President of the Board of Schools in England had to tell the schools that 'the period of religious instruction is just as important as any other part of the time table' (Percy, 1932a: 256). In 1961, Garforth (1961: 76) coined a term 'the Cinderella of the Curriculum' which refers to the low regard for religious education among politicians, educationists, teachers and pupils. This issue was also stressed in other studies (APPG, 2013: 7; Chater and Erricker, 2013: 2; Conroy, 2011: 26; Cooling, 2012b: 89; Everington, 2000: 294; Kay, 2012: 59; Moulin, 2012: 158; Ofsted, 2013: 15; Watson, 1993: 21) and in other

comparative religious education studies (Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003: xv; Matemba, 2011: 154), but what this study suggests is that marginalisation of religious education is the case in two significantly different countries. Even though Turkey is known for its conservative and 'religious' society (see 3.3 above), religious education is still regarded as a low-status subject according to the participants of this study. Moreover, the findings suggest that there is no single reason behind the marginalisation. It is not only secularisation, economic and career concerns that marginalise religious education, but also religious education policy itself might alienate pupils and families from religious education, through marginalising their voices. Confusion around religious education, omissions and additions and concerns about (secular or religious) indoctrination all probably contributed to the alienation from religious education. The next section will explore remedies suggested by the participants for the problems of religious education.

6.7. Calls for Reform

Section 6.2 presented religious education reform and how wider factors historically shaped these reforms in Turkey and England. During interviews, there were still calls for reform to solve the problems of religious education mentioned in previous sections and to attune the subject to needs and demands of society.

6.7.1. Turkey

As the relevant literature suggested (see Ayhan, 2004; Köylü and Altaş, 2012; Yilmaz, 2013), religious education in state schools in Turkey has always been subject of much debate, and the fieldwork showed that religious education policy continues to be a topic of controversy. One of the issues is the course's legal status.

6.7.1.1. Reform in the Legal Status

Eight participants, in total, demanded a reform in the legal status of religious education (T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T04LAIC; T05ATH; T07ESWU; T09ERI; T11A2; T14A5). It is interesting to note that only one religious representative was in favour of the current legal status (T01PRA), all other religious and secular representatives called for reform. The participants referred to international human rights standards, laicism, plurality, misuse of religion and religious education, and confusion inherent in religion as reasons for the reform.

Some participants referred to human rights principles and international policy documents, arguing that religious education in Turkey should be reformed or abolished since it is not compatible with these standards. For example, the Association of Atheism stated that Turkish religious education violates Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights because the courses are not objective, critical and pluralistic and there is no universal right to withdraw from religious education (Association of Atheism, 2014b: 8). Similarly, the Education Reform Initiative in their report entitled '*Religion and Schooling in Turkey: The Need for Reform*' mentioned the articles of the European Convention on Human Rights and stated that

> Education in Turkey should secure the right not to receive religious instruction/education inconsistent with one's own conviction. (ERI, 2007: 4).

Moreover, some participants questioned whether current religious education is compatible with the laicism principle and a plural society. They argued that religious education is incompatible with them because it imposes one belief system, which is Sunnism. The Education and Science Workers' Union representative explained to me why the mandatory course contradicts laicism;

> If Turkey is a laic state, it cannot favour or protect one religion or denomination over others. That is against the equality principle of laicism. The current compulsory religious education courses should not be compulsory, [since] these courses ignore the fact that people from different religious backgrounds live in this country. (T07ESWU).

For this participant, religious courses that ignore religious plurality within society contradict the laicism principle. The participants who advocated reform of religious education's legal status can be divided into two groups. The participants in the first group advocated the removal of the current opt out regime which is granted only to Christians and Jews who should explain why they withdraw their children by revealing their Christian or Jewish identities and then the introduction of a universal right to withdraw from religious education, which would not require any reason for withdrawal (T04LAIC; T09ERI; T11A2; T14A5). Academic 5 argued that universal right to withdraw would not only 'please European Union and Western authorities' but also 'minimise frictions in society' (T14A5). The Alevi representative argued that instead of opting out, there should be opt in. In other words, the course should be voluntary (T02ALEVI).

6.7.1.2. Right to Opt Out

As stated before, Christian and Jewish families have a right to withdraw their children from religious education, but this was criticised by the above participants, on the grounds that it forces families to disclose their religion:

> Application for exemption from compulsory religious education courses require declaration of one's faith or denomination. Exemption is only granted to Christians and Jews and in order to claim exemption, the applicant must not only declare his/her faith, but is also required to submit official records or documentation to support the claim for exemption based on conflicting religious belief. (Association of Atheism, 2014b: 8).

According to the Association of Atheism, and the Alevi participant this biased system shows that the State does not see the Alevi faith and atheism as qualifying for exemption. The

Association of Atheism lamented that 'Atheism is not considered a valid philosophical view, therefore Atheists must also take the course' (Association of Atheism, 2014b: 8). According to the Christian representative due to this disclosure, many Christian families chose not to withdraw their children from religious courses. The participant argued that

> We [Christians] have the right to opt out, but it leads to peer pressure, other pupils do not look good to children who opted out (T03CHR).

However, some participants argued that even the introduction of universal right to withdraw would not solve the problem. Three participants pointed to 'community pressure' (T03CHR; T05ATH; T07ESWU). The ESWU participant argued that

> Children who do not choose these [religious] courses [would] face discrimination. Their peers and teachers [would] ask them why did not you choose religious courses?

The participants used the term '*mahalle baskısı*' (community pressure) that is, in our case, pupils and families who opted out of religious courses face pressure and discrimination from Islamic circles on the local level. The participants argued that this is already happening in optional courses. The ESWU participant claimed that

> [Then] the Prime Minister [Recep Tayyip Erdoğan] urged families to choose optional courses carefully. This is actually a message not only to families but also to head teachers and society. The message was 'make pupils to choose optional religious courses'. (T07ESWU).

It is interesting to note that community pressure has been also used by the supporters of compulsory religious education in Turkey. For example, two academics said that before 1982, the course was optional and this was leading to polarisation among students: on the one hand, pupils who opted out had been accused of being 'non-believer' (*dinsiz*) or 'infidel' (*imansız*); on the other hand, pupils who opted in had been branded as 'backward' (*gerici*) or 'religionist' (*dinci*) (T12A3; T13A4). Similarly, State Official 1 argued that the

introduction of universal right to withdraw from religious education can bring 'chaos' to schools (T16S1). So, as can be seen, both some supporters and opponents of compulsory religious education agreed that right to withdraw might be problematic, but the agreement ended there. The supporters claimed that due to these problems, religious education should remain compulsory without and opt-out possibility, while the opponents argued that due to these problems, religious education should be abolished completely.

6.7.1.3. Complete Abolition

Three participants argued that the way forward is the complete removal of religious education (T03CHR; T05ATH; T07ESWU). For example, the Association of Atheism stated that

> Any courses of religious nature should be abolished in state schools altogether or taught briefly in regards to the cultures of peoples throughout world history (Association of Atheism, 2014b: 9).

These three participants all argued religious education contradicts human rights principles and laicism and does not reflect plural society. Moreover, they all argued that religious education in state schools is not good option for Turkey. The ESWU participant claimed that in Turkey, due to teachers, politicians and society, it is impossible to have an objective and neutral religious education (T07ESWU). In other words, for these three participants, compulsory religious education might be an option for more settled societies, but not for Turkey, because of its particularities and peculiarities (see 4.5 above).

Moreover, these participants also questioned the effectiveness of the right to opt out (and opt in). For them universal right to withdraw would not be ideal solution (see above). However, they argued that if the State does not abolish religious education, then at least a

universal right to withdraw should be introduced. Moreover, the ESWU participant said that they were against religious education on 'pedagogical' grounds (see 6.5 above)

However, there was a difference between the Christian representative and the other two participants. The Christian representative said that religious groups should be allowed to teach religious education in mosques and churches, but in ordinary state schools, there should not be religious education, but the ESWU participant and the Association of Atheism called for the complete removal of religious education, without giving concessions to religious groups.

6.7.1.4. Need for Compulsory Religious Education

It should be noted that for a slight majority of the participants, the courses should continue with current legal arrangements, i.e. the courses should be compulsory with limited opt-out.

The views of Academic 3 summarises the views of the participants in this group. This participant argued that religious education should be compulsory and given a proper place in the school curricula, because, the participant reasoned that, if the courses become voluntary as it had been before 1982, they would eventually become less effective and some schools would totally omit the courses. The participant further claimed that ineffective religious education would lead some religious families to send their children to 'unregulated' places (T12A3).

Moreover, four participants argued that voluntary status would undermine the significance of the subject, because it would give the impression that the course is not as important as other secular subjects which are all compulsory without right to withdraw. Pupils would ignore it, and because of this, parents would look for alternative places for an Islamic education (T01PRA; T08TEU; T10A1; T16S1).

Moreover, some participants even referred to supranational laws and documents to argue that religious education should have a place in schools. For example, State Official 2 referred to supranational documents to argue that the religious education should be more inclusive, but she opposed the idea of voluntary religious education arguing that 'Turkey cannot afford to lift compulsion', since every child should learn about religions (T17S2). A striking example comes from the official English summary of the Religious Education Curriculum, which stated that 'International covenants clearly express that religious teaching is an obligation' (MEB DÖGM, 2010b: 10). Compare it with ERI's statement above, which shows that the same covenants are interpreted widely and contradictorily.

Moreover, some participants were against changes in religious education policy at the request of 'Western powers'. For example, State Official 1 argued that compulsion should be retained and Alevis should be taught as a path within Islam, because a change would be, inter alia, a 'grist to the mill of the Western powers' (T16S1). He reasoned that the Western powers seek to sow sectarian splits among society with their policy of 'divide and rule', and the abolishment of religious education would serve this aim (T16S1). Moreover, some participants even demanded the abolition of the limited right to withdraw, granted to Christians and Jews, on the grounds that the subject is about culture, not religion and every pupil should learn about the culture of the society they live in (e.g. T08TEU; T18T1).

6.7.1.5. Reform of Method and Content

Eight participants who demanded a reform in the legal status of religious education (T02ALEVI; T03CHR; T04LAIC; T05ATH; T07ESWU; T09ERI; T11A2; T14A5) argued that if religious education remains compulsory, then there should be reform of the subject's method and content. For example, the Association of Atheism said that religious education

> must be more equally inclusive and teach an objective curriculum in respect to all religions, faiths and philosophies … in accordance with the TOLEDO Principle [sic]. (Association of Atheism, 2014b: 9; capitalisation in original).

Moreover, some participants who was in favour of compulsory religious education also called for the reform of religious education's content and method (T10A1; T12A3; T13A4; T17S2). These participants wanted religious education to be more inclusive, by removing some sections that can be interpreted as confessional teaching and by adding objective information about different faiths and more importantly persuading teachers that this is not a confessional course.

For example, five out of six academics (except Academic 6) in my sample claimed that the courses cannot continue with this content and methodology in the face of local and international pressure, especially coming from the European Union through its 'progress reports' (European Commission, 2016) and from the European Court of Human Rights (see ECtHR, 2007b; 2014).

This shows that a slight majority of Turkish participants demanded religious education curriculum reform to make religious education more inclusive. Yet there were also participants, who were in favour of the continuation of the current content and method (e.g. T15A6). What is more, there were participants who demanded more Islamic oriented religious education (e.g. T01PRA; T06ETU; T08TEU; T18T1; T19T2). Interestingly most of these participants were either teachers or representatives of teacher unions. For example, the representatives of two largest teacher unions called for more Islamic oriented religious education, arguing that the current courses are not religious courses, but culture courses (T06ETU; T08TEU) as opposed to the representative of the third largest education union who argued that religious education is already based on Islam, particularly Sunni Islam,

which marginalises other faiths, therefore demanded a complete abolition of the subject (T07ESWU).

6.7.1.6. Religious Schools

In Turkey, there are vocational religious schools called Imam and Preacher Schools (*Imam-Hatip Okulları*). These schools may not have any tie with religious organisations and they operate under the control of the Ministry of National Education. Approximately 40 per cent of their curricula is devoted to religious subjects such as the Qur'an, Islamic Jurisprudence, Islamic History and Hadith (Sayings of Prophet Muhammad) (Aşlamacı and Kaymakcan, 2017; Öcal, 2007; Ozgur, 2012; Pak, 2004; Tarhan, 1996). Moreover, there are also minority schools which can form their religious educations as they wish so long as their books are approved by the Ministry of National Education. These schools also operate under the control of Ministry of National Education, but they are not funded by the State.

Some participants called for more independent religious schools (e.g. T11A2; T20T3). The Christian representative argued that religious institutions could handle religious education, but for some other interviewees, this was not an option, as they argued that it would impossible to monitor these schools (T04LAIC; T07ESWU). After, exploring the calls for reform made by the Turkish participants, I will now explore reform calls made by English participants.

6.7.2. England

There were calls for reform in England, and the participants referred to, among others, wider factors, when making their case.

6.7.2.1. A New Subject

The National Secular Society called for a completely new subject (E05NSS). They argued that

> Britain is one of the most religiously diverse and least religious countries in the world.

It is 'therefore', they argued,

> especially important that young people learn about the beliefs and perspectives of those whose beliefs and values differ from their own.

They argued that a new subject called 'Philosophy and Ethics' which 'include objective education about religious beliefs, but not to the detriment of other important philosophical and ethical perspectives (…) along with strengthened provision of citizenship education is the most appropriate and inclusive means of achieving this' (National Secular Society, 2013: 1). For them the current religious education policy cannot achieve this aim, because it prioritises religion, provides religious communities a privileged input into religious education and is open to be used as a platform by some to proselytise, all of which are problematic in a plural and secular society (National Secular Society, 2013, 2016, 2017).

There were also those who advocated a change of the name of the subject. The Accord Coalition wanted 'Beliefs and Values Education' which would be 'wide ranging, fair and objective in its delivery and as part of a properly monitored National Curriculum' (Accord Coalition, 2012: 1). Similarly, the BHA representative argued that

> RE is not a good name. Weird, stupid name. Something, Religions and Beliefs, or Religion and World Views, or Religion and Philosophy should be compulsory part of the curriculum. (E04BHA)

What these participants wanted was not a simple change of the name. As can be seen from their name suggestions, they wanted a less emphasis on religion and more and at least equal emphasis on world-views, philosophy and beliefs.

Another reform call came from the State Official 2, who argued that study of religions can be integrated into the whole curriculum and in this way, study of religions could take place in history, art, English and elsewhere. The participant argued that if this is done, a new subject called 'Philosophy and Ethics' can replace 'Religious Education' (E19S2).

As can be seen even though some advocated a new subject to replace religious education, they did not object to a subject that deals with religion and non-religious worldviews in state schools. Only one participant called for the abolition of religious education especially in primary schools. The Sunni representative argued that religious education in primary schools either should be abolished or the religion of parents should be taught by teachers of respective community (E07SUNNI). No participant except the Sunni participant talked about the complete abolition of religious education in state schools.

Moreover, some participants specifically argued that religious education should not be abolished. For example, Academic 4 argued that religious education should remain in the curriculum, because '(i)n a predominantly secularist culture it keeps religion a little in the public eye.' (E17A4). Academic 2 reminded me that some uses secularisation as a justification for the removal of religious education, but he argued that the fact that 'young people are more alienated from religion' makes religious education more important than ever, because it remains the only place where they can learn about religion (E15A2).

Moreover, some participants noted that pluralisation makes religious education an important subject, because pupils can learn about different religions present in society (E01ANG1;

E05NSS; E09AULRE; E15A2; E19S2; E21T2). For example, State Official 2 said that 'there has been a renewal of interest in the importance of the subject' partly due to multi-faith society. Similarly, Anglican Representative 1 said that 'I think the value of pluralism has helped religious education, because the subject matter you are studying became more important' (E01ANG1).

6.7.2.2. Elimination of Right to Withdraw

Some participants argued that the right to withdraw should be abolished. In Display 5.8 in Chapter 5, I put the participants who argued that right to withdraw should be abolished (E12REC; E15A2; E18S1) under the section on pluralisation 'should not influence', because what they argued was that pluralisation is wrongly used as a justification for right to withdraw.

For example, State Official 1 argued that parents cannot 'simply withdraw their children from any part of the curriculum they do not like or agree with'. The participant described this as 'a dangerous road to go down' because of three reasons. First, the participant argued that 'it would deepen the separations between the communities in this country', a clear reference to plurality. For him, right to withdraw does not serve plurality, rather it harms it. Second, he said that parents would demand the extension of this right to other subjects:

> parents would start to feel they have that right and I have come across some religious communities in this country [who] feel that they have that right in relation to for example physical education and some aspects of science. I do not think they have that right. The curriculum is the curriculum; the curriculum is what the nation has decided [and] should be taught to young people. You can teach it and learn it, but you can still disagree with it, that is very good definition of plurality at work.

Third, the participant said that religious education 'is not attempting in any serious or systematic way to indoctrinate pupils', even though he saw religious education as civil

confessionality (E18S1). The REC representative and Academic 2, too, argued that since the subject is not attempting to indoctrinate, there is no need for right to withdraw (E12REC; E15A2).

In my sample, only three participants called for an immediate elimination of the right to withdraw. After my fieldwork, this issue came to the fore when the government announced that schools must promote British values (DfE, 2014). For example, in 2016, the National Association of Head Teachers passed a motion that demanded the end of right to withdraw for the promotion of British values (Espinoza, 2016).

In response, National Secular Society campaign director Stephan Evans said that while he 'agreed in principle that parents shouldn't be allowed to pick and choose what subjects their children learn in school', the current religious education arrangements make opt-out 'necessary to protect religious freedom' (National Secular Society, 2016). So, for them the right to withdraw can only be abolished, when religious education is thoroughly reformed. The BHA representative also expressed similar views. The participant argued that if religious education is a 'balanced, objective, impartial and fair subject', there is no need for the right to opt out, but stated that if the current arrangements continue, then there should be opt in: 'opt in is even better' (see also Franken, 2017: 109).

However, some participants specifically stated that right to withdraw should be retained (E07SUNNI; E11NATRE; E14A1). Academic 1 argued that 'if you do not have this right, then you are in the European Court of Human Rights' (E14A1). Some participants pointed to plurality. The NATRE representative said that right to opt out is 'a safety wall in a plural society' (E11NATRE).

6.7.2.3. National Curriculum

A significant number of participants argued that the local structure should be replaced by a central structure (i.e. the National Curriculum) (E04BHA; E05NSS; E09AULRE; E11NATRE; E13ACC; E14A1; E15A2; E18S1; E19S2). Three interrelated reasons were articulated for this reform. First, some argued that the locally agreed syllabus system is 'extravagant'. For example, State Official 1 said that at the time of austerity and economic recession, this system is unsustainable (E18S1). Similarly, Academic 1 said that 'what is frustrating with locality is the multiple invention of the wheel.' (E14A1).

Secondly, it was argued the recent changes in education policy, such as the introduction of free schools and academies which are not under the control of local authorities and do not have to follow locally agreed syllabuses for religious education, pose a great challenge to the current syllabus system (E19S2; see also APPG, 2013; REC, 2013: 7-8), because they have minimised the role of local authorities in education (Ball, 2013; Whitty and Wisby, 2016). The AULRE and NASACRE representatives informed me that there are some local authorities that do not have any secondary schools that follow their locally agreed syllabuses.

Third, a related reason was that local system makes the subject 'isolated' and 'different' from other subjects which results in neglect of the subject in schools. The BHA representative said that the subject 'is undermined by local determination' (E04BHA). Academic 2 said that with this change (i.e. the National Curriculum), religious education 'will then be taken much more seriously by the schools, teachers and inspectors' (E15A2).

However, some participants found these reasons weak. For example, the NASACRE representative said becoming a national curriculum subject would not raise the subject's status.

> I talk to colleagues from some of the other foundation subjects which are part of the national curriculum and they do not necessarily feel that their subjects are taken seriously. I do not think that the reason why RE is not taken seriously is necessarily because it is locally determined subject, I think it is because it is seen as a less important subject just as geography and history, because we are in a world that the emphasis is very much on literacy and numeracy (E10NASACRE).

The participant further argued that

> the trouble is not [that RE is not] the part of the national curriculum. People ignore it, because it does not sound effective (E10NASACRE)

Moreover, Christian representatives took a cautious approach to this reform. They argued that any change towards a National Curriculum should have 'provisions for faith-based schools to vary' (E02ANG2). Similarly the Catholic representative reiterated their official stance on national religious education curriculum:

> any national RE curriculum would not fulfil the purposes of RE in both Catholic and community schools. (see Catholic Education Service, 2015)

The Muslim representatives did not talk specifically about this issue, but it was clear from their views that they wanted a curriculum system that allows schools with a high Muslim intake to vary (E07SUNNI; E08SHIA).

6.7.2.4. Non-Religious Worldviews

In England, four participants called for a formal inclusion of non-religious worldviews in the religious education curriculum (E04BHA; E05NSS; E14A1; E18S1). The BHA representative said that such a move would reflect recommendations of international guidelines such as 'the Toledo Guiding Principles' (E04BHA). Academic 1 said that belief and non-belief are 'just two sides of the same coin' and they complement each other in religious education. Like BHA representative, the participant claimed that international guidelines 'encourage education about religions and non-religious convictions' (E14A1).

However, some participants claimed that non-religious worldviews have already been included in religious education (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E9AULRE). In other words, non-religious convictions are already taught in schools. The BHA representative disagreed, arguing that 'most of the schools do not teach Humanism'. Yet some questioned the need for the inclusion of non-religious worldviews into religious education (E02ANG2; E15A2; E17A4). Anglican Representative 2 said that

> the rest of curriculum is couched in entirely secularist terms, so religious education needs to be reserved for looking at faith, for goodness sake. (E02ANG2)

Similarly, Academic 2 argued that

> I believe that (…) the content of religious education is religion. Is humanism a religion? The humanists do not claim that it is a religion, so why should it be included in religious education? (E15A2)

As like any other issue, there was a disagreement among participants on the issue.

6.7.2.5. Multi-Faith RE

In England, almost all participants argued that due to immigration and awareness of global diversity, religious education has become a multi-faith subject. For example, Teacher 2 said that 'RE became multi-faith partly because there were many more communities in Britain' (E21T2), but some participants argued that religious education should be more inclusive. The BHA participant said that 'Bad RE is just about Christianity and Islam' (E04BHA).

Yet some participants claimed that religious education should take account of local religious landscape. The Sunni and Shia representative stressed this issue, arguing that

> In local authorities with high number of pupils from a particular belief, RE needs to take account of this and reflect pupils' religious backgrounds. (E07SUNNI)

Moreover, religious representatives in particular argued that there should be solid grounding in each religion, instead of a focus on including more and more religions (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA). For example, the Shia representative said that 'depth is important, [the subject should] not just look at people's belief and what they do, but also why they do it, what is the reason?' (E8SHIA).

Moreover, some called for the subject to reflect individual plurality (E02ANG2; E04BHA; E05NSS; E10NASACRE; E13ACC; E18S1). The NASACRE representative said that

> We have presented a kind of airbrush photoshop version of religion. We need to engage with religion as it actually is, with all its flows and imperfections and it is not always practiced in the way religions themselves would like to be practiced. (E10NASACRE)

Similarly, the Accord Coalition stated that the beliefs should be recognised as 'lived realities' rather than 'simply textbook propositions' (Accord Coalition, 2012: 1)

6.7.2.6. Critical Edge

According to some participants, religious education in England lacks one important dimension: 'critical edge' (E04BHA; E05NSS; E18S1; E19S2; E21T2). State Official 1 said that religious education in England has transformed into a new form of confessionalism which is 'to produce tolerant, open-minded citizens' (E18S1). The participant continued to argue that

> The subject is driven by fear. Tolerance is a weak stance. [RE] need[s] a stance from which we can critique religious ideas and practices (E18S1).

These five participants argued that in religious education, no religion or faith is criticised for the sake of community cohesion. Some participants claimed that because religion is controversial, teachers are afraid of inquiry (E20T1). However, some participants disagreed,

arguing that religious education like education in general, has long been used as a platform for criticism of religion (E07SUNNI, see 6.3.2. above)

6.7.2.7. Faith Schools

Some participants demanded the abolition of faith schools (E04BHA; E05NSS; E18S1; E19S2), arguing that these schools are divisive (see also British Humanist Association, 2014) and they cause 'further fragmentation of religious education', which leads to confusion in the minds of teachers and public (E19S2).

Yet others specifically said that the number of faith schools should be increased (E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E03CATH; E06JEW; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA). Three reasons were mentioned by the participants. The first one was related to secularisation. The Jewish participant said that

> Why there should be Jewish schools is because of the neutralisation in religious education in the rest of the system.

He also added that faith schools provide 'some brake on secularisation' (E06JEW). The Catholic representative said that the Catholic schools are the places where 'God can be talked about [and] God is not Great Absent One' as opposed to ordinary schools (E03CATH).

The second reason was related to 'otherness'. Participants argued that in a plural society, it is important to have faith schools, due to 'bullying' (E08SHIA, see Richardson and Wood, 2004: 64); 'institutional racism' (E07SUNNI, E08SHIA, see AMSS, 2004: 25; Muslim Council of Britain, 2007: 15) and 'a sense of otherness and insecurity' (E06JEW) in ordinary schools.

The third reason was ‘equity’. The Shia representative argued that ‘it is a matter of equity. You know Catholics, Jews are allowed to establish [their own schools] so why not Muslims’ (see AMSS, 2004; Parker-Jenkins, 2002; Shah, 2012: 59). She also argued that faith schools ‘are chosen by parents’, so it is also a matter of ‘parental choice’ (E08SHIA).

As can be seen human rights standards such as equity, as well as bullying and secularisation in ordinary schools are used as justifications for more faith schools. There were also other participants who supported faith schools, but they did not argue that their number should be increased (e.g. E12REC; E14A1). Yet, overall far more participants in England were in favour of the existence of faith schools along ordinary state schools than those who demanded their abolition.

6.7.2.8. Will Reform Happen?

Some participants questioned whether these reform calls will be accepted and introduced by the politicians. State Official 2 was very straightforward: ‘that’s not going to happen’. Two reasons were provided by the participants.

The NATRE representative called religious education a ‘hot potato’ (E11NATRE). The REC representative who was in touch with the Department for Education argued

> I think politicians are reluctant to interfere in that settlement [1944 settlement], because they cannot see what would guarantee an agreement on religious education if it was debated again in the parliament. So, we stuck with [the current arrangements] (…) Nobody can grasp the nettle of how we can do it better.

For them the reason behind the inactivity of politicians regarding religious education was that religious education is a controversial subject. Another reason was that according to the REC representative ‘no politicians have got incentive to do that, because there are no votes

in that for anybody' (E12REC). In other words, for these participants, in the short term, religious education reform seemed difficult.

6.7.3. Comparison

In both countries, there were calls for reform. A 'reform *talk*' (emphasis in original) (Anderson-Levitt, 2003b: 17) can be heard in Turkey and England. Moreover, when the participants demanded reform, they routinely invoked what to them were self-evident factors, but what these factors connote and how to respond to them differed markedly from participant to participant across and within cases. One striking example is international conventions. For example, the Education Reform Initiative mentioned the articles of the European Convention on Human Rights and stated that 'right not to receive religious instruction/education' should be secured (ERI, 2007: 4), whereas the official curriculum referred to the same convention, but concluded that 'International covenants clearly express that religious teaching is an obligation' (MEB DÖGM, 2010b: 10), which was shared by a significant number of participants in my study. Similarly, in England, the participants invoked plurality, but they demanded different reforms. These examples show that wider factors, especially plurality, continue to be constant themes of discussion on the reform of religious education policy, but they also continue to be understood and interpreted differently and contradictorily.

Furthermore, in Turkey, there were radical demands such as the elimination of all forms of religious education from state schools (Kaymakcan, 1998: 7-8). In England, too, one participant talked about the elimination of religious education, but the difference was that in Turkey, the elimination was the first choice of these participants, but in England, even for the Sunni participant, religious education was a vital subject and his first choice was that the religion of parents should be taught by teachers of respective community.

In both countries, one of the issues was whether education system should be centralised rigidly or decentralised, allowing variation, which is according to Kandel (1933: xix) one of important issues of education policy. There were different views about local provision and variation, central system and faith schools.

6.7.3.1. 'A New Settlement' (E19S2)

In both countries, there were participants who were pressing for a new settlement in religious education policy which was also the main theme in recent reports on religious education (Clarke and Woodhead, 2015; CORAB, 2015; Dinham and Shaw, 2015). The problem was, however, that there was no consensus on how and to what end religious education policy should be reformed. Religious education policy in both countries was still a matter of contention and seems far from settled. As could be seen in other sections, there was a diversity of opinions on the matter. Then the question is, as Cooling (2010: 12) asks, 'How is religious belief to be handled when there is such diversity of views in society?'. In Chapter 8 (Conclusion) I will share some of the implications of this research which might contribute to ongoing debate on how to handle religious belief in education.

6.8. Conclusion

This chapter sought to present the influence of wider factors on religious education policy. The analysis of data was presented in six thematic sections. Two sets of conclusions can be derived from the analysis presented in this chapter.

First, it emerged that wider factors have influenced religious education policy and they still continue to persist in much of the contemporary debate on religious education policy in

England and Turkey. Second, this influence was subject to different and contradictory interpretations of policy actors.

Regarding the first conclusion, this chapter showed that there were religious education policy reforms in both countries and these reforms were related to wider factors. Moreover, despite all the reforms, there were still debates and calls for reform and wider factors continued to persist in these calls and debates. Furthermore, the most participants agreed that partly because of wider factors such as secularisation, religious education has become a marginalised subject, even though some participants claimed that religious education was not that important in the first place. Moreover, the participants argued that there are omissions and additions: religions are not taught as they are in religious education due to pressures coming from external forces. According to the participants, on the one hand, religions are restricted and limited to certain topics, leaving some important – and controversial - topics aside; on the other hand, the subject is hijacked by socio-political issues which have limited relevance to study of religion.

Regarding the second conclusion, it was evident throughout the chapter that religious education policy in the face of wider factors was subject to different interpretations. For example, in both countries, some participants argued religious education still includes confessional elements, but for some this was a secular confessionality, while for others, it was a religious one. Moreover, the data reveals that there is confusion around religious education policy. On the one hand, the participants claimed that there is confusion in religious education policy. For example, in England some participants used words like ‘ambiguity’, ‘confusion’, ‘contradiction’ and ‘vague’ to describe English religious education policy. On the other hand, from the accounts of participants, it is understood that there is confusion in the interpretation of wider factors and religious education policy. In other

words, there were diverse and contradictory opinions and interpretations about religious education policy in the context of wider factors. There might be two explanations. First, this might be because of the beliefs, perspectives, worldviews and values of participants. What one participant sees as objective teaching was regarded as confessional by another. As a result, the same religious education was accused of both secular and religious confessionalities. Second, this might be because of religious education policy itself. As the policy sociologists stressed, collision of contradictory factors and actors would most probably, if not inevitably, result in contradictory and confusing policies, which give rise to different applications and interpretations (Ball, 2013: 9; Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 34).

7. Discussion: Supranational and National Factors and Religious Education Policy

7.1. Introduction

The research question of this thesis was 'how have supranational and national factors shaped religious education policy according to policy actors in Turkey and England?'. The identification and exploration of the factors and their influence on religious education policy was, unsurprisingly, a complex task, not least because the subject matter, religious education, itself was complex and contested (Brockman, 2016: 318-319; Carmody, 2010: 41; Durham Jr, 2013: 1; Jahangir, 2009: 13; Matemba, 2011: 43; Van Arragon and Beaman, 2015: 5; Willaime, 2007: 64). Throughout the findings chapters, one theme was recurrent, that is, participants described, understood and saw the supranational and national factors differently, which created divergent and sometimes contradictory accounts of the factors and their influence on religious education policy. This makes it difficult to present a single narrative about the wider factors, but this diversity helped me to answer the research question.

I will start with the discussion of whether the same factors have shaped religious education policy in Turkey and England, which will also include a revisit of the dichotomy between supranational and national factors. Then, I will explore in what ways these factors have shaped religious education policy (i.e. mechanisms) by using the concepts such as equilibrium and conflict, structure and agency and compulsory consensus. Finally, consequences of this influence will be discussed.

7.2. Factors

From the findings of the thesis, it was clear that wider factors have shaped religious education policy, and they still continue to persist in much of the debate on religious education policy in England and Turkey. This thesis concurs that the state of religious education policy is dependent upon the state of the world within which religious education policy is shaped and operates. This was also the conclusion reached by some pioneering works (Bråten, 2009; Matemba, 2011; Osmer and Schweitzer, 2003), but the question is whether the same factors shaped religious education policy in England and Turkey.

Chapter 4 revealed that politics, the relation between the State and religion, school system, particularities and peculiarities of England and Turkey and teachers have been seen as important factors shaping religious education policy by the policy actors. Moreover, Chapter 5 revealed that plurality was recognised as a factor by both Turkish and English religious education respondents, even though there were some Turkish participants who did not agree. Supranational policy was seen influential in Turkey, but less so in England, whereas secularisation was regarded as influential in England, but less so in Turkey. However, in both chapters, it was clear that even though the participants used the same terms, such as plurality to define society, they meant different things by these concepts.

Some comparative studies in the field of religious education tend to argue that these factors are the same (e.g. Bråten, 2009). Others criticise these studies, arguing that these factors 'may be manifested in a different way' in different countries (Schreiner, 2014b: 360). The findings of the thesis *suggest* that the factors shaping religious education policy not only seem to be manifested in different ways in England and Turkey, but also seem to be manifested differently to different policy actors within the same country.

Supranational policy is the case in point. In Turkey, the EU accession process and the European Court of Human Rights were seen as key factors influencing religious education policy, but they were not even mentioned in English interviews as being factors, even though at the time of interviews, England was the member of the European Union and the Strasbourg Court. In England, the focus was on recent supranational documents (e.g. OSCE, 2007), which were rarely mentioned by the Turkish participants. So, the supranational policy has been manifested in different ways in Turkey and England.

What is more, these were interpreted and read differently by different participants within the same country. In England, while a significant number of participants expressed their concerns about supranational religious education policy, some saw them as a way forward for secular and plural societies (e.g. E04BHA), and others argued that English religious education policy should influence supranational policy, not the reverse (e.g. E15A2). These differences across and within Turkey and England became even more apparent, when the participants talked about secularisation.

These differences between and within Turkey and England make it difficult to call these factors the 'same' factors. In this sense, as Anderson-Levitt (2003b: 17) would argue, we cannot and should not 'delude' ourselves that we are looking at the same factor just because a common vocabulary is used by different participants (see also Baumfield et al., 2012: 18; Gorski and Altınordu, 2008: 61; Schweitzer, 2006). However, as can be seen in the findings, participants in both countries were informed by these factors and some factors such as plurality seemed to be more important than others.

7.2.1. Dichotomy between Supranational and National

In Chapter 2, I have shown that some factors are called 'global' or 'supranational' by the previous comparative religious education studies and this can mean two things: a) they belong literally to a different level from national, or b) they are national factors but 'shared' internationally.

From the data, it was evident that only supranational religious education policy was seen as coming from a different level. Even though some English participants talked about their contribution to some of the supranational guidelines and recommendations, in both countries the supranational policy was seen as something that belongs to a different level from the national. This different level was exclusively associated with the West or Europe. In other words, for the participants of this study, the supranational policy belongs to a different level: the Western or European level.

As for, secularisation and pluralisation, for most participants, they were national developments. Secularisation is an interesting one. In Turkey, seven participants associated secularisation with the West and two participants argued that secularisation is the project of the West. For these participants, secularisation has had its roots outside Turkey, but for the majority of the Turkish participants, secularisation is a national development. In England, secularisation was seen as belonging to a national level. In other words, the participants did not see secularisation coming from a different level, but some participants argued that supranational policies may cause further secularisation. Regarding pluralisation, in both countries pluralisation was regarded as belonging to the national level, but two participants in Turkey accused the West of attempting to create sectarian conflicts which would further polarise and pluralise the society.

In short, in both countries, only supranational religious education policy was regarded as something from a different level. Secularisation and pluralisation, for the majority of the participants, were actually national developments. In other words, it is difficult to call these factors 'supranational' or 'global' if we take them in the first sense (they belong to a different level, i.e. global level), because only supranational religious education policy was regarded as coming from a different level. However, if we take them in the second sense (they are 'shared' internationally), then these factors might be called supranational in a wider sense, only if they are really shared by different countries. If these factors are national factors, but shared internationally, then a problem arises.

7.2.2. National Factors but Shared Internationally

The problem is that some factors that are presented as national factors by the main comparative religious education studies, might be also shared internationally. For example, the data revealed that factors such as politics were shared by England and Turkey. Like Matemba (2011), I found that politics is a key factor in religious education policy in Turkey and England. Then, politics is no different from plurality, because both were national factors and at the same time they were shared by Turkey and England. Then, why is not politics a supranational factor, if it is shared internationally?

One can argue that what makes pluralisation and secularisation global factors is their novelty. In other words, religious education policy in different countries is facing a new challenge, plurality, partly because of immigration. This might be true for some countries, but might be wrong for others. While in England plurality is associated with immigration, in Turkey no one talked about immigration, but still talked about plurality. Moreover, many participants understood plurality as an individual diversity, which, I think, might be the case throughout history. Moreover, who said that politics has remained the same, while society

has changed? The participants noted that as the governments and even ministers of education change, religious education policy faces new reforms and challenges (e.g. T08TEU), as is the case in general education policy (Brown and Beswick, 2014: 4). English participants singled out one politician, Michael Gove, and the Coalition Government (and then subsequent Conservative Governments) as the biggest challenges to religious education policy in recent history. In Turkey, the 'conservative-democrat' AK Party was criticised by some participants for 'Islamising' education (e.g. T07ESWU; see also Eğitim Sen, 2012; Eğitim Sen, 2013), while it was praised by some participants for meeting the demands of silent majority (e.g. T15A6), and for pluralising educational provision (Gür, 2016)

Moreover, the rise of populism, rise of religious and conservative parties, use and abuse of (religious) education for socio-political ambitions and projects and what policy sociology calls 'policy overload' (Ball, 2013: 3) and policy 'hyperactivism' (Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1987) are all political challenges, which religious education policy has faced in many countries.

Another pertinent example was the concern for the influence of teachers' own convictions on the way the subject is taught, which was shared by a significant number of participants in both countries. In other words, what some call national factors might be also shared internationally. In that sense, every local/national factor might be also a global factor at the same time. In this sense, I find Matemba's (2011) approach to factors useful. Matemba talked about factors that others called supranational and national factors, but he did not make such a distinction. Of course, we still can use such a distinction, but it should be kept in mind that there are 'hazy' borders between supranational and national factors; and a factor 'may fall into both categories simultaneously' (Anderson-Levitt, 2012: 442; Milana, 2015: 498;

Schwinn, 2012: 530). Therefore, the thesis argues that it would be better to use 'wider factors', rather than supranational and national to refer to these factors.

7.3. Mechanisms

In Chapter 2, I mentioned concepts such as equilibrium and conflict, structure and agency and compulsory consensus to understand how wider factors influence religious education policy. Regarding the equilibrium and conflict, the central difference between them is the role of hegemonic power, conflict and vested interests in shaping policy (Arnove, 2009: 101; Ginsburg et al., 1990: 478; Griffiths, 2009: 1; Paulston, 1977: 375; Rui, 2014: 289). From the accounts of the participants, it was clear that the issue was complex. For example, In Turkey, regarding supranational religious education policy, four participants argued that the Western powers want to control Turkey under the guise of international standards (T4LAIC; T8TEU; T16S1; T18T1). Concerning secularisation, seven participants associated it with the West and two participants even argued that it is the project of the West to weaken societies (T3CHR; T8TEU). Moreover, as for plurality, two participants claimed that the West supports certain religious groups to sow hatred and discord in the society (T8TEU; T16S1). For these participants, the aim of the West is to weaken the society and hinder Turkey from being powerful again. So, their accounts resonate with 'conflict' theory. In England, no participant argued that foreign powers try to control their country, but there were arguments that resonated with 'conflict' theory. For example, the Sunni representative argued religion is marginalised by political power in Europe and England. Regarding supranational policy, some saw it as controlled by countries who see 'laicism' as the only way forward (E2ANG2). Moreover, some participants saw supranational policy as bastion of secularisation (E2ANG2; E8SUNNI; E16A3; E17A4).

However, in both countries, there were also participants who did not see the wider factors in this way. For example, in Turkey the majority of the participants saw supranational religious education policy as a way forward for a plural society, rather than something that is imposed by foreign powers. These arguments resonate with 'equilibrium' theory. Looking at the participants' accounts, it can be argued that some were closer to equilibrium theory, while others resonated with conflict theory. This shows that the issue is not only whether the hegemonic powers actually shape policy or not, but also how the local policy actors see and interpret these processes.

However, if we look closely at the participants' accounts, religious education policy overall seems closer to conflict theory than to equilibrium theory. The participants described, understood and saw wider factors and their influence on religious education policy differently. The participants attached different meanings to the same concepts which resulted in different policy preferences. Some policies that were suggested as a way forward by some participants, were regarded as dangerous and a threat to national unity by other participants. Ball (1990) argued that education policy is the result of endless struggles, not the result of consensus among all policy actors (see also Taylor, 1997: 26). The same can be said for religious education policy. Religious education policy seems to be the result of struggles, so much so that even interpretation of religious education policy was 'a matter of struggle' (Rui, 2014: 294). Then, the thesis suggests that wider factors have shaped religious education policy through struggle and conflict at the local, national and international levels.

7.3.1. Agency and Structure

As can be seen the participants understood and interpreted wider factors and their influence on religious education policy widely and contradictorily. For example, even though almost all participants accepted that their societies are plural and wanted to protect plurality, they

still ended up in different interpretations of plurality and its influence on religious education policy. These different interpretations stressed one issue, that is, human beings tend to see 'the same world in different ways' (Jackson, 2017: 3-4). This is partly because they have different and contradictory worldviews and values and as Cooling (2010: 37) claims, the worldview held 'frame[s] the way in which the knowledge learnt is understood', interpreted and applied. For example, the participants reacted to secularisation in a variety of ways from openly hostile to supportive. From this insight, it can be argued that the way policy actors viewed and interpreted a wider factor was as crucial as the factor itself. In other words, it is not 'merely' what the wider factors actually are; it is how they are interpreted and responded to which define and shape religious education policy (Cowen, 2009: 338; Parker and Freathy, 2012).

This research seems to support Morrison (2009: 116)'s argument that 'it is individuals, not variables which do the acting and the causing' (see also Arnove, 2013: 16-17), which means that what the policy actors understand by social forces such as secularisation is quite crucial. For example, as criticised by some participants, official Turkish religious education policy takes a pro-religious approach and marginalises atheism. This shows that the policy actors in Turkey who made official policy regarded atheism as a dangerous development that should be resisted. So, the issue is not only merely whether secularisation is occurring in Turkey or not, the issue is how policy actors respond to secularisation: 'idealistic' or 'pragmatic' (Felderhof, Thompson and Torevell, 2007: xvi-xvii). In Turkey, apparently, policy actors took an 'idealistic' stance towards secularisation. However, as suggested above, since official policy itself is the result of constant struggles, the same religious education policy may also include anti-religious elements as well as pro-religious ones (see 6.3 above).

Returning to the pro-religious stance of Turkish religious education, it shows us that the way policy actors understand and interpret wider factors makes a difference. Yet, this does not mean that policy actors are completely independent from the factors. Wider factors constitute a significant milieu that informs and shapes policy actors (Robson, 2016: 130). The findings suggest that the wider factors have had explicit and implicit influence on both the views of the policy actors and official religious education policy.

Politics is a case in point. The participants of this study criticised politicians for politicising and mishandling religious education, but it seemed that the views of the participants were 'political', too, because they criticised politicians for different reasons, reflecting their own worldviews, positions and values.

Moreover, from the statements of the participants, it can be suggested that religious education policy was linked with a consideration of society (read wider factors). In other words, the participants knowingly or unknowingly assumed that religious education policy and society within which religious education policy is shaped and operates must be connected. The result was that the participants almost always referred to wider factors when interpreting, criticising or defending current religious education policy.

I borrow the term 'compulsory consensus' (Copeaux, 2015; Massicard, 2013) to describe this influence of wider factors. 'Compulsory consensus' here expresses the phenomenon of constant referral to values and factors by official religious education policies and individuals, groups and the state institutions who want to advance their demands. In the interviews, the participants evoked factors and values such as plurality, human rights principles, laicism and parental right to education to make their interpretations and policy preferences 'legitimate'. These factors have become 'compulsory references' and compelled policy actors and official policies to respond to their challenges in an acceptable framework.

For example, almost no participant wanted to be seen as arguing for a 'confessional' religious education (Cooling, 2012b: 91), even though some of them argued that there is no 'non-confessional' religious education. Almost all participants expressed positive views about plurality and offered policy solutions that, they believed, would protect plurality. Even though there was a small number of outliers in both countries who criticised 'normative' pluralism (E07SUNNI) and some forms of plurality (e.g. T16S1), no participant wanted to be seen as being against plurality.

Yet, as the thesis shows, this 'compulsory consensus' has an inherent problem: different actors still legitimise their differing policy solutions and interpretations by presenting themselves as the champion of these values (e.g. pluralism) (Akboga, 2016; Massicard, 2013). In this way 'group-specific' demands and interpretations were expressed as universal and objective, as opposed to 'others' which are presented as ideological and dogmatic (Davidsen, 2010).

Interestingly, almost no participant in my sample, argued that religious education policy should be devised according to the sacred scripture. Of course, this does not mean that sacred scripture did not influence policy actors. As argued above, the worldviews held by the policy actors shaped how they interpreted and understood wider factors and their influence on religious education policy, but when they articulated their positions, most referred to compulsory references, instead of the source (e.g. sacred scripture) from which they gain their worldviews, probably in order to make their demands 'legitimate' and advance them within an acceptable framework. In other words, as Bruce (2011: 39) argues, the policy actors acted within the 'secular rules of engagement' within which no one 'can plausibly claim that its values should predominate because God is on its side'. To put it in another

way, secularisation, which some participants openly opposed, implicitly structured their interpretations and arguments (Gearon, 2013c, 2017b; Lewin, 2017).

Then, it can be assumed that this might be also the case for official religious education policy. Even when official policy seems to be pro-religious, as is the case in Turkey, it might still promote a secular construction of religion and a secular lifestyle intentionally or unintentionally. Or, in England, as some participants noted, religious education policy seems to be pro-religious in structure, but it might still end up supporting a fact/belief divide, which marginalises belief but sacralises fact, or it might give the impression 'religion is what other people practice, rather than something that can have personal relevance' (E16A3), which might lead pupils to understand religion as the distant 'other' and construct themselves as 'secular' people who have nothing to do with religion (see Sjöborg, 2013a, 2013b). Yet, secularisation is not the only factor which has invisible, subtle influence on religious education policy. There are also rival factors at work. Some participants noted that despite official claims of non-confessional, objective, critical and pluralistic religious education, religious education might still promote implicitly or explicitly an authorised, acceptable version of religion and might prefer one belief over others (Matemba and Richardson, forthcoming). Some participants in Turkey noted that what authorities present as supra-sectarian (i.e. non-denominational) religious education is actually a diffuse Sunni indoctrination. Likewise, in England, some participants criticised the treatment of Christianity as the first among equals, arguing that it gives the impression that Christianity is somehow more important than other religions. Teacher 1 argued that some teachers in primary schools knowingly or unknowingly 'expect [pupils] to be Christian' (E20T1), probably because of religious education policies and syllabuses.

In other words, wider factors explicitly and implicitly shape official religious education policy and the responses of policy actors, but at the same time as agencies, the actors still exert power. One typical example comes from the Turkish religious education policy. According to Altinyelken, Çayır and Agirdag (2015: 475-476), Turkish policy makers 'have often been influenced by global trends, particularly by developments in Western societies'. In this context, according to the participants, partly due to European Union accession process and partly owing to the need for democratic reforms, the classification showing Islam as the only true religion, and other religions as distorted religions was removed from the curriculum and textbooks in 2000 (see 6.2 above). What this research showed and others indicated (e.g. Altıparmak, 2013; Müftügil, 2011) is that there is a mismatch between legislative policy and teacher practice. There might be different reasons for this mismatch (Matemba, 2015).

One reason might be that the official policy failed to take local realities into account. This issue was raised by some participants. For example, teachers in my sample were not happy with this reform and disregarded it (see also Kaymakcan, 2011: 39). Moreover, some participants said that families were not happy with the official policy and they want their children to learn and instil Islamic values (e.g. T11A2). In other words, as argued by some participants, local actors were still able to negotiate and disregard the reform.

Another reason might be that official policy reform actually did not mean to change what is taught in schools. To put it simply, the reform was made, because the politicians wanted to be seen as protecting plurality in the eyes of internal and external powers, without any sincere desire for a change at the school level. This was pointed by Bråten (2009: 281) who found that there is a 'disconnection' between the official policy and teacher practice in

Norway which faced supranational legal challenge (ECtHR, 2007a) like Turkey. Bråten (2009: 281) argued that

> This raises the question why implementation has not been ensured and whether the changes in the national curriculum are perhaps not primarily aimed at practice, but rather at the debates on the societal level.

This point was also raised by some participants as well. For example, Christian participant said that in Turkey, there are also 'hidden laws' which are not quite compatible with the international standards (T03CHR). This was one of the main points of 'conflict' perspective scholars, who argued that Western models were spread partly through imposition, which still produced different reactions and readings at the local level (Arnove, 2013).

What do these findings tell us about the influence of wider factors on religious education policy, especially about its mechanisms? The findings tend to agree that wider factors indeed constitute a significant milieu that informs and shapes, both implicitly and explicitly, policy actors and thereby official policies, Yet, the findings also suggest that policy actors still exert power, and interpret these factors differently even though they use certain compulsory references to present their interpretations and advance their demands and even though they are sometimes influenced by these factors without realising it. For example, in England, even though the participants refer to scientific research and surveys, some participants claimed that the society is extremely secular, while others argued that there is a persistence of Christian faith. In other words, the scientific research was enlisted to support different claims.

Likewise, in both countries, even though the participants valued and wanted to protect plurality, they still ended up with different interpretations of plurality and different policy solutions. In Turkey, all the participants agreed that Turkish society is a plural society, but

what they understood by plurality differed markedly and this was significant, because it created completely different readings of plurality and religious education policy. For example, for those who accepted only Christians and Jews (and other religions) as religious minorities, Turkish religious education policy has already been shaped by plurality because the State grants the right to withdraw from religious education to Christians and Jews and gives non-Muslims a right to establish their own schools. However, for those who accept Alevis, non-religious and others as different and legitimate religious groups, Turkish religious education is an example of resistance to plurality, because there is a limited opt-out possibility and the curriculum does not sufficiently represent diversity within society.

In England, too, even though the participants agreed that English society is plural, what the participants meant was not necessarily the same. For example, for the Christian representatives, it was nothing but fair for religious education syllabus to devote 60 per cent of the time to Christianity because the majority of society still holds Christian beliefs (e.g. E01ANG1; E02ANG2; E03CATH), but this was problematic for the Muslim representatives, because, they argued, it does take into account the 'local' religious landscape (E07SUNNI; E08SHIA) and it was problematic for the non-religious representatives, because in England religion is a minority activity (E04BHA; E05NSS).

This shows that the policy actors are as crucial as factors. In other words, how the wider factors shape religious education policy is closely related to who makes, applies and interprets the policy. Official religious education policy then would differ, depending on who makes, interprets and applies the policy, because in this research, it was clearly seen that the interpretation of official religious education policy differed, depending on who interpreted the policy. The answer of the question 'how have supranational and national factors shaped religious education policy?' differed significantly from policy actor to policy

actor, which made it important to add ‘according to policy actors’ to the research question to highlight that the answer of the question very much depends on who answers the question and the worldviews and beliefs of the respondent.

People have different values, worldviews and concerns, which inevitably result in different readings of society and religious education. Even though sometimes a certain reading of society becomes a ‘compulsory consensus’ and even though sometimes policy actors are shaped by wider factors without realising it, they still have different worldviews and values and these differences do not necessarily go away. Struggles between actors still decide the fate of religious education policy in the face of wider factors. It is not always necessarily, for example, secularisation decides the fate of religious education, but partly, if not wholly, the responses of policy actors to secularisation decide it. Then it can be suggested that the wider factors influence religious education policy, not as impersonal forces within an equilibrium environment, but through struggles and conflicts of policy actors at the local, national and supranational levels (Freathy and Parker, 2013).

7.4. Consequences

In the literature, some maintain that in the face of supranational factors there has been ‘convergence’ or similar policy developments such as non-confessional approaches to religious education in different countries (Willaime, 2007). Even though this research did not examine official policy documents such as religious education curricula, it was clear from the accounts of the participants that religious education policy was subject to different interpretations. For example, the same religious education was criticised for being both religious and secular indoctrination at the same time, even in England, which does not give

support for Willaime (2007)'s claim that the European religious education is converging on non-confessional approaches.

What this thesis has found was that there were convergence and divergence at the same time, because on the one hand there were cross-case similarities, on the other hand, there were within-case differences. For example, State Official 2 in Turkey and State Official 1 in England both argued that the concern for social cohesion shaped religious education policy so much so that the subject lost (or never had) its critical edge (T17S2; E18S1), which shows that there was a cross-case similarity. However, the Sunni representative in England disagreed. He argued the course is used as a platform for criticism of religion (E07SUNNI).

We have seen glimpses of consensus in some salient issues. For example, in both countries, there were various attempts to reform the subject and there were still calls for reform to attune religious education policy to the contemporary socio-political and legal context. Moreover, in both countries, almost all participants agreed that religious education is treated as a minor subject, partly because of secularisation and the school system. However, this 'convergence' was subject to different views and interpretations. Some participants criticised those who 'exaggerate' the importance of subject in the first place (e.g. E19S2; T07ESWU).

Furthermore, from the accounts of participants, it emerged that religious education policy was the product of various competing factors and actors, and that it was subject to different and contradictory interpretations and expectations from different policy actors and stakeholders, which resulted in what Ball (2013: 9) argues, contradictions and confusions not only in the official religious education policies of Turkey and England, but also in the accounts of policy actors.

Then how have wider factors shaped religious education policy? What are the consequences? The rival actors and factors have shaped religious education policy in state schools in Turkey and England. This has led to convergence on problems such as confusion, marginalisation, accusations and on endless discussion and enacting of reforms. Some of these findings are consistent with the findings of Matemba (2011) and Conroy et al. (2013).

7.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the findings and attempted to answer the research question. I revisited the dichotomy between supranational and national. The thesis has revealed that only supranational religious education policy was regarded as coming from a different level by the participants. Secularisation and pluralisation, for the majority of the participants, were actually national factors, but 'shared' internationally. However, there were also factors which were presented as national, but shared internationally. One of them was politics. Therefore, I have argued that there are 'hazy' borders between supranational and national factors; and a factor may fall into different categories simultaneously.

Moreover, the findings confirmed that wider factors were influential in religious education policy, but the question was how they shaped religious education policy. Wider factors constituted a significant milieu that informed and shaped policy actors. Yet the responses of policy actors still varied significantly, reflecting their deeply held worldviews and values. Therefore, the findings suggested that official religious education policy differs, depending on who makes, applies and interprets the policy, because in the thesis, it was apparent that the interpretation of official religious education policy differed, depending on who interpreted the policy. This of course does not mean that the actors are completely

independent from wider factors. As can be seen the wider factors still had implicit and explicit influence on policy actors and official policy.

Moreover, the findings tended to argue that religious education policy can be better understood within conflict terms. The participants interpreted, understood and saw the supranational and national factors differently and as policy actors, they reached different and contradictory conclusions regarding the influence of supranational and national factors on religious education policy. Religious education policy seemed to be the result of struggles, so much so that even interpretation of religious education policy was 'a matter of struggle' (Rui, 2014: 294).

Furthermore, regarding the influence of wider factors on religious education policy, it has emerged that there were cross-case convergences, but at the same time within case divergences, because of the different views of policy actors, but two convergences were telling. The first one was marginalisation of religious education in England and Turkey, even though this was contested by some participants. The second one was confusion. It seemed that there were 'contradictions, incoherencies and inconsistencies' not only in the official religious education policies of Turkey and England, but also in the accounts of policy actors. In the context of the collision of wider factors and rival policy actors, religious education policy in Turkey and England has converged on issues like confusion, marginalisation and reform talk. In the next chapter, I will discuss the implications of these findings.

8. Conclusion: Sensitising for Plurality

8.1. Introduction

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 presented the findings of the thesis. Chapter 7 attempted to answer the research question. In this thesis, understanding how supranational and national factors have shaped religious education policy was an end in itself, but it was also a means to an end. A set of policy implications arises from this study (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 314), which will be presented here.

The implications here should be seen as the personal reflections of the researcher who conducted this research for the last few years. They are subjective, but they might offer insights and contribute to the ongoing debates over religious education policy in state schools.

8.2. Implications

I titled this chapter 'Sensitising for Plurality' (Schröder, 2016: 202), because, interviews with only 40 participants shows differences in emphasis, interpretation and attitudes towards wider factors and their influence on religious education policy. The lack of consensus on many issues underpinning religious education policy by the different policy actors shows that there is a diversity of opinions regarding the issue in both countries.

8.2.1. Wider Factors

There was no consensus over what sort of society either England or Turkey was. It was difficult to reach a consensus about how much secularisation and pluralisation there are, what secularisation and pluralisation look like and more importantly, what to do about

secularisation and pluralisation vis-a-vis religious education policy. For some, their society is a religious society, while for others it is an extremely secular society. The participants often cited studies and scholars that supported their claims. Even though the participants sometimes used the same concepts such as 'plural' to describe their societies, it was clear that what they understood by pluralisation and other concepts differed markedly, which showed that the same concepts were used and understood widely and contradictorily (Anderson-Levitt, 2003b; Davie, 2014; Gorski and Altınordu, 2008). Moreover, sometimes, different concepts, such as secularisation and secularism were used interchangeably, which would be seen problematic by some commentators (Casanova, 2007, 2009). This shows that religious education policy actors have not reached a consensus over socio-political trends such as secularisation and pluralisation, which were sometimes treated as given and *self-evident* in religious education literature.

It seemed that the disagreement among participants was partly because the participants did not approach supranational and national factors as detached and 'objective' individuals (Cooling et al., 2016: 8). They not only described these factors, but also expressed their normative views about them. Some participants in England criticised recommendations and guidelines of supranational organisations such as the Council of Europe, accusing them of imposing a 'laic' or 'secular' understanding on religious education in different contexts (e.g. E02ANG2; E17A4). In Turkey, there were participants who linked secularisation with the West and accused the West of exporting secularisation. Yet, there were also participants who disagreed. For example, same saw the recommendations and guidelines of supranational organisations as sincere attempts to solve the problems and challenges faced by plural societies. This shows that when it comes to sensitive issues such as society, religion and education, there are stark differences and disagreements. It can be suggested that these disagreements are not just a matter of confusion or intellectual disagreement. 'The stakes

are high' as Gearon (forthcoming: 3) argues. There seem to be 'political' (Bacchi, 2000), religious and personal stakes in the contending positions. Religious education policy, like education policy in general, seems to be a mirror for wider battles over religion, society and politics.

Another related issue here is that the participants referred to the same human rights principles, but reached different conclusions. For example, in Turkey both the opponents and supporters of compulsory religious education referred to human rights principles such as religious freedom and right to education. In other words, the same human rights principles were called upon by different sides to support conflicting policies (Kuburić and Moe, 2006c: 163; Richardson, 2016: 300-301; Smrke and Rakar, 2006: 32). This might be because of the perspectives of the participants or their desire to 'appropriate' these principles to support their claims (Akboga, 2016), but this might be also because the human rights principles themselves allow such different readings (Slotte, 2011). If the latter is the case, there is a need for a clear articulation of what these principles mean to religious education policy (Relaño, 2010).

Jackson (2014) argues that supranational organisations like the Council of Europe and OSCE, in the understanding that contemporary societies face similar challenges like pluralisation and secularisation, are determined to provide appropriate solutions. In this thesis, it was evident that a significant number of participants did not see the publications, recommendations and guidelines of the supranational organisations as relevant and useful. Some participants even saw them as dangerous, as a bastion of secularisation (e.g. E02ANG2), or as a threat to national unity (e.g. T08ETU). This negativity partly stemmed from the understanding that supranational organisations (or Western powers) impose one secular perspective upon different contexts. Even though not all participants thought like

that, it is still important for these organisations to convince different stakeholders in different contexts that their policies do not impose any 'secular' perspective, nor do they aim at undermining social unity.

Furthermore, it emerged that, according to the most participants, in both countries, politics was one of the most influential factors shaping religious education policy. It might not be surprising that politics (and politicians) is inevitably a decisive factor not least because in democratic countries, it is politicians, so-called representatives of the people, who make and shape policies (Brockman, 2016: 318). The participants in both countries reacted against politicians' mishandling of religious education. There was suspicion and mistrust towards politicians, which is, according to Rui (2014: 287), a worldwide trend. This might raise questions, in the long term, regarding the suitability and desirability of leaving religious education policy to politicians, governments and state officials, which ultimately might lead to questioning of the state regulated and controlled education (Gatto, 2003; Illich, 1971).

8.2.2. Minorities and Majorities as 'Others'

Rudge (1998: 160) argues that religious education 'discriminates against the silent majority' (i.e. non-religious students), while Moulin (2011) stresses that religious students (i.e. the silent minority) feel that they are 'stereotyped', 'misrepresented' and 'disrespected' in religious education. The findings of this thesis seem to support both claims. Religious education policy which is the product of rival actors and factors ends up being everybody's and nobody's religious education, which leads different actors to charge religious education policy with different confessionalities. Both groups felt marginalised and discriminated against, sometimes by omission, sometimes by design and sometimes by the implicit or explicit influence of wider forces. If there is such diversity and dissatisfaction, then the religious education community, politicians, state officials and religious and secular

communities should ponder upon this particular question, as Cooling (2010: 12) asks, 'How is religious belief to be handled [in state schools] when there is such diversity of views in society?'.

8.2.3. Religious Education Policy

Alberts (2007) and Jensen (2008, 2016) wanted secular and plural European countries to adopt the same 'educational' and 'scientific' religious education model based on academic study of religions, which would be a compulsory subject without the possibility of opting-out. For them, supranational forces such as pluralisation are an argument for study of religions based religious education. However, what this research suggests is that different readings and interpretations of society, and religious education were evident not only between England and Turkey, but also within Turkey and England. There was no consensus over whether Turkish and English societies are plural and secular or not, let alone a consensus over what should be the response of religious education, if the society is plural and secular (see above).

According to Schreiner (2015: 151) 'The existing variety does not give support to any initiative toward a common European model of RE'. The thesis shows that the variety and differences not only between England and Turkey, but also within England and Turkey present a serious challenge to a common European model of religious education. This diversity may not mean that it is *impossible* to have one religious education model across countries and within countries, but listening to diverse voices, this study shows that devising a model that would be acceptable and satisfactory to all policy actors and stakeholders remains a serious challenge (Franken, 2017: 113; Hunter-Henin, 2015; Moulin and Robson, 2012: 543).

In some cases, it even seems a mission impossible. For example, for a significant number of Turkish participants, Alevism is a part of Islam, i.e. it is a *tariqah* or a sub-culture. So, for them teaching Alevism as a separate faith from Islam is a misinterpretation and misrepresentation of both Alevism and Islam. For State Official 1, it would be 'grist to the mill of the Western powers' who seek to sow sectarian splits among the already fragile Turkish society with a 'divide and rule' policy (T16S1). For the participant, the is not simply a policy decision, the national unity and future of the country are at stake. Yet, for some participants, teaching Alevism as a part of Islam, a *tariqah*, is an attempt to assimilate Alevis, which, according to them, amounts to a human rights violation and further alienates Alevis from the State (T02ALEVI).

Similarly, in England, for some participants, religious education has lost its critical edge (or it never had it in the first place), partly due to the political agenda of social cohesion, which undermines the professional and academic integrity of the subject (e.g. E19S1; E19S2). Yet, some participants complained that religious education serves as a platform for criticising and undermining religion, and especially belief in God (e.g. E07SUNNI). Against the backdrop of this diversity found within and between two contexts, adoption of the same religious education model, based on academic study of religions would probably be seen as problematic by a significant number of policy actors.

8.2.4. Open and Plural Religious Education Policy

Against this backdrop, I argue that for religious education policy, careful thought is needed to find adequate *policies* to accommodate diversity (Santos, 2007: 65). One option might be, what the European Court of Human Rights (2007a; 2007b) called, 'objective, critical and pluralistic' religious education. Overall, almost all participants wanted religious education to be open, objective and plural. Yet, the problem was, as discussed above, it was extremely

difficult to convince all stakeholders that religious education provided at schools is neutral, objective and pluralistic (Evans, 2008). For example, English religious education often attracts favourable views and is accepted as the best model of non-confessional religious education, as some participants noted (E09AULRE; E10NASACRE; E15A2) and as documented in the literature (Fabretti, 2013: 49-50; Matemba, 2011: 113-114; Pépin, 2009: 49; Schreiner, 2011: 19), but this same English religious education policy attracted heavy criticism by the participants of this study; some even accused it of secular indoctrination.

Given the diversity of opinions regarding religious education, it might be suggested that schools would be better to offer the right to opt out from religious education. I can imagine that if England abolishes the right to opt out, it might find itself before European Court of Human Rights (as argued by Academic 1 in England), which Turkey has already experienced. As stressed by some law scholars (Bertini, 2014: 140; Cumper, 2011: 217; Meredith, 2006), an appropriate right to withdraw is still the single most effective vehicle by which the States might avoid the charge of indoctrination before supranational courts. As the NATRE representative argued the right to opt out seems 'a safety wall in a plural society' (E11NATRE).

This does not mean that right to withdraw is not problematic. In my study, some critical voices maintained that opt-out clauses have a negative and stigmatizing impact on children exempted (see Dickinson and Van Vollenhoven, 2002: 9; Franken, 2017: 109; Mawhinney et al., 2010; Richardson et al., 2013). For example, the Christian representative (T03CHR) argued that 'community pressure' prevents some Christian families from choosing to withdraw their children from religious education.

My contention is that the right to withdraw might be highly problematic when it is applied only to religious education, since this would imply that religious education is the only

subject in the curriculum in which indoctrination might take place. It would be naïve to think that a State or a school that indoctrinates in religious education, becomes a champion of objectivity and neutrality in other courses (Hull, 1996; Mawhinney, 2007).

Moreover, the participants of this study who accused their respective religious education policies of confessionality or indoctrination, did not spare the rest of the curriculum. In Turkey, for example, the Alevi participant argued that the whole school system, including religious education, attempts to produce 'terminal behaviour' which is 'obedience to the State' (T02ALEVI). In England, Academic 3, 4 and the Sunni representative claimed that English community schools effectively indoctrinates pupils into secularisation by dividing knowledge into fact and belief (E16A3; E17A4) or religious and secular (E07SUNNI) which sacralise 'facts' or 'secular' while portraying religious knowledge or belief as 'subjective', 'vague', 'unreliable' and 'mere opinion' (E16A3; E17A4). Of course there were participants who did not agree with these accusations, therefore these accusations should not be seen as 'consensus' reached by the participants. The consensus here reached by most participants was that religious education policy has an interdependent relationship with the whole of education policy. The implication of this finding for the religious education community and policy makers is that in order to solve the problems of religious education, we might need to focus not only on religious education policy, but also on the whole state education policy (Cooling, 2012a: 551).

Then, it can be argued that the answer of the question of how to handle religion in education in plural societies lies in a careful look at the whole education policy. Listening to diverse voices about wider factors and religious education policy, the findings of this thesis seem to support an open and plural education policy that offers a choice between different religious, secular and non-faith schools (see Cooling, 2010; Matemba, 2011, 2013; Moulin and

Robson, 2012). In other words, plural societies might need plural education policies. Yet, there are two important problems here. First, some commentators and some participants in my study would object to this, on the grounds that this policy would be detrimental to plurality itself, while others would welcome it as a way of meeting the demands of plural society. This issue is at the heart of the debate on faith schools (Berkeley, 2008; Gardner, Cairns and Lawton, 2005; Halstead and McLaughlin, 2005; Jackson, 2003; Parker-Jenkins, Hartas and Irving, 2005). According to Halstead and McLaughlin (2005), the academic studies on this issue are inconclusive and there are studies reaching contradictory conclusions in which both sides can find support for their claims. While the findings of the thesis seem to support the arguments for an open and plural education policy, as some participants noted, this system should not be divisive and harmful to plurality. For example, in Turkey, some participants pointed to unregulated religious schools in the Islamic world, as sources of fundamentalism and terrorism (e.g. T16S1).

Second, the existence of faith schools does not always guarantee that schools are completely different schools. In my sample, some religious participants expressed their concerns that Church schools (E02ANG2; E03CAHT) and Muslim schools (E07SUNNI; E08SHIA) are not much different from ordinary secular state schools, especially when it comes to the curriculum and the focus on doing best in national exams and league tables to attract more students and prove themselves to be outstanding schools (see also Arthur, 2013). For example, the Anglican representative 2 said that

> It is not sufficiently distinctive. If you worked in the Church schools and community schools, you would not know you are in different kind of schools (E02ANG2).

In other words, the findings of the thesis seem to support open and plural education policies, but there are challenges such as fundamentalism on the one hand, and distinctiveness of these schools on the other.

8.2.5. Contribution to Comparative Religious Education Research

This thesis might have several contributions to the comparative religious education research. First, it compares the religious education policies of two significantly different countries, Turkey and England. The findings of the thesis show that even though Turkey and England seem to be significantly different countries, their religious education policies have much in common. The study reveals that wider factors have shaped religious education policy in both countries, which supports the claims of previous comparative religious education researchers. Moreover, even though, my impression is that in Turkey religious education policy was more contested than in England, in both countries religious education remained a contested subject. In Turkey, there were participants who categorically objected to religious education in state schools altogether, finding it to be Islamic indoctrination while some demanded more religious education, finding it inadequate to the teaching of Islam and other religions properly. Likewise, in England, not all policy actors thought that English religious education has adequately responded to pluralisation, some even accused it of indoctrination, as opposed to, what Barnes (2006: 395) calls, 'a tale of progress', as narrated by some religious educators. In other words, among policy actors, religious education was still controversial and convoluted in both countries.

Second, this thesis has attempted to give voice to 'the silent minority' and 'silent majority' (Moulin, 2011; Rudge, 1998). Even though the interview model I applied can be called 'expert' or 'elite' interviews, some participants still felt that they are ignored and discriminated against. As Bereday (1964b: 6) argues a comparative study might help us 'to

be aware (…) of other nations' points of view', the contribution of this thesis to comparative religious education is that it presents not only 'other nations' points of view' but also different points of view within different nations. The interview data generated in this study gives instances of how different actors make sense of wider factors and interpret their influence on religious education policy within the same society, which was not addressed in previous comparative religious education studies. The findings suggest that national religious education policy is not always necessarily a national consensus. It has 'winners' and 'losers' (Rui, 2014: 293). Like education policy in general (see Foucault, 1981: 64), religious education policy is highly controversial, 'political' and 'a matter of struggle' (Rui, 2014: 294).

The findings of this thesis, therefore, are comparable to the findings of Matemba (2011; 2013) who similarly conducted interviews with various stakeholders in Scotland and Malawi (excluding secular groups) and reached comparable conclusions. For example, Matemba (2013: 19) argued that

> Given the intractability of stakeholder views and positions on the matter of RE, a dual arrangement may so far be the most workable option for the subject in both Scotland and Malawi.

Third, the thesis has attempted to explore and contribute to the academic debate about how supranational and national factors shape religious education policy, particularly its consequences and mechanisms, through using concepts such as equilibrium and conflict, structure and agency and compulsory consensus. The findings have suggested that the wider factors influence religious education policy, not as impersonal forces within an equilibrium environment, but through struggles and conflicts of policy actors at the local, national and supranational levels and this has led religious education in Turkey and England to convergence on problems such as confusion, marginalisation, accusations and on endless

discussion and enacting of reforms, but there is still a need for more studies on these issues, which remain understudied in the field of comparative religious education policy.

Fourth, the thesis has attempted to contribute to the pertinent question of how to deal with religion in education in plural societies. The findings tended to support the idea of open and plural religious education policy which will offer a choice between different religious, secular and non-faith schools.

8.2.6. Turkey and England in terms of Religious Education Policy

This research is not primarily conducted to find successful religious education policies that can be transplanted into other contexts. Yet, the research inevitably has practical findings. Even though the religious education policies of Turkey and England remain controversial, throughout the thesis it was evident that Turkish religious education policy was more contentious and controversial and the debates were more heated. This might be because of the strict central and unified education system of Turkey. As Kandel (1933: xix) argues, the less rigid centralised control there is, the better the national education system 'reflect(s) the variety of forces by which the character of a nation is moulded'.

In England, the diverse education system provided some relief, especially to religious participants. For example, the Jewish, Catholic and Shia representatives criticised religious education in ordinary schools in comparison with religious education in their own schools, some of which were state funded schools. In other words, these participants were not happy with religious education in ordinary schools, but they could still find schools that are mostly funded by the State that they can be happy with. Even though there were objections to these schools from some participants, especially from representatives of secular organisations, (E04BHA; E05NSS; E17S1; E18S2), the majority were in favour of diverse school system

in England. This was not the case in Turkey, where all participants talked about religious education in fully state funded schools, because there are no schools that are allowed to offer different religious education, except the minority schools whose number is just 22 (Örer, 2013). Moreover, more participants in Turkey than in England argued that there is no effective consultation in religious education policy, which I think, also contributed to challenges of Turkish religious education policy. However, in Turkey, we saw a more 'idealistic' stance to, for example, secularisation, which was demanded by some participants in England (E01PRA; E07SUNNI; E08SHIA; E16A3; E17A4).

These examples show that even though both countries' religious education polices remain controversial internally and externally to some extent, there might be still things that these two countries might learn from each other.

8.3. Personal Reflection

I understand the research process as a learning process. If a research has something to offer, the researcher should be the first person to get and practice it. The Qur'an (61: 2) warns that

> Believers, why do you preach what you do not practice?

This research suggests that we need to be more sensitised to plurality. Throughout the research, I realised that there is marginalisation of alternative epistemologies and worldviews, and we do this consciously or unconsciously. For example, as a self-professed Muslim, I never saw religious education in Turkey as a Sunni indoctrination. For me, it was much closer to laic and nationalistic indoctrination (Sahin, 2013: 17) than Sunni/Islamic indoctrination. However, interviews with Christian, Alevi, Laic participants and others made me think about these issues again and again. I realised that sometimes our deeply held beliefs and views prevent us from thinking otherwise, but we need to be sensitive to the diversity

of worldviews, be they religious or secular. As Poulter, Riitaoja and Kuusisto (2016: 72) argue we have 'an *ethical responsibility towards the "Other"* [that is] to consider our epistemological positions' (emphases and capitalisation in original). We need to consider our positions, commitments and values and be sensitive to others. We need to know and understand each other (Selçuk, 2017).

After this study, I will return to Turkey with something to offer, but this is not borrowing something from England. I learned something from the views of policy actors both in England and Turkey. Expectations, hopes and worries of participants in both countries were very informative and liberating. We need more encounters and conversations like this.

8.4. Concluding Remarks

This is a small-scale study of the subjective accounts of religious education policy actors and it does not claim to adopt a representative sample strategy. It means that its findings might not be representative or generalizable. For example, in Turkey, most participants saw secularisation as a problem to be tackled, but when I make sense of this data, I always keep in my mind that I only interviewed around 20 participants in Turkey. Therefore, I often used 'according to participants' to refer to the fact that the conclusions reached are based on limited number of interviews conducted in England and Turkey. The researcher, the research and its findings have their limitations. The findings of this thesis have been subject to 'double subjectivity': subjectivities of the policy actors and the researcher. Therefore, what I found in this thesis is not wholly 'determinate' or 'precise'; the thesis does not 'prove' anything, but at best it 'suggests' (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2014: 223).

Moreover, some of the findings of the thesis are hardly new. For example, a need for a plural and open religious education policy is found by Matemba (2011). Confusions around

religious education are highlighted by Conroy et al. (2013). This is hardly the first study to suggest that there is marginalisation of religious education. However, these issues become ever more apparent in this thesis and the thesis suggests that these are the issues faced even in strikingly different countries. The religious education policies of Turkey and England, often presented in literature as a 'failure' and a 'success', converged on issues like constant reform talk, accusations, marginalisation and, most importantly, confusion.

This thesis compared religious education policy in Turkey and England, encompassing the views of different actors of religious education policy to present different perspectives on the supranational and national factors and their influence on religious education policy. While I recognise the limitations of this small-scale study, I still believe that the results of this study can give an insight into various actors' views on religious education policy which can contribute to the ongoing debates about the relationship between wider factors and religious education policy and about how to handle religion in education in plural societies.

This thesis has two sets of suggestions: theoretical and practical (Bereday, 1964a). Theoretical insights were discussed in Chapter 7 and practical insights were discussed in this chapter at hand. Theoretically, the thesis suggests that there are hazy borders between supranational and national factors; and some factors may fall into both categories simultaneously (Anderson-Levitt, 2012: 442). Plurality is a case in point. It is a national factor according to the participants, but it was shared by Turkey and England. Moreover, the thesis suggests that some participants' accounts resonated with 'conflict' theory, while others with 'equilibrium' theory, because while some participants argued that there is an imposition of certain policies, others disagreed. However, listening to diverse voices, this study suggests that religious education policy overall was closer to conflict theory than to equilibrium theory, because the participants described, understood and interpreted wider

factors and their influence differently and contradictorily. A policy that is suggested as a way forward for a plural society by one participant was regarded as detrimental to plurality by another. Religious education policy was a battlefield so much so that even interpretation of religious education policy was a matter of struggle and debate. What is at stake is how to mould minds and hearts of future generations, i.e. the future of the world. The participants probably felt that, as argued by Bourdieu (2003: 11) they 'cannot stand aside, neutral and indifferent, from the struggles in which the future of [the] world is at stake'.

The thesis confirms that wider factors explicitly and implicitly shape religious education policy. Understanding how they shape religious education policy inevitably brings us to the debate about agency and structure. Some of these factors constitute a significant milieu that informs and shapes policy actors. A certain understanding and reading of society and religious education becomes a compulsory consensus, which constrains and enables policy actors. Yet, the policy actors still exert power. The participants' arguments include norms and values from the compulsory consensus, such as plurality, laicism, Atatürk, the parental right to education, human rights and equality, but the responses of policy actors still vary significantly, reflecting their deeply held values and worldviews.

Practically, this thesis suggests that there is a need for a more open and plural not only religious education policy but also education policy. There is a diversity of views about doing God in education in both Turkey and England, predominantly Muslim and predominantly Christian countries, which shows the issue is highly contested across societies.

This thesis is not a final word on this complex issue. As Glaser and Strauss (1967: 40) would argue it is 'only a pause in the never ending process'. I hope that this thesis will contribute to discussions about methodology for the relatively new field of comparative study of

religious education policy as well as informing wider debates about religious education and doing God in education (Cooling, 2010). I also hope that this thesis will be an inspiration for other researchers to conduct further research on this topic. There is a need for studies which incorporate policy actors from different religious traditions and from different continents. This thesis did not include politicians, parents and students, further studies can include these voices to find out how they interpret religious education policy in the context of supranational and national factors. Moreover, there is a need for more studies on supranational and national factors shaping religious education policy in different countries and on their mechanisms and consequences, to test, challenge and strengthen the suggestions of this thesis.

Finding myself at the end of this journey, I want to emphasise that academic progress and self-discovery were entangled throughout this research. Understanding how wider factors shape religious education policy was attempted, but as I stressed repeatedly, the researcher, the research and findings of this thesis have their limitations. Moreover, this thesis strongly stressed the need for sensitising for plurality, which is my take from this thesis. I hope that the findings of this thesis will be of help to myself and others who live a short life in a small, yet plural, world.

9. Appendix: CUREC Forms

CUREC Application Approval

04/07/2012

Dear Abdurrahman Hendek

Application Approval

Title: "A Comparative Study of Religious Education in England and Turkey"

The above application has been considered on behalf of the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to DREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly approval has been granted.

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application you should submit details to research.office@education.ox.ac.uk for consideration.

Good luck with your research study.

Yours sincerely,

Justina Kurkova

Research Office Assistant

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY
Tel: +44(0)1865 274024 Fax: +44(0)1865 274027
general.enquiries@education.ox.ac.uk
www.education.ox.ac.uk

Dear [Name]

A Comparative Study of Religious Education in England and Turkey

I am undertaking research on this topic for a doctorate at the University of Oxford, and would be very grateful if you would be willing to be interviewed as part of the study. (Tailored to each individual, in this case an academic in England) I have carefully read some of your publications about religious education in England. Indeed, they were very insightful, and I would like to ask you some questions regarding your thoughts and opinions on religious education in England, particularly on i) what the socio-political and legal factors that shape religious education; ii) the influence of socio-political and legal factors on religious education; iii) the importance of the subject; iv) the influence of religious education on society; v) how society sees religious education.

The research aims to analyse the influence of socio-political and legal factors on religious education policy in England and Turkey. In this regard, the research incorporates these factors since there is a strong case for asserting that religious education in different countries confronts similar factors and the international nature of some factors makes it appropriate to address them in a comparative research. The research will be based on semi-structured key informant interviews as well as documents. Through examining the literature pertaining to religious education and also speaking to my supervisors and others about the study, your name came up as someone who have expert opinion and experience to comment on this matter. I kindly ask that we meet for an approximately forty-five-minute interview at a venue we will agree on. The interview will be audio-taped.

This research has been approved by the research ethics committee of the department of education at the University of Oxford. The research is funded and organized as an independent doctoral research project in conjunction with the Department of Education, Oxford University. Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary. I respect your decision to take part in the interview. You can decide to stop participating at any time. You do not

need to answer questions that you do not wish to. Every effort will be made to preserve confidentiality; unless you wish to be identified, you will be anonymous however, given your status, it may be difficult to disguise your identity completely. The results of this research will form the basis of the DPhil thesis. Some results may be published in academic journals. If you wish to obtain a copy of the published results, please inform me. (…) I will try my best to reflect the contents of the interview faithfully, ensure your confidentiality, if required, and carefully treat the disclosure of any relevant information. The data generated will be kept securely in electronic form in my password protected computer for a period of five years after the completion of the thesis. No other person apart from me and my supervisors will have an access to them.

Should you have any further questions about this research, please feel free to contact: Abdurrahman Hendek, Department of Education, 15 Norham Gardens, Oxford, UK OX2 6PY. abdurrahman.hendek@education.ox.ac.uk Also, if you have any concerns about this research, you can contact my supervisors: (the first supervisor) Dr Liam Gearon at liam.gearon@education.ox.ac.uk and (the co-supervisor) Dr Nigel Fancourt at nigel.fancourt@education.ox.ac.uk. Your inquiries are most welcome.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Abdurrahman Hendek

DPhil candidate of the Department of Education, University of Oxford

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY
Tel: +44(0)1865 274024 Fax: +44(0)1865 274027
general.enquiries@education.ox.ac.uk
www.education.ox.ac.uk

Research Consent Form

A Comparative Study of Religious Education in England and Turkey

The research is undertaken by Abdurrahman Hendek, DPhil candidate of the Department of Education, University of Oxford under the supervision of Dr Liam Gearon (liam.gearon@education.ox.ac.uk) and Dr Nigel Fancourt (nigel.fancourt@education.ox.ac.uk).

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, simply by informing the researcher of my decision.

3. I am aware that the interview will be tape-recorded and then transcribed.

4. I understand who will have access to identifying information provided and what will happen to the data at the end of the project.

5. I am aware of who to contact should I have questions following my participation in this study.

6. I have been notified that at a future time the research materials may be used in an academic publication.

7. I understand that this project has been reviewed by and received ethical clearance through the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee.

I agree to voluntarily participate in this study [ ]

Name of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____Signature: _____

Name of Researcher: _____ Signature: _____

Interview Questions

These are the main questions I asked to the participants. As stated above, the interview questions were semi-structured, which means that questions were tailored for different interviewees and modified as needed.

I.

What have been the deciding factors in religious education in England?

How have these factors shaped religious education policy?

Questions related to supranational factors, namely the supranational policy, secularisation and pluralisation.

II.

Do you think religious education should be compulsory in state schools? Why and how?

What is the importance of religious education in England?

What are the aims and purposes of religious education in this country? What should be the aims of religious education? Why? Are the current arrangements sufficient to achieve these aims?

In your opinion, do society, elites, government officials, teachers and students see religious education as important as other subjects such as maths or science? If so why, if not, why not?

In your opinion, have been there adequate consultation with relevant stakeholders regarding religious education policy? Who should be the relevant stakeholders in religious education?

In your opinion, does religious education have a positive or inverse influence on (if there is) the increasing secularisation and pluralisation in England?

What challenges generally do you see for religious education in England?

Is there anything would you like to add?

10. References

Accord Coalition. (2012) *Beliefs and Values Education* [Online]. Available: http://accordcoalition.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Beliefs_and_Values_Education.pdf [Accessed 07 January 2017].

Adanali, H. (2002) The Many Dimensions of Religious Instruction in Turkey. *In:* IARF (ed.) *Religious Education in Schools: Ideas and Experiences from around the World*. Madrid: The International Association for Religious Freedom, 18-22.

Agai, B. (2007) Islam and Education in Secular Turkey: State Policies and the Emergence of the Fethullah Gulen Group. *In:* Hefner, R. W. and Zaman, M. Q. (eds.) *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 149-171.

Ahmad, F. (1991) Politics and Islam in Modern Turkey. *Middle Eastern Studies,* 27(1)**,** 3-21.

Ahmed, F. (2012) Tarbiyah for Shakhsiyah (Educating for Identity): Seeking Out Culturally Coherent Pedagogy for Muslim Children in Britain. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* 42(5)**,** 725-749.

Akboga, S. (2016) The Expansion of Compulsory Education in Turkey: Local and World Culture Dynamics. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* 46(5)**,** 789-810.

Akbulut, O. and Usal, Z. O. (2008) Parental Religious Rights vs. Compulsory Religious Education in Turkey. *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights,* 15(4)**,** 433-455.

Alakuş, F. and Bahçekapılı, M. (2009) *Din Eğitimi Açısından İngiltere ve Türkiye [England and Turkey in terms of Religious Education]*. Istanbul: Ark Kitapları.

Alberts, W. (2007) *Integrative Religious Education in Europe: A Study-of-Religions Approach*. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter.

Alberts, W. (2010) The Academic Study of Religions and Integrative Religious Education in Europe. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 32(3)**,** 275-290.

Alexander, R. J. (2001) *Culture and Pedagogy: International Comparisons in Primary Education*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Almén, E. and Øster, H. C. (eds.) (2000) *Religious Education in Great Britain, Sweden and Russia: Presentations, Problem Inventories and Commentaries (Texts from the PETER Project)*. Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press.

Altbach, P. G., Arnove, R. F. and Kelly, G. P. (eds.) (1982) *Comparative Education*. New York: Collier Macmillan.

Altinyelken, H. K., Çayır, K. and Agirdag, O. (2015) Turkey at a Crosroads: Critical Debates and Issues in Education. *Comparative Education,* 51(4)**,** 473-483.

Altıparmak, K. (2005) *Zorunlu Din Dersi Gerçekten Zorunlu Mu? [Is Compulsory Religous Education Really Compulsory?]* [Online]. Radikal. Available: http://www.radikal.com.tr/radikal2/zorunlu-din-dersi-gercekten-zorunlu-mu-872303/ [Accessed 03 October 2017].

Altıparmak, K. (2013) *Execution of the Judgment of Hasan ve Eylem Zengin/Turkey- Monitoring Report* [Online]. Human Rights Joint Platform. Available: http://aihmiz.org.tr/files/01_Hasan_ve_Eylem_Zengin_Report_EN.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Alves, C. (1991) Just a Matter of Words? The Religious Education Debate in the House of Lords. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 13(3)**,** 168-174.

Amnesty International. (2017) *Amnesty International Report 2016/17 The State of the World's Human Rights* [Online]. Available: https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2017/02/amnesty-international-annual-report-201617/ [Accessed 25 February 2017].

AMSS. (2004) *Muslims on Education: A Position Paper* [Online]. The Association of Muslim Social Scientists. Available: http://www.amssuk.com/docs/pdf/Muslims%20on%20Education%20Position%20Paper%20June%202004.pdf [Accessed 06 September 2017].

Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (ed.) (2003a) *Local Meanings, Global Schooling: Anthropology and World Culture Theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (2003b) A World Culture of Schooling? *In:* Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (ed.) *Local Meanings, Global Schooling: Anthropology and World Culture Theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1-26.

Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (2012) Complicating the Concept of Culture. *Comparative Education,* 48(4)**,** 441-454.

Andreassen, B.-O. (2013) Religion Education in Norway: Tension of Harmony between Human Rights and Christian Cultural Heritage? *Temenos,* 49(2)**,** 137-164.

Andreassen, B.-O. (2014) Christianity as Culture and Religions as Religions. An Analysis of the Core Curriculum as Framework for Norwegian RE. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 36(3)**,** 265-281.

Antunes, F. (2006) Globalisation and Europeification of Education Policies: Routes, Processes and Metamorphoses. *European Educational Research Journal,* 5(1)**,** 38-55.

APPG. (2013) *RE: The Truth Unmasked: The Supply of and Support for Religious Education Teachers. An Inquiry by The All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education*. London: Religious Education Council of England and Wales.

Apple, M. W. (2000) *Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Apple, M. W., Ball, S. J. and Gandin, L. A. (2010a) Mapping the Sociology of Education: Social Context, Power and Knowledge. *In:* Apple, M. W., Ball, S. J. and Gandin, L. A. (eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Education*. London: Routledge.

Apple, M. W., Ball, S. J. and Gandin, L. A. (eds.) (2010b) *The Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Education*. London: Routledge.

Arnove, R. F. (1980) Comparative Education and World-Systems Analysis. *Comparative Education Review,* 24(1)**,** 48-62.

Arnove, R. F. (2007) Reframing Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local. *In:* Arnove, R. F. and Torres, C. A. (eds.) *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1-20.

Arnove, R. F. (2009) World-Systems Analysis and Comparative Education in the Age of Globalization. *In:* Cowen, R. and Kazamias, A. M. (eds.) *International Handbook of Comparative Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 101-120.

Arnove, R. F. (2013) Introduction: Reframing Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local. *In:* Arnove, R. F., Torres, C. A. and Franz, S. (eds.) *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local* (4th ed.). Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1-25.

Arnove, R. F. and Torres, C. A. (eds.) (2007) *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local* (3rd ed.). Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Arnove, R. F., Torres, C. A. and Franz, S. (eds.) (2013) *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local* (4th ed.). Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Arthur, J. (2008) Learning under the Cross: Legal Challenges to 'Cultural–Religious Symbolism' in Public Schools. *Education and the Law,* 20(4)**,** 337-349.

Arthur, J. (2013) The De-Catholicising of the Curriculum in English Catholic Schools. *International Studies in Catholic Education,* 5(1)**,** 83-98.

Arthur, J. and Holdsworth, M. (2012) The European Court of Human Rights, Secular Education and Public Schooling. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 60(2)**,** 129-149.

Ashkenazi, J. (2009) Reflections on Educational Transitions in Egypt, Lebanon and Turkey. *In:* Cowen, R. and Kazamias, A. M. (eds.) *International Handbook of Comparative Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 889-905.

Ashton, E. (2000) *Religious Education in the Early Years*. London: Routledge.

Aşlamacı, İ. and Kaymakcan, R. (2017) A Model for Islamic Education from Turkey: The Imam-Hatip Schools. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 39(3)**,** 279-292.

Aslan, E. (2016) Plurality as the Will of God: An Islamic Theological Perspective. *In:* Aslan, E., Ebrahim, R. and Hermansen, M. (eds.) *Islam, Religions and Pluralism in Europe*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 19-37.

Aslan, E., Ebrahim, R. and Hermansen, M. (eds.) (2016) *Islam, Religions and Pluralism in Europe*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Association of Atheism. (2014a) *Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yanlış ve Ayrıştırıcı İçeriği Kaldırmalıdır [The Ministry of National Education Should Remove False and Discriminatory Content]* [Online]. Association of Atheism. Available: https://www.ateizmdernegi.org.tr/haber/milli-egitim-bakanligi-yanlis-ve-ayristirici-icerigi-kaldirmalidir [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Association of Atheism. (2014b) *Our Views and Recommendations About Freedom of Faith in Turkey*. Istanbul: Association of Atheism.

Ayhan, H. (2004) *Türkiye'de Din Eğitimi [Religious Education in Turkey]*. İstanbul: DEM Yayınları.

Aytulu, G. (2015) *Atheists Raising Thier Voice in Turkey Amid Polarized Reactions* [Online]. Hurriyet Daily News. Available: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/number-of-atheists-increasing-in-turkey-research-company.aspx?pageID=238&nID=87604&NewsCatID=339 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Bacchi, C. (2000) Policy as Discourse: What Does It Mean? Where Does It Get Us? *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education,* 21(1)**,** 45-57.

Bahçekapılı, M. (2011) Avrupa'da Islam Din Eğitimi Modelleri [Islamic Religious Education Models in Europe]. *Marmara Üniversitesi Din Eğitimi Araştırmaları Dergisi,* (21)**,** 21-64.

Ball, S. J. (1990) *Politics and Policy Making in Education: Explorations in Policy Sociology*. London: Routledge.

Ball, S. J. (1993) What is Policy? Texts, Trajectories and Toolboxes. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education,* 13(2)**,** 10-17.

Ball, S. J. (1994) *Education Reforms: A Critical and Post Structural Approach*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Ball, S. J. (2010) New States, New Governance and New Education Policy. *In:* Apple, M. W., Ball, S. J. and Gandin, L. A. (eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Education*. London: Routledge, 155-166.

Ball, S. J. (2013) *The Education Debate* (2nd ed.). Bristol: The Policy Press.

Bardakoğlu, A. (2008) *AİHM, İslam'a Hristiyanlık Gibi Bakıyor [ECtHR Regards Islam as Christianity]* [Online]. Altınoluk. Available: http://dergi.altinoluk.com/index.php?sayfa=yillar&MakaleNo=d266s048m1 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Barnes, L. P. (2006) The Misrepresentation of Religion in Modern British (Religious) Education. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 54(4)**,** 395-411.

Barnes, L. P. (ed.) (2012a) *Debates in Religious Education*. London: Routledge.

Barnes, L. P. (2014) *Education, Religion and Diversity: Developing a New Model of Religious Education*. London: Routledge.

Barnes, L. P. (2015) Religious Education: Teaching for Diversity. *In:* Halstead, J. M. (ed.) *Religious Education: Educating for Diversity*. London: Bloomsbury, 11-62.

Barnes, L. P. and Wright, A. (2006) Romanticism, Representations of Religion and Critical Religious Education. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 28(1)**,** 65-77.

Barnes, P. (2012b) Diversity. *In:* Barnes, P. (ed.) *Debates in Religious Education*. London: Routledge, 65-76.

Bartlett, L. and Vavrus, F. (2009) Introduction: Knowing, Comparatively. *In:* Vavrus, F. and Bartlett, L. (eds.) *Critical Approaches to Comparative Education: Vertical Case Studies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1-18.

Bates, D. (1984) Harold Loukes: Christian Educationist 1912-80. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 6(2)**,** 75-81.

Bates, D. (1994) Christianity, Culture and Other Religions (Part 1): The Origins of the Study of World Religions in English Education. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 17(1)**,** 5-18.

Bates, D. (1996) Christianity, Culture and Other Religions (Part 2): F H Hilliard, Ninian Smart and the 1988 Education Reform Act. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 18(2)**,** 85-102.

Baumfield, V. et al. (2012) The Delphi Method: Gathering Expert Opinion in Religious Education. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 34(1)**,** 5-19.

Baumfield, V. and Cush, D. (2013) Religious Education at the Crossroads (Again): The Search for a Subject Identity? *British Journal of Religious Education,* 35(3)**,** 231-235.

Beaman, L. G. and Van Arragon, L. (eds.) (2015) *Issues in Religion and Education: Whose Religion?* Leiden: Brill.

Becker, S. O., Nagler, M. and Woessmann, L. (2014) *Education Promoted Secularization* [Online]. IZA. Available: http://ftp.iza.org/dp8016.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Bell, L. and Stevenson, H. (2006) *Education Policy : Process, Themes and Impact*. London: Routledge.

BERA. (2011) *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* [Online]. British Educational Research Association. Available: https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Bereday, G. Z. F. (1964a) *Comparative Method in Education*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Bereday, G. Z. F. (1964b) Sir Michael Sadler's "Study of Foreign Systems of Education". *Comparative Education Review,* 7(3)**,** 307-314.

Bereday, G. Z. F. (1967) Reflections on Comparative Methodology in Education, 1964-1966. *Comparative Education,* 3(3)**,** 169-187.

Berger, P. L. (1967) *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. New York: Anchor Books Doubleday.

Berger, P. L. (1999a) The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overwiew. *In:* Berger, P. L. (ed.) *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Washington: William B. Eerdmans, 1-18.

Berger, P. L. (ed.) (1999b) *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Washington: William B. Eerdmans.

Berger, P. L. (2001) Reflections on the Sociology of Religion Today. *Sociology of Religion,* 62(4)**,** 443-454.

Berger, P. L., Davie, G. and Fokas, E. (2008) *Religious America, Secular Europe?: A Theme and Variation*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Berglund, J., Lundén, T. and Strandbrink, P. (eds.) (2015) *Crossings and Crosses: Borders, Educations, and Religions in Northern Europe*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Berglund, J., Shanneik, Y. and Bocking, B. (2016a) Introduction. *In:* Berglund, J., Shanneik, Y. and Bocking, B. (eds.) *Religious Education in a Global-Local World*. Switzerland: Springer, 1-10.

Berglund, J., Shanneik, Y. and Bocking, B. (eds.) (2016b) *Religious Education in a Global-Local World*. Switzerland: Springer.

Berkeley, R. (2008) *Right to Divide? Faith Schools and Community Cohesion* [Online]. The Runnymede Trust. Available: http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/Summaries/RightToDivide-Summary.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Berkes, N. (1964) *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. Montreal: McGill University Press.

Berkhout, S. J. and Wielemans, W. (1999) Toward Understanding Education Policy: An Integrative Approach. *Educational Policy,* 13(3)**,** 402-420.

Bertini, I. M. (2014) *Freedom of Religion and State Neutrality in the Educaitonal Environment: A Path through the Jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights.* PhD Thesis, Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca.

Bhabha, H. K. (1994) *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.

Bhargava, R. (2010) States, Religious Diversity, and the Crisis of Secularism. *The Hedgehog Review,* 12(3)**,** 8-22.

Bilgin, B. (1993) The Understanding of Religious Education in a Country Where There Is Separation of Religion and State: The Example of Turkey. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 15(2)**,** 36-43.

Bilgin, B. (2002) İslam Din Pedagojisinde İslam'dan Başka Dinlerin Anlatımı [Presentation of Other Religions in Islamic Religious Pedagogy]. *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi,* 43(2)**,** 19-40.

Bîrzéa, C. (2006) The Education Policy Perspective. *In:* Keast, J. (ed.) *Religious Diversity and Intercultural Education : A Reference Book for Schools*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 7-8.

Bîrzéa, C. et al. (2004) *All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Blair, T. (2014) *Fight War of Ideas against Extremism* [Online]. BBC. Available: http://www.bbc.com/news/business-29553001 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Bligh, D. (1993) Learning to Teach in Higher Education. *Studies in Higher Education,* 18(1)**,** 105-111.

Bogner, A., Littig, B. and Menz, W. (eds.) (2009) *Interviewing Experts*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bogner, A. and Menz, W. (2009) The Theory-Generating Expert Interview: Epistemological Interest, Forms of Knowledge, Interaction. *In:* Bogner, A., Littig, B. and Menz, W. (eds.) *Interviewing Experts*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 43-80.

Bolay, S. H. and Türköne, M. (1995) *Din Eğitimi Raporu [Religious Education Report]*. Ankara.

Boulden, J. and Kymlicka, W. (eds.) (2015) *International Approaches to Governing Ethnic Diversity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2003) *Firing Back: Against the Tyranny of the Market 2*. New York: New Press.

Bowe, R., Ball, S. J. and Gold, A. (1992) *Reforming Education and Changing Schools: Case Studies in Policy Sociology*. London: Routledge.

Bozan, İ. (2016) *'Bizi Kutuplaşmadan Kim Kurtaracak?' ['Who Will Save Us from Polarisation?']* [Online]. Al Jazeera Turk. Available: http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/al-jazeera-ozel/bizi-kutuplasmadan-kim-kurtaracak [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Brandell, I., Carlson, M. and Çetrez, Ö. A. (eds.) (2015) *Borders and the Changing Boundaries of Knowledge*. Stockholm: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul.

Bråten, O. M. H. (2009) *A Comparative Study of Religious Education in State Schools in England and Norway.* PhD Thesis, University of Warwick.

Bråten, O. M. H. (2013) *Towards a Methodology for Comparative Studies in Religious Education : A Study of England and Norway*. Münster: Waxmann.

Bråten, O. M. H. (2015) Three Dimensions and Four Levels: Towards a Methodology For Comparative Religious Education. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 37(2)**,** 138-152.

Bråten, O. M. H. (2016) Comparative Studies in Religious Education: Perspectives Formed Around a Suggested Methodology. *In:* Berglund, J., Shanneik, Y. and Bocking, B. (eds.) *Religious Education in a Global-Local World*. Switzerland: Springer, 35-51.

Bray, M., Adamson, B. and Mason, M. (eds.) (2007) *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods*. Hong Kong: Springer.

Bray, M., Adamson, B. and Mason, M. (eds.) (2014a) *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods* (2nd ed.). London: Springer.

Bray, M., Adamson, B. and Mason, M. (2014b) Different Models, Different Emphases, Different Insights. *In:* Bray, M., Adamson, B. and Mason, M. (eds.) *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods*. London: Springer, 417-436.

Bray, M. and Thomas, R. M. (1995) Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies: Different Insights from Different Literatures and the Value of Multilevel Analyses. *Harvard Educational Review,* 65(3)**,** 472-491.

British Humanist Association. (2014) *'Faith' Schools* [Online]. British Humanist Assosication. Available: https://humanism.org.uk/campaigns/schools-and-education/faith-schools/ [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Broadbent, L. and Brown, A. (eds.) (2002) *Issues in Religious Education*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Brockman, D. R. (2016) Education for Pluralism, or Against It? Lessons from Texas and Quebec on Teaching Religion in the Public Schools. *Religion & Education,* 43(3)**,** 317-343.

Brown, C. G. (2009) *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation, 1800-2000* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Brown, N. and Beswick, K. (2014) Policy and Curriculum Research in the Context of Change. *In:* Fitzallen, N., Reaburn, R. and Fan, S. (eds.) *The Future of Educational Research: Perspectives from Beginning Researchers*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 3-11.

Bruce, S. (2011) *Secularization: In Defence of an Unfashionable Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bruce, S. and Yearley, S. (2006) *The Sage Dictionary of Sociology*. London: Sage.

Bülbül, K., Özipek, B. B. and Kalın, İ. (2008) *Aşk ile Nefret Arasında Türkiye'de Toplumun Batı Algısı [Between Love and Hate: Turkish Society's Perception of the West]*. Ankara: SETA Siyaset, Ekonomi ve Toplum Araştirmaları Vakfı.

Burke, B. (2007) *Home Education: The Experience of Parents in a Divided Community*. EdD Thesis, Institute of Education, University of London.

Busher, H. et al. (2011) Pedagogy, Empowerment and Discipline: Comparative Perspectives of Novice Teachers in England and Turkey Reflecting on 'the Other'. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* 41(3)**,** 387-400.

Çağatay, N. (1972) *Türkiye'de Gerici Eylemler: 1923'den Buyana [Reactionary Movements in Turkey: Since 1923]*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Ilahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları.

Çarkoğlu, A. and Toprak, B. (2006) *Değişen Türkiye'de Din, Toplum ve Siyaset [Religion, Society and Politics in Changing Turkey]*. Istanbul: Tesev.

Carmody, B. (2010) Interreligious Education and the Question of Truth. *In:* Engebretson, K. et al. (eds.) *International Handbook of Inter-Religious Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 41-55.

Carney, S., Rappleye, J. and Silova, I. (2012) Between Faith and Science: World Culture Theory and Comparative Education. *Comparative Education Review,* 56(3)**,** 366-393.

Carter, P. (2012) Policy as Palimpsest. *Policy & Politics,* 40(3)**,** 423-443.

Casanova, J. (1994) *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Casanova, J. (2006) Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective. *The Hedgehog Review,* 8(1/2)**,** 7-22.

Casanova, J. (2007) *Secular, Secularizations, Secularisms* [Online]. The Immanent Frame. Available: https://tif.ssrc.org/2007/10/25/secular-secularizations-secularisms/ [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Casanova, J. (2009) The Secular and Secularisms. *Social Research,* 76(4)**,** 1049-1066.

Catholic Education Service. (2015) *CES Response to Westminster Faith Debates Report A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools* [Online]. Available: http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/item/1003008-ces-response-to-westminster-faith-debates-report-a-new-settlement-religion-and-belief-in-schools [Accessed 02 March 2018].

Çelik, S. (2012) Turkey's Ministry of National Education Study-Abroad Program: Is the MoNE Making the Most of Its Investment? *The Qualitative Report,* 17(20)**,** 1-31.

Chabbott, C. and Ramirez, F. O. (2000) Development and Education. *In:* Hallinan, M. T. (ed.) *Handbook of the Sociology of Education*. New York: Springer, 163-187.

Chadwick, P. (1997) *Shifting Alliances: Church and State in English Education*. London: Cassell.

Charmaz, K. (1983) The Grounded Theory Method: An Explication and Interpretation. *In:* Emerson, R. M. (ed.) *Contemporary Field Research*. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, 109-126.

Charmaz, K. (2006) *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*. London: Sage.

Chater, M. (2014) The Fire Next Time? A Critical Discussion of the National Curriculum Framework for RE and the Policy Recommendations in the Review of Religious Education in England. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 36(3)**,** 256-264.

Chater, M. and Erricker, C. (2013) *Does Religious Education Have a Future?* London: Routledge.

Chaves, M. (1994) Secularization as Declining Religious Authority. *Social Forces,* 72(3)**,** 749-774.

Christians, C. G. (2005) Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research. *In:* Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage, 139-164.

Çınar, I. and Atılgan, H. (2005) *Ülkemizde Laik Eğitim Sisteminde Sosyal Bilim Olarak Din Öğretimi Kurultayı: Bildiri ve Tartışmalar [Congress of Religious Instruction as a Social Science in Laic Education System in Our Country: Papers and Discussions]*. Malatya: Inönü Üniversitesi.

Çınar, Ö. H. (2013) Compulsory Religious Education in Turkey. *Religion and Human Rights,* 8(3)**,** 223-241.

Clarke, C. and Woodhead, L. (2015) *A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools* [Online]. Available: http://faithdebates.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/A-New-Settlement-for-Religion-and-Belief-in-schools.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Codd, J. A. (1988) The Construction and Deconstruction of Educational Policy Documents. *Journal of Education Policy,* 3(3)**,** 235-247.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2011) *Research Methods in Education* (7th ed.). London: Routledge.

Commission on Religious Education. (2017) *Interim Report: Religious Education for All* [Online]. Religious Education Council of England and Wales. Available: http://www.commissiononre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Commission-on-Religious-Education-Interim-Report-2017.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Conroy, J. C. (2011) *Does Religious Education Work? A Three-Year Investigation into the Practices and Outcomes of Religious Education: A Briefing Paper* [Online]. Available: http://www.secularism.org.uk/uploads/does-religious-education-work-by-prof-c-conroy.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Conroy, J. C. (2012) *What's Happening to Religious Education in Schools Is a Disaster for Britain* [Online]. Religion and Society Research. Available:

http://www.religionandsociety.org.uk/attachments/files/1329132950_Conroy-final.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Conroy, J. C. (2016) Religious Education and Religious Literacy - A Professional Aspiration? *British Journal of Religious Education,* 38(2)**,** 163-176.

Conroy, J. C. et al. (2013) *Does Religious Eduacation Work? A Multi-Dimensional Investigation*. London: Bloomsbury.

Cooling, T. (2010) *Doing God in Education*. London: Theos.

Cooling, T. (2012a) Contestable Beliefs in Education: Fairness and/or Neutrality? *Oxford Review of Education,* 38(5)**,** 551-566.

Cooling, T. (2012b) Faith, Religious Education and Whole School Issues. *In:* Barnes, P. (ed.) *Debates in Religious Education*. London: Routledge, 88-97.

Cooling, T. et al. (2016) *Christian Faith in English Church Schools: Research Conversations with Classroom Teachers*. Oxford: Peter Lang.

Copeaux, E. (2015) The Research Topic as a Guideline. *In:* Brandell, I., Carlson, M. and Çetrez, Ö. A. (eds.) *Borders and the Changing Boundaries of Knowledge*. Stockholm: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 75-87.

Copley, T. (2005) *Indoctrination, Education, and God: The Struggle for the Mind*. London: SPCK.

Copley, T. (2008) *Teaching religion: Sixty Years of Religious Education in England and Wales*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press.

Copley, T., Freathy, R. and Walshe, K. (2004) *Teaching Biblical Narrative: A Summary of the Main Findings of the Biblos Project 1996-2004*. Great Britain: Rumbold Holland Litho Limited.

CORAB. (2015) *Living with Difference: Community, Diversity and the Common Good. Report of the Commission on Religion and Beleif in British Public LIfe*. Cambridge: The Woolf Institute.

Corbin, J. M. and Strauss, A. L. (2008) *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Council of Europe. (1999) *The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Recommendation 1396 on Religion and Democracy* [Online]. Available: http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=16672&lang=en [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Council of Europe. (2005) *Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1720 on Education and Religion* [Online]. Available: http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=17373&lang=en [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Council of Europe. (2007) *Recommendation 1804 on State, Religion, Secularity and Human Rights* [Online]. Available: http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=17568&lang=en [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Council of Europe. (2008a) *Recommendation CM/Rec 12 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Dimension of Religions and Non-Religions Convictions within Intercultural Education* [Online]. Available: https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1386911&Site=CM%20accessed%201%20July%202012 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Council of Europe. (2008b) *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: 'Living Together as Equals with Dignity'* [Online]. Available: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Cowen, R. (2009) Editorial Introduction: The National, the International, and the Global. *In:* Cowen, R. and Kazamias, A. M. (eds.) *International Handbook of Comparative Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 337-340.

Cowen, R. (2014) Comparative Education: Stones, Silences, and Siren Songs. *Comparative Education,* 50(1)**,** 3-14.

Cowen, R. and Kazamias, A. M. (eds.) (2009a) *International Handbook of Comparative Education*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Cowen, R. and Kazamias, A. M. (2009b) Joint Editorial Introduction. *In:* Cowen, R. and Kazamias, A. M. (eds.) *International Handbook of Comparative Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 3-6.

Creswell, J. W. (2012) *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. Boston: Pearson.

Cruickshank, M. (1963) *Church and State in English Education: 1870 to the Present Day*. London: Macmillan.

Cumper, P. (2011) Religious Education in Europe in the Twenty-First Century. *In:* Hunter-Henin, M. (ed.) *Law, Religious Freedoms and Education in Europe*. Farnham: Ashgate, 207-227.

Cush, D. (2007) Should Religious Studies Be Part of the Compulsory State School Curriculum? *British Journal of Religious Education,* 29(3)**,** 217-227.

Cush, D. (2015) Religious Education Policy: Home and Away. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 37(2)**,** 117-121.

Cush, D. (2016a) Policy and Implementation: Local, Regional, National, International, Global. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 38(3)**,** 224-228.

Cush, D. (2016b) What Have We Learned from Four Decades of Non-Confessional Multi-Faith Religious Education in England? Policy, Curriculum and Practice in English Religous Education

1969-2013. *In:* Berglund, J., Shanneik, Y. and Bocking, B. (eds.) *Religious Education in a Global-Local World*. Switzerland: Springer, 53-70.

Dale, R. (2000) Globalisation and Education: Demonstrating a 'Common World Education Culture' or Locating A 'Globally Structured Educational Agenda'? *Educational Theory,* 50(4)**,** 427-448.

Dale, R. (2005) Globalisation, Knowledge Economy and Comparative Education. *Comparative Education,* 41(2)**,** 117-149.

Dale, R. (2006) Policy Relationships between Supranational and National Scales: Imposition/Resistance or Parallel Universes. *In:* Kallo, J. and Rinne, R. (eds.) *Supranational Regimes and National Education Policies*. Turku: Finnish Educational Research Association, 27-52.

Dale, R. (2015) Conjuctions of Power and Comparative Education. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* 43(3)**,** 341-362.

Dale, R. and Robertson, S. (2009a) Beyond Methodological 'Isms' in Comparative Education in an Era of Globalisation. *In:* Cowen, R. and Kazamias, A. M. (eds.) *International Handbook of Comparative Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 1113-1128.

Dale, R. and Robertson, S. (eds.) (2009b) *Globalisation and Europeanisation in Education*. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Danchin, P. G. and Cole, E. A. (eds.) (2002) *Protecting the Human Rights of Religious Minorities in Eastern Europe.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Daun, H. (2008) Islam, Christianity and Secularism in European Education. *Policy Futures in Education,* 6(6)**,** 730-743.

Daun, H. (2011) Globalisation, EU-ification, and the New Mode of Educational Governance in Europe. *European Education,* 43(1)**,** 9-32.

Davidsen, M. (2010) The Secular Future of Religious Education in Europe: Review of Wanda Alberts' Integrative Religious Education in Europe. A Study-of-Religions Approach. *Zeitschrift für junge Religionswissenschaft,* 5**,** 1-7.

Davie, G. (1994) *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Davie, G. (2007) *The Sociology of Religion*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Davie, G. (2014) Managing Pluralism: The European Case. *Society,* 51(6)**,** 613-622.

Davis, D. H. and Miroshnikova, E. (eds.) (2013) *The Routledge International Handbook of Religious Education*. London: Routledge.

DCSF. (2010) *Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010*. Nottingham.

De Souza, M. et al. (eds.) (2006) *International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions in Education*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.) (2005) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Desmond, M. (2004) Methodological Challenges Posed in Studying an Elite in the Field. *Area,* 36(3)**,** 262-269.

Dey, I. (1993) *Qualitative Data Analysis : A User-Friendly Guide for Social Scientists*. London: Routledge.

DfE. (2014) *Promoting Fundemental British Values as part of SMSC in Schools: Depertmental Advice for Maintained Schools* [Online]. Department for Education. Available: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

DfE. (2016) *Policy Paper: English Baccalaureate (EBacc)* [Online]. Department for Education. Available: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc/english-baccalaureate-ebacc [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Dickinson, G. and Van Vollenhoven, W. (2002) Religion in Public Schools: Comparative Images of Canada and South Africa. *Perspectives in Education,* 20(3)**,** 1-20.

Dilipak, A. (1991) *Bu Din Benim Dinim Degil [This Religion is not my Religion]*. Istanbul: İşaret.

Dinham, A. (2015) Public Religion in an Age of Ambivalence: Recovering Religious Literacy after a Century of Secularism. *In:* Beaman, L. G. and Van Arragon, L. (eds.) *Issues in Religion and Education: Whose Religion?* Leiden: Brill, 19-33.

Dinham, A. and Shaw, M. (2015) *RE for REal: The Future of Teaching and Learning about Religion and Belief* [Online]. Goldsmiths College. Available: https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/documents-by-section/departments/research-centres-and-units/research-units/faiths-and-civil-society/REforREal-web-b.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Dobbelaere, K. (1981) Trend Report : Secularization: A Multi-Dimensional Concept. *Current Sociology,* 29(3)**,** 3-153.

Dobbelaere, K. (1999) Towards an Integrated Perspective of the Processes Related to the Descriptive Concept of Secularization. *Sociology of Religion,* 60(3)**,** 229-247.

Dündar, C. (2012) *Din Dersi De Kaldırılsın O Zaman [Religious Education Should Be Removed Too]* [Online]. Milliyet. Available: http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/din-dersi-de-kaldirilsin-o-zaman/gundem/gundemyazardetay/28.01.2012/1494773/default.htm [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Dunleavy, P. and O'Leary, B. (1987) *Theories of the State : The Politics of Liberal Democracy*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Education.

Durham Jr, W. C. (2013) Introduction. *In:* Davis, D. H. and Miroshnikova, E. (eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of Religious Education*. London: Routledge, 1-12.

Durham Jr, W. C. and Kirkham, D. M. (2012) Introduction. *In:* Durham Jr, W. C. et al. (eds.) *Islam, Europe and Emerging Legal Issues*. Farnham: Ashgate, 1-18.

Durham Jr, W. C. et al. (eds.) (2012) *Islam, Europe and Emerging Legal Issues*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Durkheim, E. ([1893] 1964) *The Division of Labour in Society*. New York: Free Press.

Durkheim, E. ([1912] 2008) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. New York: Dover.

ECRI. (2016) *Report on Turkey* [Online]. European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. Available: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Turkey/TUR-CbC-V-2016-037-ENG.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

ECtHR. (1993) *Case of Kokkinakis v. Greece (Application no. 14307/88)* [Online]. European Court of Human Rights. Available: http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-57827 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

ECtHR. (2007a) *Case Of Folgerø And Others v. Norway (Application no. 15472/02)* [Online]. European Court of Human Rights. Available: http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-81356 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

ECtHR. (2007b) *Case of Hasan and Eylem Zengin v. Turkey (Application no. 1448/04)* [Online]. European Court of Human Rights. Available: http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-82580 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

ECtHR. (2014) *Case of Mansur Yalçın and Others v. Turkey (Application no. 21163/11)* [Online]. European Court of Human Rights. Available: http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng-press/pages/search.aspx?i=003-4868983-5948734 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

ECtHR. (2015) *Grand Chamber's Rejected Referrals* [Online]. European Court of Human Rights. Available: http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng-press/pages/search.aspx?i=003-5016676-6159979 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Edwards, R. (1993) An Education in Interviewing: Placing the Researcher and the Research. *In:* Lee, R. M. and Renzetti, C. M. (eds.) *Researching Sensitive Topics*. London: Sage, 181-196.

Edwards, R. and Holland, J. (2013) *What is Qualitative Interviewing?* London: Bloomsbury.

Eğitim Sen. (2012) *Eğitimde AKP'nin 10 Yılı [AKP's 10 years in Education]*. Ankara.

Eğitim Sen. (2013) *Bilimsel ve Laik Eğitimi Neden Savunuyoruz? [Why Do We Defend Scientific and Laic Education?]*. Ankara.

El-Sawah, F. (2006) *Home Education and the Muslim Community* [Online]. Islamic Home Schooling Advisory Network (IHSAN). Available: http://www.home-education.org.uk/articles/article-he-muslim-community.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Eligür, B. (2010) *The Mobilization of Political Islam in Turkey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Emerson, R. M. (1983) *Contemporary Field Research*. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press.

Engebretson, K. et al. (eds.) (2010) *International Handbook of Inter-Religious Education*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Epstein, E. H. (2008) Setting the Normative Boundaries: Crucial Epistemological Benchmarks in Comparative Education. *Comparative Education,* 44(4)**,** 373-386.

Epstein, I. (2011) Sports as a Metaphor for Comparative Inquiry. *In:* Weidman, J. C. and Jacob, W. J. (eds.) *Beyond The Comparative: Advancing Theory and Its Application to Practice*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 93-112.

ERI. (2007) *Religion and Schooling in Turkey: The Need for Reform*. Istanbul: Education Reform Initiative.

ERI. (2012) *Eğitim Izleme Raporu 2011 [Education Monitoring Report 2011]*. Istanbul: Education Reform Initiative.

Erkem-Gülboy, G. P. (2010) The Dynamics of the Transition to Multi-Party System in Turkey. *International Review of Turkology,* 3(6)**,** 17-34.

Eroglu, C. (1987) The Establishment of the Multi-Party Rule. *In:* Schick, I. C. and Tonak, E. A. (eds.) *Turkey in Transition: New Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Erol, M. U. (2015) Questioning Non-Discrimination, Equality, and Human Rights in Contemporary Turkey from the Perspective of the Alevi Religious Community. *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights,* 12(1)**,** 75-97.

Espinoza, J. (2016) *Head Teachers Argue Parents Should Be Stripped of Right to Take Children Out of Religious Education* [Online]. The Telegraph. Available: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2016/05/01/head-teachers-to-argue-parents-should-be-stripped-of-right-to-ta/ [Accessed 27 January 2018].

European Commission. (2014) *Turkey Progress Report* [Online]. Available: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2014/20141008-turkey-progress-report_en.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

European Commission. (2015) *Turkey Progress Report* [Online]. Available: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2015/20151110_report_turkey.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

European Commission. (2016) *Turkey Report* [Online]. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_turkey.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Evans, C. (2008) Religious Education in Public Schools: An International Human Rights Perspective. *Human Rights Law Review,* 8(3)**,** 449-473.

Everington, J. (2000) Mission Impossible? Religious Education in the 1990s. *In:* Leicester, M., Modgil, C. and Modgil, S. (eds.) *Spiritual and Religious Education*. London: Falmer Press, 277-197.

Everington, J. (2016) 'Being Professional': RE Teachers' Understandings of Professionalism 1997-2014. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 38(2)**,** 177-188.

Fabretti, V. (2013) Learning from Religions. Post Secular Schools and the Challenge of Pluralism. *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education,* 5(2)**,** 46-66.

Fancourt, N. (2012) *Teaching About Christianity in Religious Education: A Review of Research* [Online]. Available: http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Teaching-about-Christianity-in-religious-education.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Fancourt, N. (2013) Religious Education across Europe: Contexts in Policy Scholarship. *In:* Skeie, G. et al. (eds.) *Exploring Context in Religious Education Research: Empirical, Methodological and Theoretical Perspectives*. Münster: Waxmann, 193-212.

Fancourt, N. (2015) Re-Defining 'Learning About Religion' and 'Learning from Religion': A Study of Policy Change. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 37(2)**,** 122-137.

Fancourt, N. (2016) Assessment and Examinations in Religious Education: Sixty Years of Research and Analysis. *British Journal of Religious Education* [Online], Virtual Special Issue Editorial. Available: http://explore.tandfonline.com/page/ed/assessment-and-examinations.

Fancourt, N. (2017) Teaching About Christianity: A Configurative Review of Research in English Schools. *Journal of Beliefs & Values,* 38(1)**,** 121-133.

Felderhof, M. C. (1985a) Introduction. *In:* Felderhof, M. C. (ed.) *Religious Education in a Pluralistic Society*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1-4.

Felderhof, M. C. (ed.) (1985b) *Religious Education in a Pluralistic Society*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Felderhof, M. C. and Thompson, P. (eds.) (2014) *Teaching Virtue: The Contribution of Religious Education*. London: Bloomsbury.

Felderhof, M. C., Thompson, P. and Torevell, D. (eds.) (2007) *Inspiring Faith in Schools: Studies in Religious Education*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Fenn, R. K. (1978) *Toward a Theory of Secularization*. Storrs, Conn: Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

Ferguson, M. (1992) The Myth About Globalization. *European Journal of Comminication,* 7(1)**,** 69-93.

Ferrari, S. (2013) Religious Education in the European Union. *In:* Davis, D. H. and Miroshnikova, E. (eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of Religious Education*. London: Routledge, 100-103.

Ferrari, S. (2014) Teaching Religion in the European Union. *In:* Seligman, A. B. (ed.) *Religious Education and the Challenge of Pluralism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 26-44.

Ferrari, S. (ed.) (2015) *Routledge Handbook of Law and Religion*. Oxford: Routledge.

Fitzallen, N., Reaburn, R. and Fan, S. (eds.) (2014) *The Future of Educational Research: Perspectives from Beginning Researchers*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Flick, U. (2009) *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (4th ed.). London: Sage.

Floria, J. G. N. (2013) Religious Education in Latin America. *In:* Davis, D. H. and Miroshnikova, E. (eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of Religious Education*. London: Routledge, 197-201.

Fontana, A. and Frey, J. H. (2005) The Interview: From Neutral Stance to Political Involvement. *In:* Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage, 695-727.

Fontana, G. (2016) Religious Education after Conflicts: Promoting Social Cohesion or Entrenching Existing Cleavages? *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* 46(5)**,** 811-831.

Foucault, M. (1981) The Order of Discourse. *In:* Young, R. (ed.) *Untying the Text: Post-Structuralist Reader*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 49-78.

Francis, L. J. et al. (1999) The Influence of In-service Training on Teacher Attitutudes Towards Religious Education in Non-Denominational Schools in England. *Journal of In-service Education,* 25(1)**,** 173-185.

Francis, L. J. and Ziebertz, H.-G. (eds.) (2011) *The Public Significance of Religion*. Leiden: Brill.

Franken, L. (2017) Coping with Diversity in Religious Education: An Overview. *Journal of Beliefs & Values,* 38(1)**,** 105-120.

Franken, L. and Loobuyck, P. (eds.) (2011) *Religious Education in a Plural, Secularised Society: A Paradigm Shift*. Münster: Waxmann.

Franken, L. and Loobuyck, P. (2017) Neutrality and Impartiality in RE: An Impossible Aim? *British Journal of Religious Education,* 39(1)**,** 1-6.

Freathy, R. and Parker, S. G. (2013) Secularists, Humanists and Religious Education: Religious Crisis and Curriculum Change in England, 1963–1975. *History of Education: Journal of the History of Education Society,* 42(2)**,** 222-256.

Freathy, R. et al. (2016) Conceptualising and Researching the Professionalisation of Religious Education Teachers: Historical and International Perspectives. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 38(2)**,** 114-129.

Freeman, M. (2004) The Problem of Secularism in Human Rights Theory. *Human Rights Quarterly,* 26**,** 375-400.

Furedi, F. (2004) *Where Have All the Intellectuals Gone? : Confronting 21st Century Philistinism*. London ; New York: Continuum.

Furlong, J. and Lunt, I. (2016) Education in a Federal UK. *Oxford Review of Education,* 42(3)**,** 249-252.

Gale, T. (1999) Policy Trajectories: Treading the Discursive Path of Policy Analysis. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education,* 20(3)**,** 393-407.

Gardner, R., Cairns, J. and Lawton, D. (eds.) (2005) *Faith Schools: Consensus or Conflict?* London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Garforth, F. W. (1961) Doubts About Secondary School Scripture. *Religion in Education,* 28(2)**,** 73-76.

Gatto, J. T. (2003) *Against School* [Online]. Available: http://www.wesjones.com/gatto1.htm [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Gearon, L. (2008) Religion, Politics and Pedagogy: Historical Contexts. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 30(2)**,** 93-102.

Gearon, L. (2012) European Religious Education and European Civil Religion. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 60(2)**,** 151-169.

Gearon, L. (2013a) The Counter Terrorist Classroom: Religion, Education, and Security. *Religious Education,* 108(2)**,** 129-147.

Gearon, L. (2013b) The King James Bible and the Politics of Religious Education: Secular State and Sacred Scripture. *Religious Education,* 108(1)**,** 9-27.

Gearon, L. (2013c) *MasterClass in Religious Education: Transforming Teaching and Learning*. London: Bloomsbury.

Gearon, L. (2014) *On Holy Ground: The Theory and Practice of Religious Education*. London: Routledge.

Gearon, L. (2015) Education, Security and Intelligence Studies. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 63(3)**,** 263-279.

Gearon, L. (2017a) The Counter-Terrorist Campus: Securitisation Theory and University Securitisation - Three Models. *Transformation in Higher Education,* 2(A13)**,** 1-9.

Gearon, L. (2017b) Secularisation and the Securitisation of the Sacred a Response to Lewin's Framing of the Gearon–Jackson Debate. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 65(3)**,** 469-480.

Gearon, L. (forthcoming) Paradigm Shift in Religious Education: A Reply to Jackson, or Why Religious Education Goes to War. *Journal of Beliefs & Values***,** 1-21.

Genç, F. et al. (2012) A Conversational Analysis of Developments in Religious Education in Europe and in Turkey. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 34(3)**,** 281-297.

Gewirtz, S. and Ozga, J. (1994) Interviewing the Education Policy Elite. *In:* Walford, G. (ed.) *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: UCL Press, 186-203.

Gilligan, A. (2009) *Islamists Who Want to Destroy the British State Get £113,000 in Funding* [Online]. Sunday Telegraph. Available: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/6427369/Islamists-who-want-to-destroy-the-state-get-100000-funding.html [Accessed 03 March 2018].

Ginsburg, M. B. et al. (1990) National and World-System Explanations of Educational Reform. *Comparative Education Review,* 34(4)**,** 474-499.

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.

Gorski, P. S. and Altınordu, A. (2008) After Secularisation? *The Annual Review of Sociology,* 34**,** 55-85.

Grayling, A. C. (2014) *Worship in Schools is Insidious* [Online]. Times Educational Supplement. Available: https://www.questia.com/magazine/1P3-3440549151/worship-in-schools-is-insidious [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Green, A. (1997) *Education, Globalization and the Nation State*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Griffiths, T. G. (2009) *Classroom Discipline: Another Example of World-System Convergence? Paper Presented at AARE International Education Research Conference* [Online]. AARE. Available: https://www.aare.edu.au/data/publications/2009/gri091596.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Griffiths, T. G. and Arnove, R. F. (2015) World Culture in the Capitalist World-System in Transition. *Globalisation, Societies and Education,* 13(1)**,** 88-108.

Grimmitt, M. (ed.) (2010) *Religious Education and Social and Community Cohesion: An Exploration of Challenges and Opportunities*. Great Wakering: McCrimmons.

Guest, M., Olson, E. and Wolffe, J. (2012) Christianity: Loss of Monopoly. *In:* Woodhead, L. and Catto, R. (eds.) *Religion and Change in Modern Britain*. Abingdon: Routledge, 57-78.

Gunduz, S. and Yaran, C. S. (eds.) (2005) *Change and Essence: Dialectical Relations Between Change and Continuity in the Turkish Intellectual Tradition*. Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.

Gunn, T. J. (2002) The Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe and the Rights of Religion or Belief. *In:* Danchin, P. G. and Cole, E. A. (eds.) *Protecting the Human Rights of Religious Minorities in Eastern Europe.* New York: Columbia University Press, 222-250.

Gür, B. S. (2016) *What Erdoğan Really Wants for Education in Turkey: Islamization or Pluralisation?* [Online]. Al Jazeera Centre for Studies. Available: http://studies.aljazeera.net/mritems/Documents/2016/3/17/c2a0ade5d313404ab8500c9ebb0375d3_100.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Gürcan, A. E. (2015) *The Problems of Religious Education in Turkey: Alevi Citizen Action and the Limits of ECtHR*. Istanbul.

Habermas, J. (2006) Religion in the Public Sphere. *European Journal of Philosophy,* 14(1)**,** 1-25.

Hafez, S. and Slyomovics, S. (eds.) (2013) *Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Hallinan, M. T. (ed.) (2000) *Handbook of the Sociology of Education*. New York: Springer.

Halstead, J. M. and McLaughlin, T. (2005) Are Faith Schools Divisive? *In:* Gardner, P., Cairns, J. and Lawton, D. (eds.) *Faith Schools: Consensus or Conflict?* London: RoutledgeFalmer, 61-72.

Hammersley, M. (2003) Recent Radical Criticism of Interview Studies: Any Implications for the Sociology of Education? *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 24(1)**,** 119-126.

Hammersley, M. (2015) On Ethical Principles for Social Research. *International Journal for Social Research Methodology,* 18(4)**,** 433-449.

Hans, N. A. (1958) State and Church in Education in Italy and France. *Comparative Education Review,* 1(3)**,** 10-12.

Hans, N. A. (1967) *Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions*. London:: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hargreaves, D. H. (1994) *The Mosaic of Learning: Schools and Teachers for the Next Century*. London: Demos.

HC Deb. (1944) *Education Bill 25 February 1944 vol.397 cc1156-1157* [Online]. Available: http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1944/feb/25/clause-14-classification-of-auxiliary#column_1157 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

HC Deb. (1988) *The National Curriculum 23 March 1988 vol.130 c413* [Online]. Available: http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1988/mar/23/the-national-curriculum#column_413 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Hefner, R. W. and Zaman, M. Q. (eds.) (2007) *Schooling Islam: the Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Heimbrock, H. G., Scheilke, C. T. and Schreiner, P. (2001) *Towards Religious Competence: Diversity as a Challenge for Education in Europe*. Münster: Lit-Verlag.

Hendek, A. (2011) *A Comparative Study of Religious Education in State Schools in England and Turkey: The Partnership between State and Religion, Laws Regarding Religious Education and Religious Education Curricula.* Unpublished MA Dissertation, King's College London.

Heugens, P. P. M. A. R. and Lander, M. W. (2009) Stucture! Agency! (And Other Quarrels): A Meta-Analysis of Institutional Theories of Organization. *Academy of Management Journal,* 52(1)**,** 61-85.

Hoffman, E. (1998) *Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language*. London: Vintage.

Homan, R. and King, L. (1993) Mishmash and Its Effects Upon Learning in the Primary School. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 15(3)**,** 8-13.

Hörner, W. et al. (eds.) (2007) *The Education Systems of Europe*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Hull, J. M. (1989) *The Act Unpacked: the Meaning of the 1988 Education Reform Act for Religious Education*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham School of Education and the Christian Education Movement.

Hull, J. M. (1991) *Mishmash: A Study in Metaphor*. Derby: Christian Education Movement.

Hull, J. M. (1996) Editorial: Religious Education and the National Curriculum. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 18(3)**,** 130-132.

Hull, J. M. (2002) The Contribution of Religious Education to Religious Freedom: A Global Perspective. *In:* IARF (ed.) *Religious Education in Schools: Ideas and Experiences from around the World*. Madrid: The International Association for Religious Freedom, 4-11.

Hull, J. M. (2003) The Blessings of Secularity: Religious Education in England and Wales. *Journal of Religious Education,* 51(3)**,** 58-58.

Hunt, D. (1983) The Teaching of Islam in Schools: A Reply. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 5(2)**,** 96-99.

Hunter-Henin, M. (ed.) (2011) *Law, Religious Freedoms and Education in Europe*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Hunter-Henin, M. (2015) Law, Religion and the School. *In:* Ferrari, S. (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Law and Religion*. Oxford: Routledge, 259-270.

Huntington, S. P. (1993) The Clash of Civilizations? *Foreign Affairs,* 72(3)**,** 22-49.

Hurd, E. S. (2015) *Beyond Religious Freedom: The New Global Politics of Religion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hürriyet. (2012) *Dindar Gençlik Yetiştireceğiz [We Will Raise Religious Generations]* [Online]. Available: http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dindar-genclik-yetistirecegiz-19825231 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Hürriyet. (2014) *Diyanet İşleri Başkanı Görmez'den Önemli Açıklamalar [Important Statements from President of Religious Affairs Görmez]* [Online]. Available: http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/diyanet-isleri-baskani-gormezden-onemli-aciklamalar-26757061 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Hurriyet Daily News. (2014) *Drugs to Spread If Religious Courses Abolished, President Erdoğan Says* [Online]. Available: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/drugs-to-spread-if-religious-courses-abolished-president-erdogan-says.aspx?pageID=238&nID=72340&NewsCatID=338 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Hurriyet Daily News. (2017) *Turkey to Get New Religious Class Curriculum in Line with Euro Court Rulings* [Online]. Available: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-to-get-new-religious-class-curriculum-in-line-with-euro-court-rulings-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=109481&NewsCatID=393 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

IARF (ed.) (2002) *Religious Education in Schools: Ideas and Experiences from around the World*. Madrid: The International Association for Religious Freedom.

Illich, I. (1971) *Deschooling Society*. London: Calder & Boyars.

Independent. (2015) *PREVENT Will Have a Chilling Effect on Open Debate, Free Speech and Political Dissent* [Online]. Available: http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/letters/prevent-will-have-a-chilling-effect-on-open-debate-free-speech-and-political-dissent-10381491.html [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Inkeles, A. and Sirowy, L. (1983) Convergent and Divergent Trends in National Educational Systems. *Social Forces,* 62(2)**,** 303-333.

Jackson, R. (1990) Religious Studies and Developments in Religious Education in England and Wales. *In:* King, U. (ed.) *Turning Points in Religious Studies: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Parrinder*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 102-116.

Jackson, R. (2003) Should the State Fund Faith Based Schools? A Review of the Arguments. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 25(2)**,** 89-102.

Jackson, R. (2004) *Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality : Issues in Diversity and Pedagogy*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Jackson, R. (2009) The Council of Europe and Education About Religious Diversity. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 31(2)**,** 85-90.

Jackson, R. (2013) Religious Education in England: The Story to 2013. *Pedagogiek,* 33(2)**,** 119-135.

Jackson, R. (2014) *Signposts - Policy and Practice for Teaching about Religions and Non-Religious World Views in Intercultural Education*. Strasbourg: The Council of Europe.

Jackson, R. (2015) The Politicisation and Securitisation of Religious Education? A Rejoinder. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 63(3)**,** 345-366.

Jackson, R. (2016a) Inclusive Study of Religions and World Views in Schools: Signposts from the Council of Europe. *Social Inclusion,* 4(2)**,** 14-25.

Jackson, R. (2016b) Religious Education in European Organisations, Professional Associations and Research Groups. *In:* Berglund, J., Shanneik, Y. and Bocking, B. (eds.) *Religious Education in a Global-Local World*. Switzerland: Springer, 11-33.

Jackson, R. (2017) 'Who's Afraid of Secularisation?' A Response to David Lewin. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 65(4)**,** 463-468.

Jackson, R. et al. (2010) *Materials Used to Teach About World Religions in Schools in England*. London: Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Jackson, R. et al. (eds.) (2007) *Religion and Education in Europe: Developments, Contexts and Debates*. Münster: Waxmann.

Jackson, R. and O'Grady, K. (2007) Religions and Education in England: Social Plurality, Civil Religion and Religious Education Pedagogy. *In:* Jackson, R. et al. (eds.) *Religion and Education in Europe: Developments, Contexts and Debates*. Münster: Waxmann, 181-202.

Jahangir, A. (2009) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief* [Online]. Human Rights Council. Available: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/religion/docs/A-HRC-13-40.pdf [Accessed 12 August 2017].

Jaschke, G. (1972) *Yeni Türkiye'de Islamlık [Islam in Modern Turkey]*. Bilgi Yayınevi: Ankara.

Jenkins, D., Jacobsen, A. and Henriksen, A. (2014) *The Long Decade: How 9/11 Changed the Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jensen, T. (1998) *Religious Education and the Secular State delivered at the International Coalition for Religious Freedom Conference on "Religious Freedom and the New Millenium" Berlin, Germany, May 29-31, 1998* [Online]. religiousfreedom.com. Available: http://www.religiousfreedom.com/documents/Conference/Germany/jensen.htm [Accessed 10 October 2014].

Jensen, T. (2005) European and Danish Religious Education: Human Rights, the Secular State, and Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality. *Religion and Education,* 32(1)**,** 60-78.

Jensen, T. (2008) RS based RE in Public Schools: A Must for a Secular State. *Numen,* 55(2-3)**,** 123-150.

Jensen, T. (2016) ASR and RE. *The Journal of the Irish Society for the Academic Study of Religions,* 3**,** 59-83.

Jödicke, A. (ed.) (2013) *Religious Education Politics, the State, and Society*. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag.

Jokić, B. and Hargreaves, L. (2015) An Easy A or a Question of Belief: Pupil Attitudes to Catholic Religious Education in Crotia. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 37(1)**,** 4-19.

Jones, D. (2015) *Turkey's Atheists Face Hostilities, Death Threats* [Online]. Voa News. Available: http://www.voanews.com/a/turkeys-atheists-face-hostility-death-threats/2720367.html [Accessed 09 January 2017].

Kallo, J. and Rinne, R. (eds.) (2006) *Supranational Regimes and National Education Policies*. Turku: Finnish Educational Research Association.

Kandel, I. L. (1933) *Studies in Comparative Education*. London: George G. Harrap.

Kaplan, İ. (1999) *Türkiye'de Milli Eğitim İdeolojisi [National Education Ideaology in Turkey]*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Kaplan, S. (2006) *The Pedagogical State : Education and the Politics of National Culture in Post-1980 Turkey*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Karakaşoğlu, Y. (2007) Turkey. *In:* Hörner, W. et al. (eds.) *The Education Systems of Europe*. Dordrecht: Springer, 783-807.

Karpat, K. H. (1967) *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi: Sosyal, Ekonomik, Kültürel Temeller [History of Turkish Democracy: Social, Economic and Cultural Roots]*. Istanbul: Istanbul Matbaası.

Kay, W. K. (2000a) British Comment on the Swedish PPI. *In:* Almén, E. and Øster, H. C. (eds.) *Religious Education in Great Britain, Sweden and Russia: Presentations, Problem Inventories and Commentaries (Texts from the PETER Project)*. Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press, 116-120.

Kay, W. K. (2000b) Religious Education in Britain. *In:* Almén, E. and Øster, H. C. (eds.) *Religious Education in Great Britain, Sweden and Russia: Presentations, Problem Inventories and Commentaries (Texts from the PETER Project)*. Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press, 12-59.

Kay, W. K. (2012) Agreed Syllabuses. *In:* Barnes, P. (ed.) *Debates in Religious Education*. London: Routledge, 52-61.

Kaya, N. (2009) *Forgotten or Assimilated? Minorities in the Education System of Turkey* [Online]. Minority Rights Group International. Available: http://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/old-site-downloads/download-632-Forgotten-or-Assimilated-Minorities-in-the-Education-System-of-Turkey.pdf [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Kaymakcan, R. (1998) *A Comparison of Religious Education in Secondary Schools in Turkey and England: With Special Reference to the Teaching of Islam.* PhD Thesis, University of Leeds.

Kaymakcan, R. (2004) *Günümüz İngiltere'sinde Din Eğitimi [Religious Education in Contemporary England]*. İstanbul: DEM.

Kaymakcan, R. (2006) Religious Education Culture in Modern Turkey. *In:* De Souza, M. et al. (eds.) *International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions in Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 449-460.

Kaymakcan, R. (2007) Pluralism and Constructivism in Turkish Religious Education: Evaluation of Recent Curriculum of Religious Culture and Ethical Knowledge Lesson. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice,* 7(1)**,** 202-210.

Kaymakcan, R. (2010) A Turkish Response to the REDCo Project. *Religion & Education,* 37(3)**,** 208-212.

Kaymakcan, R. (2011) Öğretmenlerine Göre Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersleri, Yeni Eğilimler: Çoğulculuk ve Yapılandırmacılık [Religious Culture and Ethics Knowledge and New Trends: Plurality and Constructivism According to Teachers]. *In:* Kaymakcan, R., Zengin, M. and Arslan, Z. Ş. (eds.) *Türkiye'de Okullarda Din Öğretimi [Religious Instruction in Schools in Turkey]*. Istanbul: DEM, 27-52.

Kaymakcan, R., Zengin, M. and Arslan, Z. Ş. (eds.) (2011) *Türkiye'de Okullarda Din Öğretimi [Religious Instruction in Schools in Turkey]*. Istanbul: DEM.

Kazamias, A. M. (1966) *Education and the Quest for Modernity in Turkey*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Keast, J. (ed.) (2006) *Religious Diversity and Intercultural Education : A Reference Book for Schools*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Keast, J. (2008) *Religious Education in Europe* [Online]. Available: http://www.reonline.org.uk/news/religious-education-in-europe/ [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Keddie, N. R. (2003) Secularisation and Its Discontents. *Daedalus,* 132(3)**,** 14-30.

Kelly, G. P., Altbach, P. G. and Arnove, R. F. (1982) Trends in Comparative Education: A Critical Analysis. *In:* Altbach, P. G., Arnove, R. F. and Kelly, G. P. (eds.) *Comparative Education*. New York: Collier Macmillan, 505-533.

Kerbaj, R. and Griffiths, S. (2014) *Islamist Plot to Take Over Schools* [Online]. Sunday Times. Available: http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/Education/article1382105.ece [Accessed 03 March 2018].

Kimanen, A. (2016) Measuring Confessionality by the Outcomes? Islamic Religious Education in the Finnish School System. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 38(3)**,** 264-278.

King, N. and Horrocks, C. (2011) *Interviews in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

King, U. (ed.) (1990) *Turning Points in Religious Studies: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Parrinder*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

Koenig, M. (2015) Governance of Religious Diversity at the European Court of Human Rights. *In:* Boulden, J. and Kymlicka, W. (eds.) *International Approaches to Governing Ethnic Diversity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 51-73.

Kosmin, B. A. (2007) Introduction: Contemporary Secularity and Secularism. *In:* Kosmin, B. A. and Keysar, A. (eds.). Hartford: Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture, 1-13.

Kosmin, B. A. and Keysar, A. (eds.) (2007) *Secularism and Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*. Hartford: Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture.

Köylü, M. (2005) Religious Education in Modern Turkey. *In:* Gunduz, S. and Yaran, C. S. (eds.) *Change and Essence: Dialectical Relations Between Change and Continuity in the Turkish Intellectual Tradition*. Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 45-64.

Köylü, M. and Altaş, N. (eds.) (2012) *Din Eğitimi [Religious Education]* (2nd ed.). Ankara: Gündüz.

Kuburić, Z. and Moe, C. (2006a) Introduction. *In:* Kuburić, Z. and Moe, C. (eds.) *Religion and Pluralism in Education: Comparative Approaches in the Western Balkans*. Novi Sad: Centre for Empirical Researches on Religion in cooperation with the Kotor Network, 1-8.

Kuburić, Z. and Moe, C. (eds.) (2006b) *Religion and Pluralism in Education: Comparative Approaches in the Western Balkans*. Novi Sad: Centre for Empirical Researches on Religion in cooperation with the Kotor Network.

Kuburić, Z. and Moe, C. (2006c) Summary and Conclusions. *In:* Kuburić, Z. and Moe, C. (eds.) *Religion and Pluralism in Education: Comparative Approaches in the Western Balkans*. Novi Sad: Centre for Empirical Researches on Religion in cooperation with the Kotor Network, 161-167.

Kuru, A. T. (2007) Passive and Assertive Secularism: Historical Conditions, Ideological Struggles, and State Policies toward Religion. *World Politics,* 59(4)**,** 568-594.

Kuru, A. T. (2009) *Secularism and State Policies Toward Religion: the United States, France, and Turkey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kuyk, E. et al. (eds.) (2007) *Religious Education in Europe: Situation and Current Trends in Schools*. Oslo: IKO.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. (2008) *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Larsson, R. and Gustavsson, C. (eds.) (2004) *Towards a European Perspective on Religious Education: The RE Conference, March 11-14, 2004, University of Lund*. Stockholm: Artos and Norma.

Leavy, P. (ed.) (2014) *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lee, R. M. and Renzetti, C. M. (eds.) (1993) *Researching Sensitive Topics*. London: Sage.

Leigh, I. (2012) Objective, Critical and Pluralistic? Religious Education and Human Rights in the European Public Sphere. *In:* Zucca, L. and Ungureanu, C. (eds.) *Law, State and Religion in the New Europe: Debates and Dilemmas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 192-214.

Levitt, M. and Muir, F. (2014) 'The Perfect Pupil': Changing Aims and Changing Measures of Success in School RE. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 36(2)**,** 218-233.

Lewin, D. (2017) Who's Afraid of Secularisation? Reframing the Debate Between Gearon and Jackson. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 65(4)**,** 445-461.

Lewis, B. (2002) *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (3rd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Lied, S. (2009) The Norwegian Christianity, Religion and Philosophy Subject KRL in Strasbough. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 31(3)**,** 263-275.

Long, R. (2016) *Religious Education in Schools (England). Briefing Paper Number 07167* [Online]. House of Commons Library. Available: http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7167#fullreport [Accessed 27 January 2018].

López-Muñiz, J. L. M., De Groof, J. and Lauwers, G. (eds.) (2006) *Religious Education in Public Schools: Study of Comparative Law*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Loukes, H. (1961) *Teenage Religion: An Inquiry Into Attitudes and Possibilities Amoung British Boys and Girls in Secondary Modern Schools*. London: SCM Press.

Luckmann, T. (1967) *The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society*. New York: Macmillan.

Lundie, D. (2012) England and Wales. *In:* Barnes, P. (ed.) *Debates in Religious Education*. London: Routledge, 22-33.

Mabud, S. A. (1992) A Muslim Response to the Education Reform Act 1998. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 14(2)**,** 74-98.

Maclure, J. and Taylor, C. (2011) *Secularism and Freedom of Conscience*. Cambridge: Harward University Press.

Maguire, M., Braun, A. and Ball, S. J. (2015) 'Where You Stand Depends on Where You Sit': The Social Construction of Policy Enactments in the (English) Secondary School. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education,* 36(4)**,** 485-499.

Mainardes, J. and Marcondes, M. I. (2009) Interview with Stephen J. Ball: A Dialogue about Social Justice, Research and Education Policy. *Educ. Soc.,* 30(106)**,** 303-318.

Manzon, M. (2011) *Comparative Education: The Construction of a Field*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre.

Martin, D. (1991) The Secularization Issue: Prospect and Retrospect. *British Journal of Sociology,* (3)**,** 465-474.

Martin, D. (2005) *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Martínez-Torrón, J. and Durham Jr, W. C. (2010) General Report. *In:* Martínez-Torrón, J. and Durham Jr, W. C. (eds.) *Religion and the Secular State: Interim National Reports issued for the Occasion of The XVIIIth International Congress of Comparative Law*. Washington: The International Center for Law and Religion Studies Brigham Young University Provo, Utah, 1-56.

Massicard, E. (2013) *The Alevis in Turkey and Europe: Identity and Managing Territorial Diversity*. London: Routledge.

Matemba, Y. H. (2011) *A Comparative Study of Religious Education in Scotland and Malawi with Special Reference to Developments in the Secondary School Sector, 1970-2010.* PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow.

Matemba, Y. H. (2013) Spaces of Contest for Religious Education Reform in Comparative Perspectives: Scotland and Malawi as Cases. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* 43(3)**,** 366-386.

Matemba, Y. H. (2015) Mismatches Between Legislative Policy and School Practice in Religious Education: The Scottish Case. *Religious Education,* 110(1)**,** 70-94.

Matemba, Y. H. and Richardson, A.-M. (forthcoming) 'These Religions Are No Good – They're Nothing But Idol Worship': Mis/representation of Religion in Religious Education at School in Malawi and Ghana. *British Journal of Religious Education***,** 1-19.

Mawhinney, A. (2007) Freedom of Religion in the Irish Primary School System: A Failure to Protect Human Rights? *Legal Studies,* 27(3)**,** 379-403.

Mawhinney, A. et al. (2010) *Opting Out of Religious Education: The Views of Young People from Minority Belief Backgrounds* Belfast: Queen's University Belfast.

Max, R. (2009) The Decalage and Bricolage of Higher Education Policymaking in an Inter/National System: The Unintended Consequences of Participation in the 1992 Senegalese CNES Reform. *In:* Vavrus, F. and Bartlett, L. (eds.) *Critical Approaches to Comparative Education: Vertical Case Studies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 39-55.

Maxwell, J. A. (2013) *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

May, P. R. and Johnston, O. R. (1968) *Religion in Our Schools*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

May, T. (ed.) (2011) *Social Research: Issues, Methods, and Process* (4th ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

May, T. and Perry, B. (2011) Comparative Research: Potential and Problems. *In:* May, T. (ed.) *Social Research: Issues, Methods, and Process*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 243-267.

Mayrl, D. (2011) Administering Secularization: Religious Education in New South Wales since 1960. *European Journal of Sociology,* 52(1)**,** 111-142.

McCulloch, G. (2004) *Documentary Research in Education, History, and the Social Sciences*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

McHugh, J. D. (1994) The Lords' Will Be Done: Interviewing the Powerful in Education. *In:* Walford, G. (ed.) *Researching the powerful in education*. London: UCL Press, 51-66.

MEB. (2005) *İlköğretim 1-5 Sınıf Programları Tanıtım El Kitabı [Primary School 1-5 Programs Introduction Handbook]*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı.

MEB DÖGM (ed.) (2003) *Din Öğretiminde Yeni Yöntem Arayışları: Uluslararası Sempozyum Bildiri ve Tartışmalar 28-30 Mart 2001-İstanbul (New Methodological Approaches in Religious Education: International Symposium Papers and Discussions 28-30 March 2001-Istanbul)*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Din Öğretimi Genel Müdürlüğü.

MEB DÖGM. (2005) *Ortaöğretim Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi (9, 10, 11 ve 12. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programı [Secondary School Religious Culture and Ethics Knowledge Course (Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12) Teaching Program]*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Din Öğretimi Genel Müdürlüğü.

MEB DÖGM. (2006) *İlköğretim Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi (4,5,6,7 ve 8. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programı ve Kılavuzu [Primary School Religious Culture and Ethics Knowledge Course (Grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) Teaching Program and Guideline]*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Din Öğretimi Genel Müdürlüğü.

MEB DÖGM. (2010a) *İlköğretim Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi (4,5,6,7 ve 8. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programı ve Kılavuzu [Primary School Religious Culture and Ethics Knowledge Course (Grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) Teaching Program and Guideline]*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Din Öğretimi Genel Müdürlüğü.

MEB DÖGM. (2010b) *Ministry of National Education Curriculum of Religious Culture and Ethics Course [Official English Summary]* [Online]. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Din Öğretimi Genel Müdürlüğü. Available: http://dogm.meb.gov.tr/www/ogretim-programlari/icerik/14 [Accessed 01 January 2017].

MEB DÖGM. (2010c) *Ortaöğretim Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi (9, 10, 11 ve 12. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programı [Secondary School Religious Culture and Ethics Knowledge Course (Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12) Teaching Program]*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Din Öğretimi Genel Müdürlüğü.

Meijer, W. A. J., Miedema, S. and van der Velde, A. L. (eds.) (2009) *Religious Education in a World of Religious Diversity*. Münster: Waxmann.

Mélikoff, I. ([1998] 2005) Bektashi/Kızılbaş: Historical Bipartition and Its Consequences. *In:* Olsson, T., Özdalga, E. and Raudvere, C. (eds.) *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives. Papers Read at a Conference Held at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, November 25-27, 1996*. Routledge: [Online] http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9780203985878., 1-9.

Meral, Z. (2015) *Compulsory Religious Education in Turkey: A Survey and Assessment of Textbooks*. Washington.

Meredith, P. (2006) Religious Education and Collective Worship in State Schools: England and Wales. *In:* Martínez López-Muñiz, J. L., De Groof, J. and Lauwers, G. (eds.) *Religious Education in Public Schools: Study of Comparative Law*. Dordrecht: Springer, 155-169.

Meuser, M. and Nagel, U. (2009) The Expert Interview and Changes in Knowledge Production. *In:* Bogner, A., Littig, B. and Menz, W. (eds.) *Interviewing Experts*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 17-42.

Meyer, J. W. et al. (1977) The World Educational Revolution, 1950-1970. *Sociology of Education,* 50(4)**,** 242-258.

Milana, M. (2015) Global Polity, Policy Crossing, and Adult Education. *Comparative Education Review,* 59(3)**,** 498-522.

Miles, M., Huberman, A. and Saldaña, J. (2014) *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Miller, J. (2014) *What is Religious Education? And Who Sets the Agenda?* [Online]. William Temple Foundation. Available: http://williamtemplefoundation.org.uk/what-is-religious-education-and-who-sets-the-agenda/ [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Mills, C. W. (1959) *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mocan, N. H. and Pogorelova, L. (2014) *Compulsory Schooling Laws and Formation of Beliefs: Education, Religion and Superstition* [Online]. National Bureau of Economic Research. Available: http://www.nber.org/papers/w20557 [Accessed 27 January 2018].

Modood, T. (2012) 2011 Paul Hanly Furfey Lecture: Is There a Crisis of Secularism in Western Europe? *Sociology of Religion,* 73(2)**,** 130-149.

Morrison, K. (2009) *Causation in Educational Research*. London: Routledge.

Motzkin, G. and Fischer, Y. (eds.) (2008) *Religion and Democracy in Contemporary Europe*. London: Alliance Publishing Trust.

Moulin, D. (2009) A Too Liberal Religious Education? A Thought Experiment for Teachers and Theorists. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 31(2)**,** 153-165.

Moulin, D. (2011) Giving Voice to 'the Silent Minority': the Experience of Religious Students in Secondary School Religious Education Lessons. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 33(3)**,** 313-326.

Moulin, D. (2012) Religious Education in England After 9/11. *Religious Education,* 107(2)**,** 158-173.

Moulin, D. (2013) *Negotiating and Constructing Religious Identities in English Secondary Schools: A Study of the Reported Experiences of Adolescent Christians, Jews, and Muslims.* PhD Thesis, University of Oxford.

Moulin, D. (2015) Doubts About Religious Education in Public Schooling. *International Journal of Christianity & Education,* 19(2)**,** 135-148.

Moulin, D. (2016) Reported Experiences of Anti-Christian Prejudice among Christian Adolescents in England. *Journal of Contemporary Religion,* 31(2)**,** 223-238.

Moulin, D. and Robson, J. (2012) Doing God in a Liberal Democracy. *Oxford Review of Education,* 38(5)**,** 539-550.

MRG. (n.d.) *Turkey - Alevis* [Online]. Minority Rights Group International. Available: http://minorityrights.org/minorities/alevis/ [Accessed 28 January 2018].

Müftügil, A. S. (2011) *Compulsory Religion Education and Religious Minorities in Turkey.* PhD Thesis, University of Amsterdam.

Muslim Council of Britain. (2007) *Towards Greater Understanding: Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils in State Schools*. London: Muslim Council of Britain.

National Secular Society. (2013) *Religious Education* [Online]. Available: http://www.secularism.org.uk/uploads/religious-education-briefing-paper.pdf [Accessed 28 January 2018].

National Secular Society. (2016) *Religious Education Must be Reformed before Ending Parental Opt-out* [Online]. Available: http://www.secularism.org.uk/news/2016/05/nss--religious-education-must-be-reformed-before-ending-parental-opt-out [Accessed 28 January 2018].

National Secular Society. (2017) *Pupils Should Have the Same Entitlement to Religion and Belief Education - NSS tells RE Commission* [Online]. Available: http://www.secularism.org.uk/news/2017/02/pupils-should-have-the-same-entitlement-to-religion-and-belief-education---nss-tells-re-commission [Accessed 27 January 2017].

NATRE. (2011) *Survey of Teachers: The Impact of the English Baccalaureate on RE in Secondary Schools* [Online]. National Association of Teachers of Religious Education. Available: https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/2011%20(January)%20NATRE%20Survey%20on%20impact%20of%20the%20EBacc%20on%20RE.pdf [Accessed 17 July 2017].

NATRE. (2012) *An Analysis of a Survey of Teachers on the Impact of the EBacc on Student Opportunity to Study GCSE RS - A Fourth Survey – July 2012 (v1.1)* [Online]. National Association of Teachers of Religious Education. Available: http://www.retoday.org.uk/media/display/NATRE_EBacc_Survey_2012_Final.pdf [Accessed 17 July 2017].

NATRE. (2013) *An Analysis of a Survey of Teachers on the Impact of the EBacc on Student Opportunity to Study GCSE RS - A Fifth Survey - July 2013 (v1.3)* [Online]. National Association of Teachers of Religious Education. Available: http://www.retoday.org.uk/media/display/NATRE_EBacc_Survey_2013_final.pdf [Accessed 17 April 2017].

Ngo, T. M., Lingard, B. and Mitchell, J. (2006) The Policy Cycle and Vernacular Globalisation: A Case Study of the Creation of Vietnam National Universtiy: Honchiminh City. *Comparative Education,* 42(2)**,** 225-242.

Nipkow, K. E. (2006) Religious Education in Europe: Comparative Approach, Institutions, Theories, Research. *In:* De Souza, M. et al. (eds.) *International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions in Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 577-590.

Nixon, G. (2009) Postmodernity, Secularism and Democratic approaches to Education; The Impact on Religious Education in Scotland An Analysis of the 'Philosophication' of Scottish Religious Education in Light of Social and Educational Change. *Journal of Empirical Theology,* 22(2)**,** 162-194.

Noah, H. J. (1984) The Use and Abuse of Comparative Education. *Comparative Education Review,* 28(4)**,** 550-562.

Noah, H. J. and Eckstein, M. A. (1969) *Toward a Science of Comparative Education*. London: Macmillan.

Norris, P. and Inglehart, R. (2011) *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

O'Donoghue, T. and Punch, K. (2003) *Qualitative Educational Research in Action*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Öcal, M. (2007) From the Past to the Present: Imam and Preacher Schools in Turkey—An Ongoing Quarrel. *Religious Education,* 102(2)**,** 191-205.

Office for National Statistics. (2011) *Religion in England and Wales 2011* [Online]. Office for National Statistics. Available: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt-religion.html [Accessed 01 October 2014].

Ofsted. (2007) *Making Sense of Religion: A Report on Religious Education in Schools and the Impact of Locally Agreed Syllabuses*. London: Ofsted.

Ofsted. (2010) *Transforming Religious Education: Religious Education in Schools 2006-09*. Manchester: Ofsted.

Ofsted. (2013) *Religious Education: Realising the Potential*. Manchester: Ofsted.

Okçabol, R. (2005) Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Eğitim Sisteminin Kuruluş Mantığı ve Temelleri (Turkish Republic Education System's Foundation and Principles). *In:* Çınar, I. and Atılgan, H. (eds.) *Ülkemizde Laik Eğitim Sisteminde Sosyal Bilim Olarak Din Öğretimi Kurultayı: Bildiri ve Tartışmalar [Congress of Religious Instruction as a Social Science in Laic Education System in Our Country: Papers and Discussions]*. Malatya: Inönü Üniversitesi, 16-30.

Olsson, T., Özdalga, E. and Raudvere, C. (eds.) ([1998] 2005) *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious and Social Perspectives. Papers Read at a Conference Held at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, November 25-27, 1996*. Routledge: [Online] http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9780203985878.

Örer, A. (2013) *Azınlık Okulları 90 Yılda Eridi (Number of Minority Schools Plummeted in 90 Years)* [Online]. Radikal. Available: http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/azinlik-okullari-90-yilda-eridi-1151676/ [Accessed 04 March 2018].

Orme, R. (2014) *R******us Education: How RE Lost its Soul* [Online]. Reonline.org.uk. Available: http://www.reonline.org.uk/news/think-piece-rus-education-how-re-lost-its-soul-david-ashton/ [Accessed 03 October 2017].

OSCE. (2007) *Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools: Prepared by ODIHR Advisory Council of Experts on Freedom of Religion and Belief*. Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR.

Osmer, R. R. and Schweitzer, F. (2003) *Religious Education between Modernization and Globalization: New Perspectives on the United States and Germany*. Michigan: Eerdmans.

Ozga, J. (2000) *Policy Research in Educational Settings: Contested Terrain*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Ozgur, I. (2012) *Islamic Schools in Modern Turkey : Faith, Politics, and Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pak, S. Y. (2004) Articulating the Boundary between Secularism and Islamism: The Imam-Hatip Schools of Turkey. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly,* 35(3)**,** 324-344.

Parker, S. G. (2013) *The Future of Religious Education: Prospects and Problems for Religious Education (revisited). Summary Report on a Conference Held at the University of Worcester in 2013* [Online]. University of Worcester. Available: http://eprints.worc.ac.uk/2532/1/Future%20of%20RE.pdf [Accessed 28 January 2018].

Parker, S. G. and Freathy, R. (2012) Ethnic Diversity, Christian Hegemony and the Emergence of Multi-Faith Religious Education in the 1970s. *History of Education,* 41(3)**,** 381-404.

Parker-Jenkins, M. (2002) Equal Access to State Funding: The Case of Muslim Schools in Britain. *Race, Ethnicity and Education,* 5(3)**,** 273-289.

Parker-Jenkins, M., Hartas, D. and Irving, B. A. (2005) *In Good Faith: Schools, Religion and Public Funding*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Parmaksızoğlu, İ. (1966) *Türkiye'de Din Eğitimi [Religious Education in Turkey]*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi.

Patton, M. Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Paulston, R. G. (1977) Social and Educational Change: Conceptual Frameworks. *Comparative Education Review,* 21(2/3)**,** 370-395.

Paulston, R. G. (1983) Conflicting Theories of Educational Reform. *In:* Simmons, J. (ed.) *Better Schools: International Lessons for Reform*. New York: Praeger, 21-70.

Pépin, L. (2009) *Teaching About Religions in European School Systems: Policy Issues and Trends*. London: Alliance Publishing Trust.

Percy, E. (1932a) England and Wales: Religous Education in the Schools. *In:* Percy, E. (ed.) *The Year Book of Education 1932*. London: Evans Brothers Limited, 254-262.

Percy, E. (1932b) *The Year Book of Education 1932*. London: Evans Brothers Limited.

Peters, B. G. (1998) *Comparative Politics: Theory and Methods*. Basingstoke: Macmillah.

Pew. (2011) *Common Concerns About Islamic Extremism: Muslim-Western Tensions Persist* [Online]. Pew Research Center. Available: http://www.pewglobal.org/2011/07/21/muslim-western-tensions-persist/ [Accessed 28 January 2018].

Phillips, D. (2006) Comparative Education: Method. *Research in Comparative and International Education,* 1(4)**,** 304-319.

Phillips, D. and Schweisfurth, M. (2007) *Comparative and International Education: An Introduction to Theory, Method, and Practice*. London: Continuum.

Phillips, T. M. (2009) AIDS and Edutainment: Inter/National Health Education in Tanzanian Secondary Schools. *In:* Vavrus, F. and Bartlett, L. (eds.) *Critical Approaches to Comparative Education: Vertical Case Studies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 57-71.

Popov, Z. and Ofstad, A. M. (2006) Religious Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *In:* Kuburić, Z. and Moe, C. (eds.) *Religion and Pluralism in Education: Comparative Approaches in the Western Balkans*. Novi Sad: The Centre for Empirical Researches on Religion in cooperation with the Kotor Network, 73-106.

Postlethwaite, T. N. (1988) *The Encyclopedia of Comparative Education and National Systems of Education*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Poulter, S., Riitaoja, A.-L. and Kuusisto, A. (2016) Thinking Multicultural Education 'Otherwise' - from a Secularist Construction Towards a Plurality of Epistemologies and Worldviews. *Globalisation, Societies and Education,* 14(1)**,** 68-86.

Punch, K. F. and Oancea, A. (2014) *Introduction to Research Methods in Education* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

QCA. (2004) *Religious Education: The Non-Statutory National Framework*. London: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Ramirez, F. O. (2003) Toward a Cultural Anthropology of the World. *In:* Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (ed.) *Local Meanings, Global Schooling: Anthropology and World Culture Theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 239-254.

Ramirez, F. O. (2012) The World Society Perspective: Concepts, Assumptions, and Strategies. *Comparative Education,* 48(4)**,** 423-439.

REC. (2007) *A National Strategy for Religious Education* [Online]. Religious Education Council of England and Wales. Available: https://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s5112/nationalstrategymay2007RE_Council.pdf [Accessed 04 February 2018].

REC. (2013) *A Review of Religious Education in England* [Online]. Religious Education Council of England and Wales. Available: http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/media/file/RE_Review.pdf [Accessed 04 February 2018].

Reed, H. A. (1955) Turkey's New İmam-Hatip Schools. *Die Welt des Islams,* 4(3-2)**,** 150-163.

Rein, M. (1983) *From Policy to Practice*. London: Macmillan.

Relaño, E. (2010) Educational Pluralism and Freedom of Religion: Recent Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 32(1)**,** 19-29.

Richardson, N. (2016) Issues and Dilemmas in Religious Education and Human Rights: Perspectives on Applying the Toledo Guiding Principles to a Divided Society. *In:* Pirner, M. L., Lähnemann, J. and Bielefeldt, H. (eds.) *Human Rights and Religion in Educational Contexts*. Switzerland: Springer, 295-306.

Richardson, N. et al. (2013) Opting Out or Opting In? Conscience Clauses, Minority Belief Communities and the Possibility of Inclusive Religious Education in Northern Ireland. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 35(3)**,** 236-250.

Richardson, R. and Wood, A. (2004) *The Achievement of British Pakistani Learners. RAISE Project Report* [Online]. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books. Available: http://www.insted.co.uk/raising2005.pdf [Accessed 06 September 2017].

Ringelheim, J. (2012) Rights, Religion and the Public Sphere: the European Court of Human Rights in Search of a Theory? *In:* Zucca, L. and Ungureanu, C. (eds.) *Law, State and Religion in the New Europe: Debates and DIlemmas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 283-306.

Rivers, J. (2010) *The Law of Organized Religions: Between Establishment and Secularism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Robbers, G. (ed.) (2011) *Religion in Public Education*. Germany: European Consortium for Church and State Research.

Robertson, R. (1992) *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*. London: Sage.

Robson, C. (2011) *Real World Research : A Resource for Users of Social Research Methods in Applied Settings* (3rd ed.). Chichester: Wiley.

Robson, J. (2016) Engagement in Structured Social Space: An Investigation of Teachers' Online Peer-to-Peer Interaction. *Learning, Media and Technology,* 41(1)**,** 119-139.

Rothgangel, M. (2014) What is Religious Education? An Epistemological Guide. *In:* Rothgangel, M. et al. (eds.) *Basics of Religious Education*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 13-28.

Rothgangel, M., Jackson, R. and Jäggle, M. (eds.) (2014) *Religious Education at Schools in Europe: Part 2: Western Europe*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Rothgangel, M., Jäggle, M. and Schlag, T. (eds.) (2016) *Religious Education at Schools in Europe: Part 1: Central Europe*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Rothgangel, M. et al. (eds.) (2014) *Basics of Religious Education*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Rousseau, J.-J. ([1762] 1979) *Emile, or On Education*. New York: Basic Books.

Rozin, P. and Royzman, E. B. (2001) Negativity Bias, Negativity Dominance and Contagion. *Personality of Social Psychology Review,* 5(4)**,** 296-320.

Rudge, L. (1998) 'I Am Nothing' -- Does It Matter? A Critique of Current Religious Educaiton Policy and Practice in England on Behalf of the Silent Majority. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 20(3)**,** 155-165.

Rui, Y. (2007) Comparing Policies. *In:* Bray, M., Adamson, B. and Mason, M. (eds.) *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods*. Hong Kong: Springer, 241-262.

Rui, Y. (2014) Comparing Policies. *In:* Bray, M., Adamson, B. and Mason, M. (eds.) *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods* (2nd ed.). London: Springer, 285-308.

Rust, V. D. et al. (1999) Research Strategies in Comparative Education. *Comparative Education Review,* 43(1)**,** 86-109.

Rymarz, R. (2013) Comparing Religious Education in Canadian and Australian Catholic High Schools: Identifying Some Key Structural Issues. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 35(2)**,** 175-187.

Sahin, A. (2013) *New Directions in Islam Education: Pedagogy and Identity Formation*. Markfield: Kube Academic.

Said, E. W. ([1978] 2003) *Orientalism*. London: Penguin.

Santos, B. d. S. (2007) Beyond Abyssal Thinking: From Global Lines to Ecologies of Knowledges. *Review,* 30(1)**,** 45-89.

Sarwar, G. (1994) *British Muslims and Schools*. London: The Muslim Educational Trust.

Schick, I. C. and Tonak, E. A. (eds.) (1987) *Turkey in Transition: New Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Schiffauer, W. et al. (2004) *Civil Enculturation: Nation-State, Schools and Ethnic Difference in Four European Countries*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Schmidt, V. H. (2006) Multiple Modernities or Varieties of Modernity? *Current Sociology,* 54(1)**,** 77-97.

Schools Council. (1971) *Working Paper 36: Religious Education in Secondary Schools*. London: Evans/Methuen.

Schreiner, P. (2002) Religious Educaion in the Euopean context. *In:* Broadbent, L. and Brown, A. (eds.) *Issues in Religious Education*. London: RoutledgeFalmer, 82-93.

Schreiner, P. (2006) The Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions of Education: National, Regional and International Constitutional and Legal Frameworks. *In:* De Souza, M. et al. (eds.) *International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions in Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 857-868.

Schreiner, P. (2007) Religious Education in the European Context. *In:* Kuyk, E. et al. (eds.) *Religious Education in Europe: Situations and Current Trends in Schools*. Oslo: IKO, 9-16.

Schreiner, P. (2011) Situation and Current Developments of Religious Education in Europe. *In:* Franken, L. and Loobuyck, P. (eds.) *Religious Education in a Plural, Secularised Society: A Paradigm Shift*. Münster: Waxmann, 17-34.

Schreiner, P. (2014a) Religious Education in Europe. *In:* Rothgangel, M. et al. (eds.) *Basics of Religious Education*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 161-177.

Schreiner, P. (2014b) Towards a Methodology for Comparative Studies in Religious Education: A Study of England and Norway. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 36(3)**,** 358-361.

Schreiner, P. (2015) Religious Education in the European Context. *In:* Berglund, J., Lundén, T. and Strandbrink, P. (eds.) *Crossings, Crosses: Borders, Educations, and Religions in the Northern Europe*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 139-153.

Schreiner, P. (2016) European Institutions, Human Rights and Interreligious Education. *In:* Pirner, M. L., Lähnemann, J. and Bielefeldt, H. (eds.) *Human Rights and Religion in Educational Contexts*. Switzerland: Springer, 273-283.

Schreiner, P. et al. (eds.) (2002) *Committed to Europe's Future: Contributions from Education and Religious Education: A Reader*. Münster: CoGREE and Comenius-Institut.

Schriewer, J. (2012) Editorial: Meaning Constellations in the World Society. *Comparative Education,* 48(4)**,** 411-422.

Schröder, B. (2016) Comparative Historical Approaches in Religious Education Research – Methodological Perspectives. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 38(2)**,** 200-212.

Schultz, K. M. (2006) Secularization: A Bibliographic Essay. *Hedgehog Review,* 8(1-2)**,** 170-177.

Schweitzer, F. (2004) Comparative Research in Religious Education: International-Interdenominational-Interreligious. *In:* Larsson, R. and Gustavsson, C. (eds.) *Towards a European Perspective on Religious Education: The RE Conference, March 11-14, 2004, University of Lund*. Stockholm: Artos and Norma, 191-200.

Schweitzer, F. (2006) Let the Captives Speak for Themselves! More Dialogue between Religious Education in England and Germany. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 28(2)**,** 141-151.

Schweitzer, F. (2015) Comparing Religious Education in Schools in European Countries: Challenges for International Comparative Research. *In:* Jäggle, M., Rothgangel, M. and Schlag, T. (eds.) *Religious Education at Schools in Europe: Part 1: Central Europe*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 15-38.

Schweitzer, S. et al. (2012) Researching Religious Education Journals: Methodology and Selected Results from a German Study. *Journal of Beliefs and Values,* 33(1)**,** 83-93.

Schwinn, T. (2012) Globalisation and Regional Variety: Problems of Theorisation. *Comparative Education,* 48(4)**,** 525-543.

Scott, D. and Morrison, M. (2006) *Key Ideas in Educational Research*. London: Continuum.

Seidman, I. (2006) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences* (3rd ed.). New York: Teachers College.

Selçuk, M. (2013) Academic Expertise, Public Knowledge, and the Identity of Islamic Religious Education. *Religious Education,* 108(3)**,** 255-258.

Selçuk, M. (2017) God Will Tell You the Truth Regarding Your Differences. *Religious Education,* 112(4)**,** 312-316.

Selçuk, M. and Doğan, R. (2007) Religious Education in Turkey. *In:* Kuyk, E. et al. (eds.) *Religious Education in Europe: Situations and Current Trends in Schools*. Oslo: IKO.

Seligman, A. B. (ed.) (2014) *Religious Education and the Challenge of Pluralism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Shah, S. (2012) Muslim Schools in Secular Societies: Persistence or Resistance! *British Journal of Religious Education,* 34(1)**,** 51-65.

Shilling, C. (1992) Reconceptualising Structure and Agency in the Sociology of Education: Structuration Theory and Schooling. *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 13(1)**,** 69-87.

Shively, K. (2008) Taming Islam: Studying Religion in Secular Turkey. *Anthropological Quarterly,* 81(3)**,** 683-711.

Shively, K. (2013) Defining (and Enforcing) Islam in Secular Turkey. *In:* Hafez, S. and Slyomovics, S. (eds.) *Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa: Into the New Millennium*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 203-221.

Silova, I. and Rappleye, J. (2015) Beyond the World Culture Debate in Comparative Education: Critiques, Alternatives and a Noisy Conversation. *Globalisation, Societies and Education,* 13(1)**,** 1-7.

Simmons, J. (ed.) (1983a) *Better Schools: International Lessons for Reform*. New York: Praeger.

Simmons, J. (1983b) Reforming Education and Society: The Enduring Quest. *In:* Simmons, J. (ed.) *Better Schools: International Lessons for Reform*. New York: Praeger, 3-19.

Sjöborg, A. (2013a) Aiming for the Stars? State Intentions for Religious Education in Sweden and Pupils' Attitudes. *In:* Jödicke, A. (ed.) *Religious Education Politics, the State, and Society*. Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 69-84.

Sjöborg, A. (2013b) Religious Education and Intercultural Understanding: Examining the Role of Religiosity for Upper Secondary Students' Attitudes Towards RE. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 35(1)**,** 36-54.

Skeie, G. (1995) Plurality and Pluralism: A Challenge for Religious Education. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 17(2)**,** 84-91.

Skeie, G. (2002) The Concept of Plurality and Its Meaning for Religious Education. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 25(1)**,** 47-59.

Skeie, G. (2006) Plurality and Pluralism in Religious Education. *In:* De Souza, M. et al. (eds.) *International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions in Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, 307-319.

Skeie, G. (ed.) (2009) *Religious Diversity and Education: Nordic Perspectives*. Münster: Waxmann.

Skeie, G. et al. (eds.) (2013) *Exploring Context in Religious Education Research: Empirical, Methodological and Theoretical Perspectives*. Münster: Waxmann.

Slotte, P. (2011) Securing Freedom Whilst Enhancing Competence: The 'Knowledge About Christianity, Religions and Life Stances' Subject and the Judgment of the European Court of Human Rights. *Religion and Human Rights,* 6**,** 41-73.

Smart, N. (1988) Religious Studies in the UK. *Religion,* 18(1)**,** 1-9.

Smith, C. (2003a) Introduction: Rethinking the Secularization of American Public Life. *In:* Smith, C. (ed.) *The Secular Revolution: Power, Interests and Conflict in the Secularization of American Public Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1-79.

Smith, C. (ed.) (2003b) *The Secular Revolution: Power, Interests and Conflict in the Secularization of American Public Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Smith, K. E. (2006) Problematising Power Relations in 'Elite' Interviews. *Geoforum,* 37(4)**,** 643-653.

Smrke, M. and Rakar, T. (2006) Religious Education in Slovenia. *In:* Kuburić, Z. and Moe, C. (eds.) *Religion and Pluralism in Education: Comparative Approaches in the Western Balkans*. Novi Sad: The Centre for Empirical Researches on Religion in cooperation with the Kotor Network, 9-38.

Smyth, E., Darmody, M. and Lyons, M. (2013) Introduction. *In:* Smyth, E., Lyons, M. and Darmody, M. (eds.) *Religious Education in a Multicultural Europe: Children, Parents and Schools*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1-14.

Smyth, E., Lyons, M. and Darmody, M. (eds.) (2013) *Religious Education in a Multicultural Europe: Children, Parents and Schools*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sommerville, C. J. (1998) Secular Society/Religious Population: Our Tacit Rules for Using the Term 'Secularization'. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* (2)**,** 249-253.

Stark, R. (1999) Secularization RIP. *Sociology of Religion,* 60(3)**,** 249-273.

Stoeckl, K. (ed.) (2015) *The Future of Religious Education in Europe*. San Domenico di Fiesole: European University Institute.

Takayama, K., Sriprakash, A. and Connell, R. (2017) Toward a Postcolonial Comparative and International Education. *Comparative Education Review,* 61(S1)**,** S1-S24.

Tanyeri-Erdemir, T., Erdem, M. and Weitzhofer-Yurtışık, T. (2012) *Challenges of Religios Accommodation in Family-Law, Labor-Law and Legal Regulation of Public Space and Public Funding: Turkish Socio-Legal Research Report* [Online]. RELIGARE. Available: http://www.religareproject.eu/?q=system/files/WP7_turkey_finalreport.pdf [Accessed 19 January 2017].

Tarhan, M. (1996) *Religious Education in Turkey: A Socio-Historical Study of the Imam-Hatip Schools.* PhD Thesis, Temple University.

Taylor, C. (2007) *A Secular Age*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. (2009) The Polysemy of the Secular. *Social Research,* 76(4)**,** 1143-1166.

Taylor, C., Rees, G. and Davies, R. (2013) Devolution and Geographies of Education: The Use of the Millennium Cohort Study for 'Home International' Comparisons across the UK. *Comparative Education,* 49(3)**,** 290-316.

Taylor, J. (2002) Responses to the United Nation's Study Paper on "The Role of Religious Education in the Pursuit of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination". *In:* IARF (ed.) *Religious Education in Schools: Ideas and Experiences from around the World*. Madrid: The International Association for Religious Freedom, 59-61.

Taylor, S. (1997) Critical Policy Analysis: Exploring Contexts, Texts and Consequences. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education,* 18(1)**,** 23-35.

Taylor, S. et al. (1997) *Educational Policy and the Politics of Change*. London: Routledge.

TBMM. (1982) *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası [Turkish Republic Constitution]* [Online]. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi. Available: http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa82.htm [Accessed 16 January 2017].

Teece, G. (2011) Too Many Competing Imperatives? Does RE Need to Discover Its Identity? *Journal of Beliefs & Values,* 32(2)**,** 161-172.

Thobani, S. (2010) *Islam in the School Curriculum: Symbolic Pedagogy and Cultural Claims*. London: Continuum.

Thomas, R. M. (2006) *Religion in Schools: Controversies Around the World*. Westport: Praeger.

Thompson, P. (2004a) *Whatever Happened to Religious Education?* Cambridge: Lutterworth Press.

Thompson, P. (2004b) Whose Confession? Which Tradition? *British Journal of Religious Education,* 26(1)**,** 61-67.

Tomlinson, S. (2005) *Education in a Post-Welfare Society* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Traianou, A. (2014) The Centrality of Ethics in Qualitative Research. *In:* Leavy, P. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 62-77.

Tschannen, O. (1991) The Secularization Paradigm: A Systematization. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* 30(4)**,** 395-415.

Tulasiewicz, W. (1993) Teaching Religion. *In:* Tulasiewicz, W. and To, C. Y. (eds.) *World Religions and Educational Practice*. London: Cassell, 12-32.

Tulasiewicz, W. and To, C. Y. (1993) *World Religions and Educational Practice*. London: Cassell.

Türkan, A. et al. (2012) *Ortaöğretim Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi 9 Ders Kitabı [Secondary School Religious Culture and Ethics Knowledge Grade 9 Course Book]*. Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı.

TurkishPress. (2014) *Regulated Religious Education, A Must to Curb Radicalism* [Online]. Available: http://www.turkishpress.com/news/414908/ [Accessed 28 January 2018].

U.K. Parliament. (1870) *Elementary Education Act 1870 Chapter 75*. London: The Stationery Office.

U.K. Parliament. (1944) *Education Act 1944 Chapter 31*. London: The Stationery Office.

U.K. Parliament. (1988) *Education Reform Act 1988 Chapter 40*. London: The Stationery Office.

USCIRF. (2016) *Annual Report of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom*. Washington, DC: United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

USCIRF. (2017) *Annual Report of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom*. Washington, DC: United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

Van Arragon, L. and Beaman, L. G. (2015) Introduction. *In:* Beaman, L. G. and Van Arragon, L. (eds.) *Issues in Religion and Education: Whose Religion?* Leiden: Brill, 1-15.

Vavrus, F. and Bartlett, L. (eds.) (2009) *Critical Approaches to Comparative Education: Vertical Case Studies from Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Verschoyle, T. (1950) Education in Turkey. *International Affairs,* 26(1)**,** 59-70.

Vertovec, S. (2006) *The Emergence of Super-Diversity in Britain*. Oxford: Centre on Migration, Policy and Society.

Vidovich, L. (2003) Methodological Framings for a Policy Trajectory Study. *In:* O'Donoghue, T. and Punch, K. (eds.) *Qualitative Educational Research in Action*. London: RoutledgeFalmer, 70-96.

Vidovich, L. and O'Donoghue, T. (2003) Global–Local Dynamics of Curriculum Policy Development: A Case-Study from Singapore. *Curriculum Journal,* 14(3)**,** 351-370.

Voas, D. (2009) The Rise and Fall of Fuzzy Fidelity in Europe. *European Sociological Review,* 25(2)**,** 155-168.

Voas, D. and Crockett, A. (2005) Religion in Britain: Neither Believing nor Belonging. *Sociology,* 39(1)**,** 11-28.

Waldow, F. (2017) Projecting Images of the 'Good' and the 'Bad School': Top Scorers in Educational Large-Scale Assessments as Reference Societies. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* 47(5)**,** 647-664.

Walford, G. (ed.) (1994) *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London: UCL Press.

Walford, G. (2005) Research Ethical Guidelines and Anonymity. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education,* 28(1)**,** 83-93.

Walford, G. (2011) *Researching the Powerful* [Online]. British Educational Research Association. Available: https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Researching-the-Powerful.pdf [Accessed 28 January 2018].

Warner, R. S. (1993) Work in Progress toward a New Paradigm for the Sociological Study of Religion in the United States. *American Journal of Sociology,* 98(5)**,** 1044-1093.

Watson, B. (1992a) Introduction: The Need for Priorities. *In:* Watson, B. (ed.) *Priorities in Religious Education: A Model for the 1990s and Beyond.* London: The Falmer Press, 1-5.

Watson, B. (ed.) (1992b) *Priorities in Religious Education: A Model for the 1990s and Beyond*. London: The Falmer Press.

Watson, B. (1993) *The Effective Teaching of Religous Education*. London: Longman.

Watson, B. (2007) Secularism, Schools and Religious Education. *In:* Felderhof, M. C., Thompson, P. and Torevell, D. (eds.) *Inspiring Faith in Schools : Studies in Religious Education.* Aldershot: Ashgate, 3-15.

Watson, B. (2012) Why Religious Education Matters. *In:* Barnes, P. (ed.) *Debates in Religious Education*. London: Routledge, 14-21.

Watson, B. (2014) The Need for Responsible Religious Education in the Light of the 'Value Free' Society. *In:* Felderhof, M. C. and Thompson, P. (eds.) *Teaching Virtue: The Contribution of Religious Education.* London: Bloomsbury, 29-41.

Watson, B. and Thompson, P. (2007) *The Effective Teaching of Religious Education* (2nd ed.). Harlow: Pearson Longman.

Weber, M. ([1918] 1958) Science as a Vocation. *Daedalus,* 87(1)**,** 111-134.

Weidman, J. C. and Jacob, W. J. (eds.) (2011) *Beyond The Comparative: Advancing Theory and Its Application to Practice*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Weisse, W. (2007) The European Research Project on Religion and Education 'REDCo': An Introduction. *In:* Jackson, R. et al. (eds.) *Religion and Education in Europe: Developments, Contexts and Debates*. Waxmann: Münster, 9-25.

Weisse, W. (2011a) *REDCo: Final Activity Report* [Online]. https://www.gsrl-cnrs.fr/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/REDCo_FinActivityReportFINALVERSION_14-5-09.pdf. [Accessed 01 March 2018].

Weisse, W. (2011b) Reflections on the REDCo project. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 33(2)**,** 111-125.

White, J. (2004) Should Religious Education Be a Compulsory School Subject? *British Journal of Religious Education,* 26(2)**,** 151-164.

Whitty, G. and Wisby, E. (2016) Education in England - A Testbed for Network Governance? *Oxford Review of Education,* 42(3)**,** 316-329.

Willaime, J.-P. (2007) Different Models for Religion and Education in Europe. *In:* Jackson, R. et al. (eds.) *Religion and Education in Europe: Developments, Contexts and Debates*. Münster: Waxmann, 57-66.

Williams, C. (2012) *Researching Power, Elites and Leadership*. London: Sage.

Wilson, B. (1982) *Religion in Sociological Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, B. (1985) Secularization: The Inherited Model. *In:* Hammond, P. E. (ed.) *The Sacred in a Secular Age*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 9-21.

Wilson, B. (1987) Secularization. *In:* Eliade, M. (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. New York: Macmillan, 159-165.

Wing, A. K. and Varol, O. O. (2006) Is Secularism Possible in a Majority-Muslim Country: The Turkish Example. *Texas International Law Journal,* 42(1)**,** 1-54.

Woodhead, L. and Catto, R. (eds.) (2012) *Religion and Change in Modern Britain*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Wright, A. (1993) *Religious Education in the Secondary School: Prospects for Religious Literacy*. London: David Fulton in association with the Roehampton Institute.

Wright, A. (2004) *Religion, Education, and Post-Modernity*. London: Routledge.

Wright, A. (2007) *Critical Religious Education, Multiculturalism and the Pursuit of Truth*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Wright, N. (2003) Principled "Bastard Leadership"? A Rejoinder to Gold, Evans, Earley, Halpin and Collarbone. *Educational Management and Administration,* 31(2)**,** 139-144.

Yemini, M. and Bronshtein, Y. (2016) The Global-Local Negotiation: Between the Official and the Implemented History Curriculum in Israeli Classrooms. *Globalisation, Societies and Education,* 14(3)**,** 345-357.

Yıldırım, M. (2012) *2011-2012 Öğretim Yılında Uygulanan Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Dersi Programına Ilişkin bir Değerlendirme [An Analysis of Religious Culture and Ethics Knowledge Course Program 2011-2012]* [Online]. AIHM Izleme. Available: http://www.aihmiz.org.tr/aktarimlar/dosyalar/1349647350.pdf [Accessed 28 January 2018].

Yilmaz, S. (2013) *State, Politics, and Religion: Effects of Political and Social Change on the Relationship Between State and Religion in Turkey, 2002-2012.* PhD Thesis, University of Pittsburgh.

Zaki, Y. (1982) The Teaching of Islam in Schools: A Muslim Viewpoint. *British Journal of Religious Education,* 5(1)**,** 33-38.

Zebiri, K. (1998) Muslim Anti-Secularist Discourse in the Context of Muslim-Christian Relations. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations,* 9(1)**,** 47-64.

Ziebertz, H.-G. (2008) *Religious Education in a Plural Western Society: Problems and Challenges* (2nd ed.). Münster: Lit.