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Phases of Differentiated Schooling:
A Theoretical and Conceptual Framework of the Relationship between
Religion and Schooling in New Zealand and Norway

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Abstract

This thesis offers a conceptual and theoretical map of the trajectory of relationship between religion and schooling that explains why and how religion has changed within state education policy. The concepts and theories of *phases of differentiated schooling* are built by applying the theoretical insight from the sociology of religion to the field of education using the case studies of Norway and New Zealand. Phases of differentiated schooling elucidates a general pattern of religious change in schooling, identifying global political, cultural and philosophical variables that have changed the concept of religion within nation state education policy using the methodological insight of historical sociology. The concepts and theories of phases of differentiated schooling are organised by a multi-level structure that allows for the identification and synthesis of these global variables, while also providing flexibility to account for national context and interpretation.

Phases of differentiated schooling identifies three distinct theoretical and conceptual phases of relationship between religion and schooling. The first phase, *undifferentiated schooling*, has its origins in the Middle Ages where Christianity arose to form a monolithic sacred authority over western society. Because Christianity defined knowledge, beliefs and values, Churches held an almost uncontested authority and provision over schooling until the mid-19th century. The second phase, *differentiated schooling* arose from consolidations of the enlightenment, liberalism, the rise of the nation state and, the scientific revolution. These variables contributed to the progressive differentiation and secularisation of schooling. Finally, the third phase, *post-differentiated schooling*, reflects what sociologists have observed as the *de-privatisation* of religion and the *deseccularisation* of society. Religion has changed in concept and increased in significance upon developments in multiculturalism, postmodernism, political ideology and religious education pedagogies. Consequently, from the late 20th century religion has increased in political and public significance, reconceptualising the role of religion within state education policy. This thesis provides a means to understand the variables that determine the conceptualisation of religion within nation state education policy, thereby enhancing the ability to critically evaluate the relationship between religion and schooling.

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