

# Teaching about religions within the renewed laistic system in France

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## Samenvatting

Sinds de onderwijswetten van het einde van de 19de eeuw maakt godsdienstonderwijs geen deel meer uit van het lesrooster van de Franse openbare scholen. Godsdienstonderwijs wordt buiten de school aangeboden door geloofsgemeenschappen of in privéscholen, maar dit valt buiten het toezicht en de controle van de overheid. Aan religie kan echter wel aandacht geschonken worden in de andere schoolvakken zoals bijvoorbeeld geschiedenis, maar het gaat dan louter om onderwijs *over* religie en levensbeschouwing. De keuze om aandacht te schenken aan religie en levensbeschouwing in de andere vakken laat zich eerst goed begrijpen vanuit de geschiedenis van Frankrijk en in het bijzonder vanuit het toonaangevende principe van de *laïcité*. Een principe dat om kennistheoretische en pragmatische redenen van belang is geworden. In de Franse scholen komen religieuze thema's vanuit een historisch en cultureel perspectief aan de orde, en is er geen apart vak 'godsdienst' of 'levensbeschouwing'. Een gevolg hiervan is wel dat godsdienstige en levensbeschouwelijke fenomenen niet door het hele curriculum en alleen in bepaalde fasen van een schooltype aan de orde komen. Ook kan de professionaliteit van de docenten qua opleiding in deze materie nogal uiteenlopen.

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## Introduction

School was one of the first public utilities to be secularized in France at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, before all the other public utilities in 1905. The background of the whole process is the conflict between secular and Catholic parties, which left its mark upon the way *laïcité* was perceived and defined in France until today and upon the way religion was spoken about at school: no religious education but teaching about religious issues. First I will briefly present an overview of the French principle *laïcité*. Then I will argue that religious education is pos-

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sible outside state schools. However, religion is not totally absent from state schools, and with even more emphasis on this subject since the 1980s and the 2000s. There has been some progress with new curricula, publications and a larger collective awareness. Nevertheless, it is still very little compared to other European countries.

### ***Brief historical overview of French laïcité***

France is one of the most secularized societies in Europe, and its key feature in relation to religions is the principle of *laïcité*. More a French finding than a French exception (Baubérot, 2004, pp. 17-28), the meaning and interpretation of *laïcité* is strongly linked to French history. It is rooted in the absolutist political thought of the *Ancien Régime* and in the tradition of Gallicanism<sup>1</sup> of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, when religion was subordinated to the French royal state (Willaime, 2004, pp. 53-54). During the French Revolution, a logic of separation between Church and State developed and the idea of a unique religion decreased. The next step was the 1801 Concordat: Catholic religion was recognized as the religion of the majority and no longer as the state religion.

However, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, debates divided the French (the French historians called it “la guerre des deux Frances”, “the war between the two Frances”), reflecting clashing views of society, government (monarchy versus republic) and education. French school was the core of the conflict: on the one hand, the Catholic Church tried to control education, on the other the secular party was suspicious of the power the Church would thus gain upon society. At the same time, there were more philosophical and scientific critiques of religion. After the triumph of republicans in 1870s, the French public school was one of the first public utilities to be secularized through two laws. The Ferry Law of 28 March 1882 implemented a secular education program (art. 1: religious and moral instruction is replaced by civic and moral instruction) and removed any control over private or public elementary schools from the hands of religious ministers (art. 3). The Goblet law of 20 October 1886 appointed secular teachers at all state schools (art. 17).

Nineteen years later, the secularization or “de-clericalisation” was extended to all public utilities: the law of 9 December 1905 organized the separation and the relation between the churches (Catholic, Protestant and Jewish) and the State: “the Republic assures the freedom of conscience. It guarantees the free exercise of the religions (*cultes*) under the only limitations promulgated below, in the interests of law and order” (art. 1); “the Republic neither recognizes, nor provides a salary nor subsidizes any religion (*culte*)” (art. 2). Since then, no sectarian education and religious proselytizing was permitted in any state institutions.

### *No religious education in most schools*

In respect to the laws mentioned above, no religious education *per se* is allowed in public schools: no confessional discourses, no education provided by any educator who would first present himself as a member of a religious community.

However it does not mean that no religious education is possible in France:

- the Ferry Law provided one day per week for “private” activities, such as music, sport and religious education (art. 2), originally on Thursday, nowadays on Wednesday since 1972.
- the free practice of religion, including religious education, is guaranteed by the 1905 law, art. 2 quoted above.
- whereas instruction is compulsory from the age of 6 to 16, neither the State nor the Ministry of National Education has a monopoly on education.

Outside the framework of state schools, religious education is legally allowed and is entirely in charge of the families. Families have the choice between two main options (which can complete each other): choose religious education through the religious community (organized in France as “1901 Law” non-profit associations) on non-school days (Thursdays, replaced by Wednesdays, or Saturdays and Sundays), or enrol their children in private denominational schools<sup>2</sup>. Indeed, alongside the official curricula they have to implement, private denominational schools can offer subjects which are more religious in character. These courses are optional and the pupils need not obtain an exemption if they do not want to follow them.

It is difficult to obtain adequate empirical data about how many pupils follow religious education in associations and in private schools. Around 17 percent of the pupils are in private denominational schools, but there are no data about how many of them follow religious education. At the moment for religious education in associations we only have data for Islam, thanks to a recent report written by the Institute for the Study of Islam and Societies of the Muslim World concerning the teaching of Islam. There are 500 Qur’anic schools serving about 35,000 youth in total (IISMM, 2010, p. 11). Concerning the content of the religious education, there are many variations: sometimes religious education is more open to other religions and is taught in a more cultural way (this is the case in some Protestant Reformed Churches and in many Catholic schools); other religious education is strictly confessional (as in Qur’anic schools, Jewish and evangelical associations), and the aim is the transmission of the creed.

There is one exception: Alsace-Moselle, where the 1905 law does not apply because this area was under German administration between 1870 and 1918. The sole reference for the relation between State and Churches is still the Concordat of 1801 (for the organization of relations between the Catholic Church and the State), the Organic Articles of 1802 (regulation of the exercise of worship for the Catholic, Lutheran and other Reformed churches), and the decrees

of 1808 (organization of Jewish worship). State schools in these departments offer religious education in all four of these faiths, with the possibility to be exempted (Poucet, 2012, p. 79). There actually exists a debate to allow Muslim education, with no decision yet (Le Monde, 2003, p. 22). We have data for Alsace-Moselle thanks to an enquiry made by the *Académie*<sup>3</sup> of Strasbourg: in primary schools<sup>4</sup>, in 2011-2012, 61.23 percent of pupils have RE (71 percent in 2006-2007); in secondary schools, in 2011-2012, 31.43 percent of students in *college* and 16.71 percent of students in *lycée* have religious education (Hourmant & Willaime, to be published).

### *Religious issues at schools*

No (confessional) religious education at school does not mean that it is impossible to speak about religions at school. No law, no decree forbids it. However, because of the peculiar history of France during the nineteenth century and the attitude of the Pope regarding the 1905 law –rejecting it until 1923 –, religions and religious phenomena were present but not emphasized in classrooms (it was assumed this learning mostly took place in families), in curricula and in the discourses of teachers. For example, a very famous history collection known as *Malet et Isaac*, which was used by generations of history teachers and pupils<sup>5</sup>, spoke from time to time of religious issues. This situation with few religious issues covered at school lasted until the 1980s.

#### *1980-1990s: awareness of the necessity of more religious issues at school*

During the 1980s France faced some important changes in the national space (immigration and emergence of various religious identities, mostly Muslim ones) and in the international (for example, Ayatollah Khomeini's political take-over in Iran in 1979), with religion at the front of the stage. Partly linked to these changes, many French authors stressed the need to expand upon religious topics at school:

- associations such as the French Education League (created in 1866 by Jean Macé),
- researchers such as the sociologist Danièle Hervieu-Léger and the historian Philippe Joutard, author of the first report relating to the teaching about religious facts in 1989,
- National Education's actors such as the inspector of history teachers Dominique Borne, and
- essayists such as the philosopher Régis Debray.

All of them became aware of the cognitive failure concerning religious issues. According to them, it was the consequence of three factors: the lack of interest in catechism, the lack of religious transmission within families, and the declining religious socialisation of teenagers. They agreed that National Education should respond to this failure and speak more about religions, within the framework

of the secular principle. They advocated more teaching about religious issues at school. Unlike religious education provided outside state schools, the main method of teaching about religious issues at schools is not the transmission of faith; it is rather patrimonial (having access to cultural and artistic heritage), cognitive (acquiring intellectual and scientific knowledge, knowing the past and understanding the contemporary world) and civic (living together). According to Philippe Gaudin (Gaudin, 2011, pp. 112-114), the first two aims are more stressed in the official discourses, even if the third one is anterior to them and is the driving force for the growing presence of religious phenomena in existing subjects, primarily in French and History.

Despite some hesitation from the Minister of National Education due to the “*hijab* affair” in Creil in 1989 (see e.g. Nordmann, 2004), some decisions were taken for the training of teachers and for the secondary school curricula. The 1996 History national curriculum for the *lycée* (in use until June 2010) gave more space to religious issues. In History, (fifteen/sixteen-year-old) students of *seconde* had to study “The Birth and Spread of Christianity”, “Mediterranean in the Twelfth Century as a Crossroads of Three Civilisations” and “Humanism and Renaissance”. In the French curriculum, the reading of Biblical texts was introduced for (eleven/twelve-year-old) students of *sixième*. To help the teachers, a new collection “History of Religions” was launched. It was a collaboration between researchers and pedagogical specialists, and it proposed chapters with scientific knowledge and chapters with pedagogical tools (Ferjani, 1996; Lévêque & L’Huillier, 1998; Nouailhat, 1997; Willaime & Cusenier, 1998).

#### *2000s: the Debray Report and its consequences*

In the aftermath of ‘9/11’, the reflection upon the question of religion at school went one step further. Upon the request of the Minister of National Education, Jack Lang, Régis Debray submitted a report in 2002 (Debray, 2002). He recalled the 1980s’ comments about the increase of ignorance and the lack of understanding of the national historic and cultural heritage and of the modern world. He also took into account a new activist and uncompromising confessional attitude that denied any legitimacy to public and secular teaching. Therefore, he invited National Education’s actors to take their responsibilities and he asked for an “office transfer (*transfert de charge*) from the private sphere to the public sphere” (p. 15). To avoid some objections and fears from the secular and the religious parties, he clearly asserted that “teaching of religion is *not* a religious teaching” (p. 23) and distinguished between “religion as *cultural object*” (*objet de culture*) and “religion as *object of cult*” (*objet de culte*) (p. 28). His advice was to enhance what was already done inside the existing subjects. “However, the main effort has to be put on the content of the curricula, through a more reasoned agreement between the existing school subjects, and on teachers’ training” (p. 35). To attain this goal, education methods and scientific research should be brought closer together. His conclusion is the well-known sentence: “The time has now arrived to pass from a *laïcité* of ignorance (in which religion

does not concern us) to a *laïcité* of understanding (where understanding becomes our duty)" (p. 38).

The Debray Report was well received in both the religious and secular milieu. As one could expect, reactions were more hesitant and distrustful among the representatives of an aggressively anti-religious *laïcité* and among religious traditionalists (Willaime, 2007, p. 97). Indeed, from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until now, the advocates of teaching about religions at schools are caught between a rock and a hard place, because they have to take into account two opposite radical views: the one of some religious groups which accuse the school discourse of being too positivist and historicist, the other of *laïcard* positions which consider that speaking about religions at school is a way for religious groups to gain more power over society.

Some of the Debray Report's recommendations were followed by two concrete measures: 1/ organization of seminars on the topic of teaching about religious issues (the last seminar held on 21-22 March 2011: *Enseigner les faits religieux dans une école laïque*)<sup>6</sup>; 2/ in June 2002, creation of a secular centre (Institut Européen en Sciences des Religions) inside the state institution, *École Pratique des Hautes Études* (where a department in religious sciences has existed since 1886). The mission of the IESR is to bring research and school (and the general public) into close contact with each other, by offering expertise and consulting on the history and the current state of religious issues.<sup>7</sup>

The Debray Report also recommended that the place of religious issues be enhanced within the initial and ongoing training programs for National Education personnel (teachers, training instructors, etc.). However, because the initial training for teachers was reformed a few years ago, it is difficult to organize in all *academies* systematic training specifically dedicated to religious topics. In many *academies*, ongoing training is regularly organized on these topics, despite financial difficulties and the concurrence of other subjects (the actual tendency is to focus on transversal training, as "use of digital tools in education" or "reflection on the competences to acquire"). Some examples: for two years now, in Arras (North of France), a training course has been provided about "Christianity and Otherness in the Middle Ages and the Reformed Times". In Reims, in March 2013, another training course has been provided about "History and Heritage: Jerusalem and the Three Monotheisms". In Paris, in February 2013, the course has been about "Religions and Society in the United States, since 1880". In addition to these courses, books have been published to help teachers, giving them some scientific knowledge and pedagogical help. For example, the magazine edited by the French public editor, *La documentation française*, has recently published four issues, one about religious issues in France, each of the three others about a monotheistic religion from a historic developmental point of view, with a short text, many documents and commentaries (Azria, 2003; Buresi, 2007; Fellous, 2008; Van den Kerchove, 2009).

The Joutard and Debray reports and their recommendations concerned exclusively the secondary school level, while the primary school was put aside.

Nevertheless, for six years this level has been taken into account. This change is mainly due to the work of the IESR, of its president (until March 2013), Dominique Borne, and of some inspectors for the primary school. Ongoing training was organised for the directors of the primary schools and for the trainers. A new collection “Récits primordiaux” was launched to help teachers of primary and secondary schools. One of its goals is to promote narrative competences and interdisciplinarity: each volume presents six narratives on the same topic (either a figure, such as Jesus, Orpheus or Mohammed, or a theme, such as creation stories or stories about death and beyond) with some historic elements and pedagogical exploitation (for history, geography, literature, philosophy, art, science).

### ***Teachers, pupils and teaching about religious issues***

#### *Religious issues in the school timetable*

During the 2000s, there was more emphasis on religious issues at school. However, it is very difficult to compare this with other European countries, not because of the approach (the non-confessional prism is not unusual in Europe), but because of its organization. For epistemological reasons (religions are mainly studied through their historic, social, cultural aspects), and for pragmatic and pedagogical reasons (it is difficult to create a new discipline and a new teaching body; moreover there is the saturation of the school syllabuses), religious issues do not constitute a subject *per se* at school (by contrast, in research and higher education, this subject is well developed and well identified). There is neither a specific curriculum nor a specific time dedicated to it. They are rather part of other school subjects, mainly History and French. There never has been a debate about its organization and there is no planning for the next few years.

Therefore it is difficult to quantify how many hours per week are devoted to this subject: in *sixième*, in History (1 hour 30 per week / 41 hours per year), where the religious issues are very prominent in the curriculum, pupils often learn about religious issues (around 20 minutes per week if we try to quantify / 10 hours out of the 41 hours in the year). In *troisième*, where there is next to nothing in the History program, pupils learn so little that it is impossible to quantify it. We have to add what is said about religious topics in other school subjects: from one hour to 5 hours per year and according to the level.

Religious issues are mentioned in History and French curricula and their (high/low) presence depends on the main goals of each curriculum (which is regularly revised) and on the necessity to include new topics. However, the curricula have to be completed by official pedagogical tools called “Ressources” where religious topics are more often dealt with and by another official document named “Socle des compétences” where religious issues are part of humanist culture. Both documents authorize teachers to speak more about religious issues within the limits of the curricula (which let them some liberty as many of them recognize).

### *Example: the History curriculum*

Before we focus on teachers, let us give an example, the History curriculum. All pupils in France, either in public schools or in private (denominational) schools, have the same program in each discipline. It is strictly forbidden for a pupil to refuse some lessons for religious reasons. Moreover, an enquiry conducted within the REDCo project showed that the majority of teenagers disagrees with the statement that “students should be excused from taking some lessons for religious reasons” (Béraud, Massignon, Mathieu, & Willaime, 2009, pp. 146-147).

Since the Debray Report, the History program has been modified once for the secondary schools: in 2008 for the *collège* and in 2010-2011 for the *lycée*. The National Education has been in charge of the whole process, with consultations with educators, teachers and specialists. The religious communities are not involved in the process because of the principle of *laïcité* and the separation between the public sphere (which in French law refers to the state institutions) and the religious sphere.

In the secondary school, the first level, *sixième*, is still the one where pupils have the greatest engagement with religious issues. They have to study Greek myths (*Iliade* and *Odyssée*), “The Beginnings of Judaism and Christianity”, and a Hindu myth (a non-compulsory lesson). The pupils in the *cinquième* level study “The Beginnings of Islam” (about four hours out of the forty-one hours dedicated to history lessons), “the function of the church during the Middle Ages” (about two hours) and “the religious crisis in the modern times” (about two hours). The pupils in the *quatrième* level study “Revolution, the Empire and religion” (about one hour) and the religious evolution during the nineteenth century (about one hour). There is nothing in the *troisième* level. In the *seconde* level, two hours are dedicated to the study of medieval Europe, one hour to the study of Constantinople as a place of contact between different religions and cultures, one hour to the study of a reformer. In the *terminale* level (for students who choose studies in literary and in economic), five hours are dedicated to “Religion and Society in the United States since 1880”.

Two remarks (to add to the one concerning the quantity): 1) nowadays French pupils hear more about religions in ancient times (Egyptian, Greek, Roman religions or the beginnings of Christianity) than religions in the present time (a little about Christianity in present-day, nearly nothing about contemporary Islam and Judaism). 2) There is neither regularity nor equality between the different levels, especially in the *college* where religious issues are more present in the first levels (*sixième* and *cinquième*) than in the last two levels (*quatrième* and *troisième*). For the *lycée*, it depends on the specialization chosen by the pupils.

### *The Teachers*

Nowadays, no teacher questions the teaching about religious issues; most of them agree with its necessity. There is also a consensus about the three objecti-

ves, cognitive, patrimonial and civic. Those who are not particularly interested in this topic would do no more than what is recommended in the curricula and official pedagogical tools. Others who are particularly interested in the topic or conscious of the importance of such teaching would do more: speak a very long time, for example about Judaism, Christianity and Islam (more than the four hours dedicated to each topic in the curriculum); or participate to some projects. One recent example is an educative action proposed jointly by the *Région des Pays de la Loire* (administrative and political area of the French Republic) and the *Académie* of Nantes, “Know religion better in order to live better together”: work in little groups around a common topic (for example: create a virtual museum on sacred objects; bestiary in medieval times; compare *laïcité* in France and Tunisia, etc.), visits of religious monuments, public exhibition of the work done during the year.

At the same time, there is also some hesitation concerning the way of teaching. Indeed, some teachers fear to be accused of not respecting the secular principle or to see their legitimacy put in question by some pupils. For example, some History as well as French teachers have reported that their credibility to speak about Islam and the Qur’an is sometimes questioned on the grounds that they are not Muslim (Laithier & Van den Kerchove, to be published).

What do they do in classrooms? There is no specific deontology for teaching about religious issues. It is the same as for the other school subjects such as Literature and Mathematics. However, because of the scientific approach (it is a teaching *about* religious issues and not learning *from* religions) and because of the *droit de reserve* (cf. Goblet law, art. 17; any public servant must not make any propaganda during his/her service), teachers might be more cautious about their own attitudes, in particular when some pupils place themselves on the level of belief. They have to explain the differences (without speaking of opposition) and not engage themselves in debates related to beliefs (the History curriculum is very clear in this respect). This approach has consequences for the methodology as well as for the way of speaking about religions.

Teachers base their lessons on various documents – mainly texts and iconography in Literature and History, as well as maps and charts for the History teacher – and study them through the tools and methodologies specific to their disciplines. From time to time, they can use the personal knowledge of pupils but they have to be very cautious with it: they should not ask a Christian/Muslim pupil to explain to his classmates what Christianity/Islam is (it does not mean that they have to deny any Muslim/Christian/Jew or a member of any other religion/worldview the right to speak a little about his/her own belief/conviction). As Dominique Borne says, there are two reasons for this: (1) a believer does not always master knowledge related to his religion and (2) the objective of scholarly education is not to instil belief (Borne, 2007, p. 134). The goal of education about religious issues is neither to propose a religious education as such, nor to present some exegesis or interfere in the sphere of belief, but rather to educate about religious issues from a historical and cultural

standpoint. This implies a distinction between knowledge and belief, however, without placing them in opposition to each other. The main goal of the teachers is to build up and develop a critical and analytical attitude in their pupils, not by denying their belief, but rather through helping them to exercise rational thought, according to a competence mentioned in the "Socle des compétences": bring students to develop their "capacity for judgment and critical thinking". Therefore, they have to be respectful and should not offend. This does not mean that the teachers may only be interested in factual events. On the contrary, they have to explain the content. However, we have to recognise that this goal is difficult to attain.

### *The Pupils*

The study conducted in 2006-2008 within the REDCo project gives precious information about what teenagers (fifteen-sixteen year old) think about religious issues at school. For this study in France, 851 questionnaires were filled in representing 18 schools throughout the country (for the methodology used, and for more comments regarding the sample, see Béraud et al., 2009, pp. 132-135) and 50 percent of the questioned teenagers declared to be a member of a religious community. Most French students (82 percent) feel that a course dealing specifically with religion must be optional. A majority (59 percent) does not agree with the statement "Students should study Religious Education separately in groups according to which religion they belong to." Their priority is clear: they expect to "get an objective knowledge about different religions" (63 percent) and to "be able to talk and communicate about religious issues" (63 percent of the total, 70 percent of students with a religion and 57 percent of those without a religion). They also want to "learn the importance of religion for dealing with problems in society" (58 percent). On the other hand, they reject a teaching of religion that would have an impact on their personal beliefs.

More recently, in the teachers' interview about the way they teach religious issues three pupils' attitudes were identified: indifference of the majority; interest in some classrooms; opposition of a minority mostly related to Islam (in most cases, pupils contest the legitimacy of the teacher; however, there are also some cases where the parents do not want Islam to be taught because it is not their religion).

### **To conclude**

A religious education does exist, outside public schools, in religious associations and in private denominational schools. It is optional, confessional in character with the main aim to transmit a faith. At school, there exists teaching about religious issues, scientific in character, with a threefold aim (civic, patrimonial and cognitive). This teaching has been emphasized for several years. There is no link between these two forms of education: each one knows the existence of the other, however they know very little of each other (nothing about the content

of the respective discourses and about their spirit); the only persons who are in a situation to effect an interaction are the pupils who follow both. However, are they able to make an interaction without any help? Concerning religious issues at school, because of its organization which is justified on an epistemological level, this teaching is characterized by irregularity and inequality: more religious issues are taught in the first levels, few or nothing in the last levels; only a few *academies* offer a training course each year; some teachers are more trained in than others. With no specific subjects, teaching about religious issues is more or less visible according to political and social imperatives. According to Philippe Gaudin, its driving force was a civic justification. However, the current Minister of National Education, Vincent Peillon (since May 2012), wants to establish a new subject, the teaching of morals, with also a civic aim. What will its content be? What would its relation be with the teaching about religious issues? At the same time, teachers do not debate the legitimacy of this teaching and agree on its importance and on the approach chosen (knowledge-orientated which “has the advantage of maintaining the spirit of universal cohesion” (Gaudin, to be published). Finally, the question is not “do we have to teach about religion?” but “how can we do it?”: not in organizational terms (we have said there will be no debate about it for the coming years), but in terms of its relation with other subjects, in terms of reflection about its content, about the educational methods in order to reduce irregularity and inequality.

### Abstract

Since the laws of the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, religious education has not been part of the public school timetable. Religious education is only provided outside public schools, in religious communities or in private schools, and the State has no right to inspect RE. However, religion can be present at school through what is called teaching about religious issues, mainly in History and French school subjects. The choice to teach about religious issues through other school subjects should be understood from the history of France and especially from the important principle of *laïcité*. It has epistemological and pragmatic justifications. In French schools, religious issues have to be taught from a historical and cultural standpoint and there is no place in the school timetable for a new subject *per se*. However, the consequences of this choice are also irregularity and inequality of this teaching: pupils learn more about religious issues when they are in the first two levels of the *college* than in *lycée* and some teachers are better trained in this topic than other teachers.

### Noten

- 1 Gallicanism can be briefly defined as the old alliance between the French king and the French clergy with the aim of limiting the power of the Holy See.
- 2 Apart from some private schools with a specific pedagogy (Steiner schools for example),

- most of the private schools are denominational. The 1959 Debré law regulates the relationship between the private schools and the State and allows private schools to sign a *contrat d'association* with the State. The State pays the teachers, the private school has to respect the official instructions concerning education and the teachers should have the required qualifications. Actually, there are 9,085 private Catholic establishments (among which 8,980 have signed a contract), 24 Protestant schools (with only 4 under contract) and 110 Jewish schools (with 86 under contract), 11 Muslim (2 under contract). See Poucet, 2012, pp. 96-97; Poucet, 2011, p. 275; IISMM, 2010, pp. 37-38.
- 3 An *académie* is an administrative district of the National Education.
  - 4 We briefly present the French scholar system: 1- primary school, during five years (6-11 year old); 2- Secondary school, with "*collège*" during four years (11-15 year old) and "*lycée*" during three years (15-18 year old). Secondary schools start with *sixième*, *cinquième*, etc.)
  - 5 This collection was initiated by Albert Malet after the rewriting of the history program in 1902. Published by Hachette, this collection is edited by Jules Isaac since 1923. The whole collection has been regularly republished and the last new edition dated back to 1960.
  - 6 Website: <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid55297/-enseigner-les-faits-religieux-dans-une-ecole-laique-colloque-national.html>.
  - 7 Website: <http://www.iesr.ephe.sorbonne.fr/>.

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