

SCHOOL'S ROLE IN WORLDVIEW EDUCATION

The pedagogical perspective of social sustainability

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Issues addressed

- ❑ The perspective of social sustainability
- ❑ The need to deal with worldviews and religions in the public and social domain
- ❑ What is a worldview and why worldview ?
- ❑ The focus is on citizenship education and worldview education



Social Sustainability

@Dealing with religious/worldview diversity, learning to live together in peace, and being educated as national and global citizens

@These topics present great challenges in our time and are part and parcel on a national and on a global scale

@In respect to the human shaping of the local & global world via social learning processes



Religion: Private or/and Public?

- ❑ Private: Strict separation of church and state. Religion doesn't belong to the public domain. Morality is sufficient. France: the principle of laïcité
- ❑ Public: The binding role of religions in society (in the public domain) is of utmost importance and should not be neglected



Focusing on Worldview

Worldview is the system of implicit and explicit convictions, feelings and attitudes of an individual in relation to human life which is always subject to changes.

WV in short: “The way one looks at life” or “A view on life, the world, and humanity”.

All pupils & all schools could be included

Versus: strong secularist approaches &
strong exclusivist/segregational claims



Great Thinkers on Religion and Society in the (post-)secular age

- **Jürgen Habermas:** *Between Naturalism and Religion* (2008)
- **Charles Taylor:** *A Secular Age* (2007)
- **Martha Nussbaum:** *The New Religious Intolerance* (2012)



Habermas

- In liberal-democratic societies mutual learning processes and dialogue between religious and secular citizens should flourish.
- The state should take a positive stance towards the contributions of religious communities and persons in the public square, because they provide these societies with important and necessary sources for creating and attributing meaning.



Taylor

Taylor points to secularity as “a move from a society where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest one to embrace. (...) *Secularity* in this sense is a matter of the whole context of understanding in which our moral, spiritual or religious experience and search takes place.”



Nussbaum

- The radix of the new religious intolerance is the politics of fear in an anxious age
- Fear is a rudimentary primitive emotion of the human animal oriented towards survival and well-being
- We need to foster our capacity for emphatic imagination based on greater understanding and respect towards more openness and inclusivity.



Personal Worldview Formation

The part of the personhood formation that is focusing on processes of meaning giving and meaning making, meaningful practices and relationships while dealing with cognitive, affective-emotional, and volitional aspects, as well as with experiential and action aspects.



Four Views on the Relationship of Religion/Worldview and Education

- Teaching and Learning **into** Religion/Worldview
- Teaching and Learning **about** Religion/Worldview
- Teaching and Learning **from** Religion/Worldview
- Combining **about & from**



Neutrality, Subjectivity, Intersubjectivity

- **Neutrality:** religion/worldview is a non-issue or T & L about approach; only information
- **Subjectivity:** group or community bound convictions (particularisation); socialisation into; T & L into approach
- **Intersubjectivity:** interreligious/worldview encounter and dialogue; identity formation; learning and practicing to live together; T & L about and from approach



Minimal and Maximal Citizenship Education

- **Minimal conception:** knowledge-based; transmission view; citizenship seen in formal, legal and juridical terms (about)
- **Maximal conception:** transformative view; action based; participative; aiming at the encompassing personhood formation of the pupils (about and from)



Inclusive Concept of Education

- ❑ Broad concept of identity formation (Bildung)
- ❑ Including worldview education
- ❑ Including citizenship education
- ❑ Worldview education and citizenship education strongly connected
- ❑ Format: teaching and learning **about** and **from**
- ❑ Self responsible self-determination of pupils



Combining 2 broad concepts

- Maximal citizenship education: emphasis on active learning and inclusion, interactivity, that is values-based and process led, and allowing pupils to develop and articulate their own views and to engage in debate.
- Wordview education: enabling pupils to develop their own point of view in matters of religion and worldview in the context of plurality via encounter and dialogue



THE SCHOOL

- The school: a place *sui generis*, in its own right, no instrumentalization of education (John Dewey)
- *Core aim:* to stimulate the integral development of the pupils, their encompassing personhood formation
- Located in the social zone of interference between the family and society at large



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**Thank you for your
attention!**

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