Nordidactica
- Journal of Humanities and Social Science Education

2012:2

The role of movies in Norwegian textbooks.

A study of film as artefact in religious education

Jon Magne Vestøl

Department of Teacher Education and School Research, University of Oslo

Abstract: Drawing on perspectives on educational design, this article investigates the role of movies in Norwegian secondary school textbooks on religious education, including teachers' handbooks and textbook websites. All passages containing references to films or movies have been included in the analysis. The distribution of references indicates that a film is an optional artefact and that movies are drawn mainly from a Western cinematic tradition and are related to topics such as Christianity and ethics. When textbook assignments introduce movies as artefacts mediating the understanding of religious issues, information about the message and the artistic role of the film seems to be downplayed. This indicates a need for reflection on how artefacts such as films are introduced into educational activity.

THE ROLE OF MOVIES IN NORWEGIAN TEXTBOOKS. A STUDY OF FILM AS ARTEFACT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Jon Magne Vestøl

Introduction

Religious education includes a range of cultural artefacts such as texts, concepts, buildings, paintings, sculptures, music and rituals. From a sociocultural perspective artefacts mediate the pupils' understanding of religious ideas and phenomena (Vygotsky, 1978, Wertsch, 1985, Wertsch, 1991/1997, Wertsch, 1998) and serve as elements of the educational designs that are developed and processed by teachers and students (Hauge et al., 2007, Lund & Hauge, 2011). Even if design elements are drawn from different resources, textbooks still play an important role in the planning and realisation of religious education. This article investigates how films or movies are presented in Norwegian religious education textbooks. In the research literature attention has been paid to the relationship between film and religion and to how film is used and may be used in religious education. The role of films or movies in textbooks seems, however, not to have been addressed in previous studies.

While artefacts such as religious texts and images are both central in the Norwegian curricula of religious education, there is less emphasis on films. Of the nine curricula published between 1974 and 2008, only four curricula for lower secondary school (1974, 2002, 2005, 2008) mention 'film' as an educational tool. In the earlier of these curricula, film is described as a medium that engages the pupils, and as a medium frequently inspired by Biblical texts, while in the 2008 curriculum the focus shifts towards film as a digital source of information and as a tool for creative expression (RE curriculum, 2008).

Throughout these curricula, film seems to be given the status of an optional, rather than a basic artefact, and the purpose of the study presented in this article is, accordingly, to investigate how textbooks deal with such an optional artefact: *How is film presented as an element of educational design in Norwegian religious education textbooks?* While *educational design* is a concept that will be dealt with below, some comments on the concept of *film* should be given here. Film may include a range of genres and modes of expression, both documentary and narrative, and be an expression of fine art ('cinema') or popular entertainment ('movies') (Dick, 2005). In this article, the terms 'film' and 'movie' will both be understood as single documentary or narrative productions for cinema, or, in some instances, for television performance. Although the material studied also includes a range of shorter video clips or references to such, only full-length productions or parts of such productions are included in this study.

Former research on the presentation of films in textbooks seems, as already stated, to be sparse, if not non-existent. A former study by Vestøl (2011) dealt with the role of information and communication technology (ICT) as an artefact and design element in textbooks. Vestøl's study shows that although ICT has a central position in the syllabuses for secondary schools, the references to this artefact in the textbooks vary considerably. His study shows how textbooks try to strengthen the capabilities and reduce the constraints of the artefact in different ways by guiding and restricting the pupils' use of the artefact.

Despite the lack of research on the role of movies in textbooks, considerable interest has been paid to the relationship between religion and film (Baugh, 1997, Deacy, 2005, Deacy & Ortiz, 2008, Hallbäck & Hvithamar, 2008, Humphries-Brooks, 2006, Johnston, 2007, Leer-Salvesen, 2005, Lyden, 2009, Marsh, 2004, Marsh & Ortiz, 1997, May, 1997, Mitchell & Plate, 2007, Tatum, 2004), and even to the use of film in religious education (Goldburg, 2004, Legg, 1996, Rindge, 2010).

The literature presents a range of approaches to the issue of religion and film, including feminist, psychoanalytical, cultural, sociological and theological perspectives, as well as perspectives on themes and genres (Humphries-Brooks, 2006, Lyden, 2009, May, 1997). Emphasis may also be placed on how particular religions are presented in films (Lyden, 2009, May, 1997, Mitchell & Plate, 2007), and treatises on the educational use of films have paid attention to how the relationship between film and religious topics is handled. Rindge (2010) underlines the distinction between teaching 'the Bible *and* Film, rather than the Bible *through* Film' (ibid, p. 145).

Similar concerns are emphasised by Legg (1996), who points to the double danger of doing damage to the film as an art form and doing damage to the understanding of the religion to which the film is related (ibid, p. 403). The artistic language of a movie may be subsumed to the language and framework of a religious tradition, or the language and framework of a religion may be subsumed to the language and expression of the film. Films may also be subject to a conceptual analysis that overrides the affective, experiential character of the medium. Finally, according to Legg, films may be used as conclusions or arguments rather than allowing the films to raise questions and explore responses.

Both Rindge and Legg argue that the film should be allowed to 'speak for itself', before it is brought into 'conversation' with a religious tradition or topic (Legg, 1996, p. 405). Although these authors argue within a normative, pedagogical framework, they raise questions that also may be of importance for a descriptive study of the use of film. From an *educational design* perspective, the concerns raised by Rindge and Legg regard the role of the film as an artefact in an educational activity and its role in the processing of religious issues as educational objects (Lund & Hauge, 2011).

This notion of educational *design* introduced by Lund and Hauge is derived from a sociocultural, activity oriented tradition (Lund & Hauge, 2011). Lund and Hauge suggest that concepts from activity theory can facilitate critical analysis, even when the full socio-historical context of the activity is not included. Their notion of design focuses on 'social practices in which learners, teachers and resources (social and material) are configured and re-configured in activities that make knowledge domains and knowledge advancement visible, and that continuously create opportunities for reflective participation in such activities'(ibid, p. 263).

While activity theory focuses on several aspects of activity such as *object*, *artefacts*, *rules*, *community*, and *division of labour* (Engeström, 1987, Daniels, 2001), it is the first two aspects that constitute the main focus of the perspective developed by Lund and Hauge, and of the present article. The *object* may be defined as the central focus and driving force of an activity. It has a material existence and defines the direction of the activity. When textbooks introduce religions and religious issues, the

pupils' understanding of these may be regarded as objects of educational activity. The
development of such educational objects is mediated through cultural *artefacts*.
Textbooks make use of a range of such artefacts from abstract concepts to visual art.
Films or movies are introduced by textbooks through the main text and illustrations
and through assignments for work, and may be understood as artefacts that are
supposed to mediate the understanding of important parts of a religious belief system
or religious practice.

While a full understanding of film as an artefact within an educational design can
only be achieved in an actual teaching and learning context, it is a premise of this
article that design elements in textbooks and other sources may be critically analysed
even *before* they are put into practice. The purpose of such an analysis would be to
identify the 'affordances' and 'constraints' of such elements as possible artefacts (or
objects) in an activity (Wertsch, 1998). Drawing on a distinction made by Kaptelinin
and Nardi (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2006), one could say that the present study
investigates a preliminary phase of the *formulation* of the object and artefact, while
the full formulation and *instantiation* of the object and artefact belongs to the
classroom activity.

Method

Exploratory by nature this study employs a qualitative approach, combining
inductive and hermeneutical perspectives (Afdal, 2010, Ziebertz, 2004). The inductive
part of the study is a bottom-up coding of the empirical material. All Norwegian
textbooks and teachers' handbooks in use in secondary education were examined, as
well as the websites related to the textbooks.

Lower secondary school material includes the two textbook series for grades 8–10
Horisonter 8–10 (Holth & Deschington, 2006, Holth & Kallevik, 2008b, Holth et al.,
2007) and *Under samme himmel 1–3* (Wiik & Waale, 2006a, Wiik & Waale, 2006c,
Wiik & Waale, 2007a) and the related teachers' handbooks (Holth & Kallevik, 2007,
Holth & Kallevik, 2008a, Holth et al., 2006, Wiik & Waale, 2006b, Wiik & Waale,
2006d, Wiik & Waale, 2007b) and websites (CappelenDamm, 2012b, Gyldendal-
Undervisning, 2012a).

Upper secondary school material includes the three single-volume textbooks
Eksistens (Aronsen et al., 2008), *I samme verden* (Kvamme et al., 2008) and *Tro og
tanke* (Heiene et al., 2008) and the related websites (Aschehoug, 2012,
CappelenDamm, 2012a, Gyldendal-Undervisning, 2012b).

All passages in the material containing references to documentary and fictional
films were text scanned and coded, with references for a totality of 115 film titles
having been identified. References to shorter documentary video clips were omitted
from the analysis.

As the vast majority of identified film references contained only short descriptions
regarding content and brief suggestions of a curriculum topic to which the movie
might be related, the main focus of the study was directed towards the assignments

where more explicit instructions were given for the educational use of the film. Through the description and analysis of these assignments and the ten movies they refer to, a more in-depth understanding is provided concerning how textbooks formulate movies as educational artefacts. In this analysis, a hermeneutical approach has been applied, involving critical perspectives derived from the literature, in an investigation of the relationship between the movies and the related topics highlighted by the textbooks and by competence aims in the RE curricula (RE curriculum, 2006, RE curriculum, 2008).

Results

Overview: The distribution of film references

On an overall level, the analysis show how the number of film references varies in the material, how movie references tend to be related to topics such as Christianity and ethics and how the vast majority of movies that are referred to are produced in Europe and North America.

A total of 159 references were found in the material, referring to 115 different movies. While references to as many as 79 movies were found in the teachers' handbooks to *Horisonter 8–10* (Holth & Kallevik, 2007, Holth & Kallevik, 2008a, Holth et al., 2006), and references to 38 movies were found on the website of *I samme verden* (CappelenDamm, 2012a), the textbooks contain only 29 references to a total of 24 movies.

Most movies are referred to only once in the material, and only 23 of the movies are referred to in two or more textbooks, handbooks or websites. Most frequently referred to are well-known movies such as *Sophie's World* (1999) by Erik Gustavson, *The Matrix* (1999) by Andy and Larry Wachowski, *The Kautokeino Rebellion* (2008) by Nils Gaup, *The Lord of the Rings* (2001-2003) by Peter Jackson, and *The Gospel According to Matthew by* Pier Paolo Pasolini. These movies address curriculum topics such as philosophy, Buddhism, the Sami religion and Christianity.

The distribution of the film references that are referred to above indicates that movies tend to be given the role of an optional rather than a basic educational design element. Compared with the approximately 400 reproductions of paintings and sculptures included in the textbooks, a mere 29 film references seem relatively modest.

Most of the film references in the material are related to one or more specific curriculum topics. In the material, Christianity and ethics are the dominant topics, with 34 and 30 per cent of the references, and secular Humanism has approximately 9 per cent of references, while only a few references are found relating to topics such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, the Sami religion, new religions, the criticism of religion and philosophy. In the textbooks, references to Christianity are even more dominant (61 per cent) and references to other topics occur only randomly.

An equally uneven distribution is found when films are grouped according to their geographical origin. Approximately 90 per cent of the movies referred to are produced in Europe and Northern America, while only a small group of films are produced in Asian and Latin-American countries such as Korea, India, Bhutan, Palestine and Brazil. Movies with an African origin are not found at all. Based on these numbers, we get the general impression that film is formulated as an artefact related to Western culture, Western religion and Western morality. The material does not indicate any reasons for this uneven distribution of references. It may, however, be an interesting question as to whether there is a possible inconsistency between this distribution and the way in which the curriculum emphasises equality in the presentation of the different religions and philosophies of life.

We turn now to the more detailed investigation of the limited number of assignments that provide instructions on how specific movies may be used to elaborate on curriculum topics. The ten movies addressed in these assignments are related to such curriculum topics as Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, the Sami religion, and the criticism of religion. It should be noted that these assignments only focus on the substantial content of the movies and do not address aspects of film technique, film genre or the overall purpose and message of the movie.

Three movies related to the Jesus-story: *Jesus of Nazareth*, *The Passion of the Christ*, and *The Last Temptation of Christ*

Central to the textbooks' presentation of Christianity is the story of Jesus Christ, and three movies related to this story are addressed in assignments in the material: *The Passion of the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth* and *The Last Temptation of Christ*.

Although the movie *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977) by Franco Zeffirelli is also referred to briefly in *Horisonter 8* and *Under samme himmel 3,* the main references to this movie are found in the handbook of *Horisonter 9* (Holth & Kallevik, 2007). Here the Zeffirelli film is recommended to illustrate events from the life of Jesus described in the textbook, and the film is also included in an assignment where pupils are told to compare a sequence from the Zeffirelli film with a related sequence from *The Passion of the Christ* by Mel Gibson (released 2004). The film sequences suggested are the passages from both movies where Jesus is put on trial by the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court.

The use of the films by Zeffirelli and Gibson is related to a textbook chapter of *Horisonter 9* titled 'Tracking Jesus' where four issues are emphasised: the life of Jesus of Nazareth, the relationship between the four gospels, the gospel of Luke, and the non-canonical gospels (Holth et al., 2007, p. 69). While the competence aims of the grade 8-10 curriculum has a narrower focus, stating that pupils should be enabled to 'discuss and elaborate on selected biblical texts from ... one Gospel' (RE curriculum, 2008), the handbook recommends scenes from the Zeffirelli movie as illustrations of the textbook presentation of the life of Jesus and of the Gospel of Luke.

In the assignment, pupils are asked to reflect on how the film scenes present Jesus, the members of the Supreme Court, the Romans and Judas. They are also asked to

identify additional differences, for instance the use of spoken language (English versus Aramaic and Latin).

As pupils work with the sequences of the two films, the differences will be quite obvious. They will see a Jesus who is treated in a decent way (Zeffirelli) versus a Jesus who is violently offended (Gibson). They will see a Sanhedrin engaged in a civilised debate (Zeffirelli) versus a Sanhedrin that is strongly manipulated (Gibson). They will see a Judas whose decent intentions are misused by the Sanhedrin leader and who is driven to suicide (Zeffirelli) versus a desperate Judas ridden by demons (Gibson). They will hear descriptions of the Roman overlords as brutal occupiers (Zeffirelli) versus total silence concerning the presence of the Empire (Gibson).

There is, however, no clear relationship between this assignment, the textbook and the competence aims of the curriculum. Although the curriculum focuses on knowledge of the Biblical texts, and the assignment includes references to the texts of Matthew, Mark and Luke in which the trial is described, there is no suggestion in the assignment that pupils should compare the screen versions of the trial with the text from Luke or the other gospels. Such a comparison might reveal to the pupils how the central accusation of Luke (on Jesus' self-claimed identity as the Messiah and the Son of God) is included in both films, and how additional material has been included to elaborate the scene. For instance it might become clear that both films have the trial taking place at night (as in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and John), while Luke explicitly says that it took place the following day. It also might become clear that Zeffirelli stays close to the gospel of Luke in omitting any physical violence during the trial scene, while Gibson elaborates on the violence described in the other three gospels and in additional material.

While the assignment work may give pupils an impression of two distinctly different filmic presentations of the trial, the teachers' handbook does not provide information to clarify how the differences relate to the overall perspectives of the two movies. Inspired by the Catholic Vatican Council II statement against racism and anti-Semitism, *Nostra Aetate* (Tatum, 2004), the Zeffirelli film presents Jesus in a Jewish context, smoothing out some of the conflicts and tensions found in the New Testament sources (Baugh, 1997). Gibson's movie, on the other hand, is inspired by the book published in 1833 by Klemens Maria Bruntano containing the mystical visions of the Augustinian nun Anne Catherine Emmerich. The visions describe in detail the violence that Christ suffered during his last days (Crossan, 2004, Gudmundsdottir, 2008, Tatum, 2004, Webb, 2004).

Knowledge of these sources of inspiration would also help teachers and pupils to understand why the movies differ in their portrayal of the Jewish authorities (and the crowd of Jews attending the trial in the Gibson movie). While the court members in Zeffirelli's version of the trial are engaged in a real debate and treat Jesus in a civilised way, the court in Gibson's version is manipulated by a leader who uses brutal force and who is cheered on by a demonised crowd. According to Gudmundsdottir (2008) and others (Corley & Webb, 2004) the anti-Semitic traits of the Gibson film stem from the visions of Emmerich, although Gibson does not seem to have gone as far as Emmerich did in her visions (Gudmundsdottir, 2008).

As the role of the gospels and the other sources mentioned above are downplayed or omitted in the handbook assignment, the premises for the pupils' understanding of the selected movie sequences are restricted. Teachers and pupils are of course free to seek additional background information for themselves, but the teachers' handbook does little to strengthen the awareness of the important issues of textual criticism and ideological debate that influence the two strikingly different versions of the trial of Jesus.

While the two movies treated above are presented for pupils in a lower secondary textbook as elaborations of a traditional Christ story, another movie is introduced in a textbook for upper secondary school to provide a more independent or challenging perspective. In an optional assignment in the textbook *Eksistens* (Aronsen et al., 2008), the pupils are asked to watch the movie *The Last Temptation of Christ* by Martin Scorsese (released 1988) and then to reflect on the following questions: why does Jesus choose to be crucified according to this movie; what role does Paul play in the film; and why was this film met with strong resistance from several Christian movements in both the USA and Norway when it was released?

Although the assignment is placed in the chapter on Christianity, after sections on the Jesus of History, Paul, the Christ of the Church, and the Bible, the questions raised in the assignment are not directly related to issues in the main text, nor are they related to competence aims in the curriculum. The assignment does not give any references to other sources of information that might help the pupils to contextualise their interpretation of the film and show how critics have been divided in their interpretation of the movie, and how the reactions among audiences have also been diverse (Riley, 2003, Stone, 2009, Tatum, 2004).

Expressing the personal elaborations on the Jesus-figure by the novelist Kazantzakis and the director Scorsese, the movie has a complex, multi-layered structure. New Testament figures such as Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Judas and Paul are given roles that challenge traditional interpretations of the Jesus-story. Some critics argue that the movie transforms Jesus into a 'freethinking, pluralistic man' of 1980s liberal America (Riley, 2003, p. 57), or a construct representing postmodern America (Humphries-Brooks, 2006), while others read the Jesus-figure as a complex mixture of gospel-material, Orthodox church tradition and a Henri Bergson-inspired pantheism (Riley, 2003, Tatum, 2004). Critics also differ in their interpretation of the discussion between Jesus and Paul concerning the historicity of Christ's resurrection. While some emphasise that this takes place in the dream-sequence of the movie (Humphries-Brooks, 2006, Tatum, 2004), others argue that this is part of the movie's attempt to replace Christianity with a humanistic myth of progress (Riley, 2003).

Adding to the complexity of this movie is also the fact that the introductory screen texts for the movie state that the battle between flesh and spirit in the human soul is the central theme of the film, and emphasise that the description of this conflict in the film is not based on the gospels, but upon 'the fictional exploration of the eternal spiritual conflict'.

It may be argued that the pupils' work with this movie presupposes a more specific framework than the one implicit in the questions of the assignment. As triggers for

pure reflection and discussions, the questions may serve well. If, however, the intention is to develop some understanding of this movie as an artistic elaboration of more specific philosophical ideas, then additional information and guidelines may be necessary.

Although the assignments investigated above point out some specific aspects of the movies for the pupils to elaborate on, we see how movies are formulated as educational artefacts on somewhat unclear premises. It is not exactly clear how the movies are supposed to deepen the understanding of the Jesus-story and New Testament texts that are the primary educational object of the activity, according to the curriculum, and it is not clear to what degree the work is supposed to develop an understanding of the movies as distinct artistic works.

Two movies related to the Bible as grand narrative and the story of Noah: *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Day After Tomorrow*

While the assignments investigated above relate to New Testament figures such as Jesus and Paul, other assignments relate to the Bible as a grand narrative and to Biblical doomsday narratives such as the story of Noah and the Apocalypse.

In the most extensive treatise of a movie found in the material, the textbook *Horisonter 8* (Holth & Deschington, 2006) gives an in-depth presentation of the famous fantasy novel *The Lord of the Rings* (LOTR) by John R. R. Tolkien, and the movies based on the novel, directed by Peter Jackson and released from 2001–2003. Pupils familiar with at least one of the volumes of the novel or one of the movies based on the novel are offered the option to work on several assignments related to this epic. Through the presentation of the epic and the related assignments, the textbook emphasises distinct similarities between the LOTR and 'the grand narrative of the Bible' (ibid, p. 135). In the textbook this grand narrative is presented as a framework for dealing with the relationship between the Old Testament and New Testament: 'According to Christianity, the Bible is a grand story about God and men' (ibid, p. 131). In this way, the textbook indirectly links the LOTR movies to a competence aim in the curriculum that states that pupils should be able to 'explain the relationship between the Old and New Testaments' (RE curriculum, 2008). The textbook describes the grand story as a drama in four acts: the creation and prehistory, God and the people of Israel, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the Christian church and the hope of a new creation.

Emphasising the Christian faith of the author of the narrative, the textbook highlights six aspects of Tolkien's epic universe: 1) The origin of evil and the struggle to overcome evil. 2) The weakness and growing strength of the chosen. 3) Frodo, the suffering servant who fulfils his mission. 4) The wizard Gandalf who throws himself in the abyss to save his friends and returns mightier than before. 5) Aragorn, the king in disguise who regains power. 6) Gollum, the creature possessed by the evil of the Ring.

Five topics are presented for the pupils to work on. They may describe a scene from the book or movie and explain its connection with the struggle between good and

evil. They may describe how the characters are 'put to the test'. They may choose their favourite hero and describe his or her heroic character. They may give examples of the right and wrong use of power in the narrative. And, they may finally reread the textbook presentation of the grand biblical story and look for more similarities between this story and the LOTR.

The list of questions in the assignment suggests a comparative work on the two narratives. Pupils are given a presentation of the biblical story and it is required that they also know a substantial part of the LOTR story. The narrative elements and characters pointed out in the assignments may thus be understood within a framework of the greater LOTR narrative. It is thus possible that the film (or novel) may play a major and independent role in the work of some of the pupils, as it is also possible that the movies and novel may be more familiar to some of the pupils than the biblical counterpart. Depending on their knowledge of the biblical tradition, pupils may depend heavily on the presentation of the biblical story given in the textbook, thus restricting the basis for comparison.

Similarities between the biblical story and the LOTR narrative seem to be the only focus of the assignment. There are no suggestions of possible differences between the biblical story and the LOTR narrative, for instance the occurrence of several Christ-like figures in the novel and movie, or the differences between the crucifixion scene of the biblical narrative and the battle between Frodo and Gollum at Mount Doom. This focus on similarities may reduce the independence of the movie or novel, as its main role in the textbook is to confirm aspects of the biblical narrative.

While the LOTR relates to the Bible as a whole, the movie *The Day after Tomorrow* (directed by Roland Emmerich and released in 2004) relates to shorter biblical narratives such as the story of Noah and the Apocalypse. The movie is referred to twice in the textbook *Eksistens* (Aronsen et al., 2008). On pages 308–309, in a chapter on ethical issues, a screen shot from the film is presented with a short text commenting on how doomsday fears are expressed in contemporary movies, and on page 145, the textbook presents an assignment asking pupils to compare the movie with the Biblical story of Noah, focusing on important similarities and differences. Although the textbook gives no explicit reference to the curriculum, competence aims concerning the interpretation of 'important texts from the Bible' and the elaboration on 'different dimensions of religions' such as 'theory, myths and narratives' seems highly relevant (RE curriculum, 2006).

As this is a fairly open-ended assignment, pupils are given the opportunity to investigate the movie and the text from different angles. The global catastrophes described in the Biblical narrative and the film offer obvious similarities such as the global character of the catastrophe and the element of self-inflicted punishment, and even show the striking difference between heroes receiving messages from God versus a hero discovering the truth through climate research. On the other hand, the open character of the assignment implies a lack of information concerning the myth as a genre both in religious texts and in films. Mythic associations are widespread in contemporary movies (Dick, 2005), and the pupils' work with this film might lose substantial depth because of the lack of such information.

In the assignments described above, the two movies are formulated as artefacts in an explicit comparison with Biblical narratives. The assignments demonstrate how specific instructions may clarify, but also constrain the use of the artefact and how more general and open instructions may run the risk of generating a superficial or diffuse understanding of both film and narrative and the relationship between them.

Two movies related to Hinduism and Islam: *Ghandi* and *The Message*

Historical aspects of Hinduism and Islam are covered in two films referred to in the teachers' handbooks for *Horisonter 8* and *Horisonter 9*. The movie *Gandhi* (released 1982) by Richard Attenborough is introduced by the teachers' handbook for *Horisonter 9* (Holth & Kallevik, 2007). As the movie is not mentioned in the textbook, the teacher has the option to choose whether it should be included in the activity or not. Following the curriculum which states that pupils should be able to present an overview of the diversity of Hinduism, historic events and Hinduism's position today (RE curriculum, 2008), the textbook *Horisonter 9* lists 'important events in the history of Hinduism' as one of four main headings in the chapter on Hinduism (Holth et al., 2007, p. 7). Mahatma Gandhi is presented as a major contributor to the history of India, with emphasis on his non-violent struggle for independence and his work to overcome the caste system.

 In the teachers' handbook, the movie *Gandhi* is presented as a 'story about activism, politics, religious tolerance and freedom', presenting a man who 'struggled for a non-violent and peaceful environment and liberated a whole nation' (Holth & Kallevik, 2007, pp. 40-41). Due to the length of the film, the handbook suggests seven short sequences from the film for use in the classroom: three sequences for assignment work and the rest as starting points for classroom conversation. The selected sequences present Gandhi as a speaker, as a prisoner and as a political organiser, including sequences showing the famous Salt March and the brutal massacre in Amritsar. A special hand-out sheet offers pupils the opportunity to work with the film. Pupils are asked to describe what happens in the three scenes that are presented and then to reflect on what these scenes say about Gandhi as a person and as a leader, and what they say about Hinduism as a religion.

As the pupils are not supposed to watch the whole movie, their impressions will depend on the scenes selected. The selected scenes will give impressions of a political leader promoting the principle of non-violence. In this respect the film emphasises a central principle of Hinduism and the main impression of Gandhi's life given by the textbook. There are, however aspects of the film that will not easily be grasped through the selected scenes. The film is presented by the director as a search for Gandhi's 'heart' (00:01:08), and Gandhi is presented as a man who is raised above the particularity of religious divisions: 'I am a Muslim and a Hindu and a Christian and a Jew. And so are all of you.' (2:32:14). Attenborough's portrait of Gandhi has been criticised for being iconic and unhistorical, mirroring the Christian transformation of Jesus to Christ (Patwardhan, 1983). Such reflections on the relationship between film and history and film and religion are not encouraged by the introduction and

assignment presented in the teachers' handbook. The fact that the movie is also suggested by the handbook for work with socio-political and moral issues concerning human rights, peace and democracy may even strengthen such a need for source criticism.

Scenes from another historical movie, *The Message* (released 1976) by Mustapha Akkad, are suggested by the teachers' handbook for *Horisonter 8* (Holth et al., 2006) as illustrations of some of the major events in the early history of Islam. Produced as a full-length movie, *The Message* tells the story of Muhammad and the origins of Islam and is described in the handbook as a fascinating visualisation of 'how Muhammad and his closest circle of adherents developed from a group of expelled critics of idolatry into leaders of a vast empire based in the new religion, Islam' (ibid, pp. 127–128). The handbook particularly emphasises the scene showing the expulsion from Mecca and subsequent move to Medina.

The handbook suggests that sequences from the movie may be helpful for pupils as they work with assignments concerning the early history of Islam, and the handbook also offers a special hand-out sheet with additional assignments. In these assignments, three sequences from the film are emphasised: Muhammad's first revelation, the first declaration and resistance in Mecca and the emigration from Mecca. The assignments instruct the pupils to describe what happens in each sequence, to reflect on the omission of the person Muhammad from the pictures, and to reflect on Muhammad's message as a challenge for the authorities of Mecca.

While the three selected sequences are related to crucial events in the history of Islam and the life of its founder, they are not closely related to the overall perspective of the film. In the opening scenes of the movie we meet messengers who are travelling to Constantinople, Alexandria and Persia to inform the political and religious rulers about the message of the last prophet, and in the closing scenes, we see how the message has spread widely after the death of Muhammad. The purpose of the film is thus not only to inform viewers of the historical events that led to the rise of Islam, but to promote the words of the prophet as a message of global relevance.

Another important aspect of the film is emphasised in a screen text ending the introduction to the movie. Here the producer refers to Islamic authorities who support the film, and also emphasises that Muhammad is not shown in any picture during the screening (00:05:03–00:05:14). While this indicates some of the controversies accompanying the production and release of the film, it also brings to our attention one of the most extraordinary technical aspects of the movie: how the camera operates as Muhammad's eyes in several scenes. Both these aspects of the film are emphasised in literature on Islamic movies (Hussain, 2009). One of the scenes where the camera operates as the eye of the prophet is even included in the sequences selected by the handbook. Although the assignment instructs pupils to reflect on the fact that Muhammad is not shown in the scene, there is no reference to the controversies or the technical aspects described above.

In these assignments movies are introduced as artefacts that serve as illustrations of major historical events and aspects of the message of the religion in focus. As such, the role of the artefact may be restricted to a visualisation of certain aspects of the

95

historical dimension of the religion. As pointed out above, historical movies have, however, aspects of interpretation as well as possible ideological overtones that may be of importance for the understanding of the film and which are not addressed in the instructions and information provided by the textbooks.

Two movies related to the Sami religion: *The Pathfinder* and *The Kautokeino Rebellion*

Two films by the Sami director Nils Gaup are suggested as sources for information about the Sami religion: the Oscar-nominated movie *The Pathfinder* (released 1987), based on an old Sami legend, and the movie *The Kautokeino Rebellion* (released 2008), based on historic events in Northern Norway in 1852. Telling the story of a young hero who saves the Sami people from violent enemies and becomes their new 'noaide' or shaman, *The Pathfinder* presents several scenes that demonstrate the shamanistic character of the old Sami religion, including the intimate relationship between humans and nature. *The Kautokeino Rebellion* portrays members of a Sami population in the 1850s, who, inspired by the Swedish Lutheran priest, Læstadius, try to liberate themselves from the curse of alcohol abuse forced on them by Norwegian traders. The movie shows how the conflict escalates until some Sami families rebel under the threat of imprisonment and total loss of property. Compared with historical information on the topic, it becomes clear that *The Kautokeino Rebellion* downplays certain characteristics of the revivalist religious movement that triggered the rebellion. The historic religious movement had marked ecstatic traits, and the members, who considered themselves godlike and sinless, acted deliberately and provocatively to convert their 'sinful' environment (Zorgdrager, 1997).

In the textbook *I samme verden* (Kvamme et al., 2008), an assignment is presented where pupils are asked to watch one or both of the Gaup movies and use them as a basis for a discussion on the religion and philosophy of life in Sami societies. The last movie is also briefly referred to on the textbook's website (CappelenDamm, 2012a). Here, an interdisciplinary study is suggested, combining religious education and history education.

The textbook website for *Tro og tanke* (Aschehoug, 2012) suggests that *The Kautokeino Rebellion* can be used as a trigger for an optional presentation, given by pupils, of the historical conflict and its religious inspiration. There is a link to two webpages presenting information by researchers on the topic, including discussions on the range of causes that have been suggested for the rebellion, and on the possible framing of the religious movement within a socio-political situation characterised by Norwegian oppression of the Sami population.

Both textbooks relate the movie(s) to the competence aim in the curriculum for upper secondary, which states that pupils shall be able to 'present main characteristics of the diversity of religions and views on life in local communities and the greater society in Norway, including religion and views on life in Sami communities' (RE curriculum, 2006). The competence aim seems to focus on contemporary religion, and it is not made clear how the historical focus of the assignments relates to this. While

the first assignment refers to the two movies as sources of information in themselves, the latter assignment uses the last movie as a springboard for introducing written information by academic experts. In this way, none of the assignments suggest that the movie(s) be critically examined in the light of historical information. In light of the historical information available about the Kautokeino rebellion, it becomes visible how the film producer has adjusted the presentation of the religion to serve the artistic purpose of the movie. A critical approach to this movie might, therefore, be a way of relating to the contemporary focus on religion found in the syllabus. Pupils might reflect on how a Sami film director promotes and downplays religious elements to negotiate Sami identity in a movie produced for a non-Sami public.

As *The Pathfinder* retells an old legend and *The Kautokeino Rebellion* retells a sequence of historical events, their functions as artefacts will differ, and so will their capabilities and constraints. When the first assignment suggests one or both films as sources for discussion, it leaves it totally up to the pupils to decide on the premises for the interpretation of the movie(s). In the latter assignment pupils are given the opportunity to check out historical information, but without any explicit encouragement to investigate the relationship between film and history. In both cases the work might benefit from an investigation of how legendary and historical narratives are used to mediate Sami identity in the contemporary context.

A movie related to the ethical question of tolerance and to criticism of religion: *Monty Python's Life of Brian*

Monty Python's Life of Brian by Terry Jones (released 1979) is referred to briefly in the textbook *I samme verden* (Kvamme et al., 2008, p. 398) in relation to pluralism as an ethical and philosophical challenge. More extensive references to the movie are found in all three volumes of the teachers' handbook accompanying the textbook *Horisonter 8–10* (Holth & Kallevik, 2007, Holth & Kallevik, 2008a, Holth et al., 2006). As the handbooks regard this movie as a satiric parody of Hollywood based Jesus films, and not as a presentation of the Jesus story, the handbooks recommend the film for work with ethical issues such as tolerance (Holth et al., 2006) and the criticism of religion (Holth & Kallevik, 2008a). The accusation against the film that it is blasphemous, especially with regard to the final crucifixion-scene, is suggested as a case for reflection on the limitations of tolerance. In the handbook for grade 8 the film is suggested as a proper case for working on an assignment in the textbook (Holth & Deschington, 2006). In this assignment, pupils are presented with the fact that the Christian and Islamic religions are sometimes ridiculed in scenes shown on television and other media, and the pupils are asked to reflect on whether such scenes are within or outside their zone of tolerance (ibid, p. 45). This topic of tolerance may be directly related to a curriculum aim stating that pupils shall be enabled to 'show the ability to carry on a dialogue about religion and the most important questions in life, and show respect for all religions and philosophies of life'(RE curriculum, 2008).

Terry Jones' film is also referred to when the handbook for grade 10 comments on a textbook chapter in *Horisonter 10* dealing with 'Religion, science and criticism of

religion' (Holth & Kallevik, 2008a, Holth & Kallevik, 2008b). The issue in the last part of the textbook chapter is closely related to a curriculum aim for grade 8–10 concerning the presentation of 'examples of different criticisms that different denominational traditions have toward religion' (RE curriculum, 2008). The textbook suggests that the scene showing Brian being hailed as a prophet may be used to illustrate the criticism of religion as manipulative, and the provocative effect of the crucifixion scene is suggested as a topic for a discussion on blasphemy.

In this case, the handbooks give some information on the purpose of the film as a political satire and a parody of Hollywood-films. The reception by the audience is also emphasised, as is the possible offense the film may arouse among pupils and their parents. On the other hand there is little information given on the huge variations reported in the reactions by Christian viewers (Lyden, 2009). Despite the indications that this movie is given some attention as an opus in its own regard, the question remains as to whether pupils are given enough information concerning the premises for the reception of the movie.

Summary of the analysis

Through the analysis it has been identified how film is presented in textbooks both on a general level through distributions of film references, and on a detailed level through assignments related to specific movies and topics. On the *general level*, film references mostly occur as optional and not as basic aspects, and they are mostly linked to the Christian religion and to a Western moral tradition. On a *detailed level*, film is mostly formulated as an artefact with rather vague instructions for its use and few indications on how the ideological, artistic and socio-political aspects of film should be addressed. It also varies as to how the assignments address the relationship between the movies and the curriculum topics or aims that the movies are supposed to relate to.

Discussion

In the introduction, I referred to discussions concerning the role of film as subordinate to, or equal to the religion or the religious issue that is the focus of an educational activity (Goldburg, 2004, Legg, 1996, Rindge, 2010). The analysis of the assignments in this study shows that such concerns are relevant, regardless of whether movies are introduced as complete artistic entities or are presented through shorter, preselected sequences. Although the use of preselected sequences may seem to reduce the independent position of the film, the introduction of a movie in its full form does not guarantee such independence. In several of the assignments analysed, I have demonstrated the absence of an interpretive framework. The absence of such a framework may reduce the pupils' understanding of important genre aspects, such as the mythic aspects of *The Day after Tomorrow*. In similar ways, pupils' awareness of the historical basis of movies may be affected, as in the assignments on *Gandhi* and *The Kautokeino Rebellion*, or the pupils' understanding of the overall intentions of the

film may be affected, as in the assignments on the movies *Jesus of Nazareth*, *The Passion of the Christ* and *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Lack of knowledge concerning a film's technical aspects may also reduce the understanding of a movie, as in the assignment on *The Message*, where camera angles and movements are used by the director to compensate for the physical absence of Muhammad on the screen.

From the perspective of educational design referred to in the introduction (Lund & Hauge, 2011), the critical perspectives raised in the analysis concern the role and position of an artefact in the processing of an educational object. Sociocultural theory emphasises the 'affordances' and 'constraints' of artefacts, which implies that the mediation of an object is a risky and unpredictable process (Wertsch, 1998). When movies are introduced in the textbook assignments as artefacts, the question is, however, seldom raised as to how these artefacts should be qualified for educational use.

In the material analysed, the most extensive attempt in this respect is found in the assignment on the LOTR. In this assignment, there is a focus on central aspects of the narrative and on central actors, and in this way, a distinct direction is suggested for the development of the object. An interesting question is whether the movie and the biblical narrative are established here as objects on an equal footing or whether either the film or the biblical narrative will take a subordinate position. By introducing an artefact with such a strong position in contemporary culture as the LOTR, one might experience a situation where the movie takes the role of a competing object. While this may strengthen the engagement of the pupils, it may also distract their attention from the direction indicated by the curriculum aims. Alternatively, the focus on the similarities between the biblical narrative and the film and a lack of focus on the possible differences may contribute to a lack of distinction or a symbiosis between the movie and the biblical narrative, and thus blur the more distinct understanding of the Biblical narrative as a historical and religious entity that should be developed according to the curriculum.

In this respect, the assignment related to the movie *The Day after Tomorrow* is slightly different, as the movie and the biblical narrative of Noah seems to be launched as two independent entities. The educational object that is formulated is an understanding within a zone of interaction between the film and the narrative, which implies that the film and the narrative are given a function as artefacts of equal impact. The activity suggested by the assignment nevertheless suffers from a possible lack of an overarching framework. There is a risk that the object will dissolve into a list of fragmented points of similarities and differences. Information on the role of the mythic in genres of text and film might counter such fragmentation, but the assignment makes no effort to introduce such information. The text and film may therefore act as artefacts without power, or artefacts that lead the processing of the object in directions not intended by the assignment. In this case there may be a need for a further refinement of the assignment to counter possible constraints in the use of the artefact.

From a sociocultural perspective, constraints occur through historical developments where the artefacts and the context get out of step. In the assignment

referred to above, the constraints of the movie as artefact seem to emerge when it is
introduced in in a context where it does not belong historically. This means that the
constraints are not necessarily inherent characteristics of the movie as an artefact, but
that the constraints are aspects of the way the artefact interacts with the environments
into which it is introduced. In the assignments referred to above, there is a lack of
additional information or resources that may qualify the artefact in the educational
context. In this respect, one may ask whether a movie will need to be introduced as an
object in a preparatory phase of the activity, to be qualified *before* it is launched as an
artefact to mediate a religious issue. Depending on the knowledge of the pupils, there
might be a similar need for preparation of the biblical texts.

On a more general level, this study leaves us with the impression that film is
presented in the textbooks as an optional cultural artefact that may or may not be used
in religious education. This is an understanding that is also reflected in the somewhat
random status that film seems to have been given in the Norwegian curricula of
religious education during the last decades. There may be practical reasons why film
has developed such a status compared with, for instance, expressions of painted art.
To watch a complete movie is time consuming and requires technical facilities, while
reproductions of art are easily included in textbooks. Historically, paintings and
sculptures have also been more central artefacts than film in the mediation of religious
faith. On the other hand, curricula formulations have indicated that movies may have
the capability of being a central artefact within contemporary culture.

The study has identified that textbooks mainly refer to movies produced in the
Western hemisphere, and to films that are related to ethics and to Christianity. This
aspect of the role of film in textbooks hardly finds any support in the curricula. The
most recent curriculum for lower secondary schools places particular emphasis on the
need for equality in the presentation of the different religions and philosophies of life.
If such principles are to be realised, it may be necessary to consider broader access to
movies than the range of titles included in the textbooks and handbooks of today.

As referred to in the introduction, ICT, another contemporary artefact, also
struggles to find its place in the educational designs of the textbooks (Vestøl, 2011).
With regard to both ICT and film there seems to be a need for qualified knowledge in
order to reduce the constraints and strengthen the affordances of the artefact. In the
case of movies, it is a particular challenge that important background information is
not easily accessible and, therefore, to a certain extent, has to be made available to the
pupils by textbooks or by teachers drawing on expert sources.

More research will be needed to investigate the fuller implications of movies as
educational artefacts, especially regarding the instantiation of such artefacts in
classroom activity. It will be of particular interest to investigate how movies may be
qualified as artistic entities that are enabled, not only to illustrate religious issues, but
also to throw light on such issues from a more independent position.

References

Afdal, Geir 2010. *Researching Religious Education as Social Practice.* Münster: Waxmann.

Aronsen, Camilla Fines, Bomann-Larsen, Lene, Notaker, Henry 2008. *Eksistens. Religion, etikk, livssyn, filosofi [Existence. Religion, Ethics, Philosophy. Upper Secondary School].* Oslo: Gyldendal.

Aschehoug 2012. *Lokus. Aschehoug videregående. Tro og tanke. Religion og etikk. Vg3. SF. Web site.* Available: http://www.lokus.no [Accessed 27.8.2012].

Baugh, Lloyd 1997. *Imaging the Divine. Jesus and Christ-Figures in Film* Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Cappelendamm 2012a. *Nettstedet I samme verden. Web site* [Online]. Available: http://isammeverden.cappelendamm.no/ [Accessed 27.8.2012].

Cappelendamm 2012b. *Under samme himmel 1-3 på nett. Web site* [Online]. Available: http://undersammehimmel.cappelendamm.no/ [Accessed 26.8.2012].

Corley, Kathleen E., Webb, Robert L. (eds.) 2004. *Jesus and Mel Gibson's The Passion of the Christ. The Film, the Gospels and the Claims of History.* London: Continuum.

Crossan, John Dominic 2004. Hymns to a Savage God. In*: Corley, K. E. & Webb, R. L. (eds.) *Jesus and Mel Gibson's The Passion of the Christ. The Film, the Gospels and the Claims of History.* London: Continuum.

Daniels, Harry 2001: *Vygotsky and Pedagogy.* London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Deacy, Christopher 2005. *Faith in Film. Religious Themes in Contemporary Cinema.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Deacy, Christopher, Ortiz, Gaye Williams 2008. *Theology and Film. Challenging the Sacred/Secular Divide.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Dick, Bernhard F. 2005. *The Anatomy of Film.* Boston: Bedford/St. Martins.

Engeström, Yrjö 1987. *Learning by Expanding. An Activity-Theoretical Approach to Development Research.* Helsinki: Orienta Konsultit Oy.

Goldburg, Peta 2004. Towards a creative arts approach to the teaching of religious education with special reference to the use of film. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 26**,** 175-184.

Gudmundsdottir, Arnfridur 2008. More Pain, More Gain! On Mel Gibson's
Film, *The Passion of the Christ*. In*: Hallbäck, G. & Hvithamar, A. (eds.)
Recent Releases. The Bible in Contemporary Cinema.* Sheffield: Sheffield
Phoenix Press.

Gyldendal-Undervisning 2012a. *Horisonter. RLE for ungdomstrinnet. Web
Site.* Available: www.gyldendal.no/horisonter [Accessed 27.8.2012].

Gyldendal-Undervisning 2012b. *Nettsted Eksistens. Web Site*. Available:
www.gyldendal.no/eksistens [Accessed 27.8.2012].

Hallbäck, Geert, Hvithamar, Annika (eds.) 2008. *Recent Releases. The Bible in
Contemporary Cinema.* Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press.

Hauge, Trond Eiliv, Lund, Andreas, Vestøl, Jon Magne 2007. *Undervisning i
endring: IKT, aktivitet, design [Education in Change: ICT, Activity, Design].*
Oslo: Abstrakt.

Heiene, Gunnar, Myhre, Bjørn, Opsal, Jan, Skottene, Harald, Østnor, Arna
2008. *Tro og tanke. Religion og etikk for den videregående skolen [Faith and
Reason. Religion and Ethics. Upper Secondary School].* Oslo: Aschehoug.

Holth, Gunnar, Deschington, Hilde 2006. *Horisonter 8. KRL for
ungdomstrinnet [Horizons 8. Religious and Moral Education. Lower
Secondary].* Oslo: Gyldendal.

Holth, Gunnar, Kallevik, Kjell Arne 2007. *Horisonter 9. Ressursperm
[Horizons 9. Teachers' Handbook].* Oslo: Gyldendal.

Holth, Gunnar, Kallevik, Kjell Arne 2008a. *Horisonter 10. Ressursperm
[Horizons 10. Teachers' Handbook].* Oslo: Gyldendal.

Holth, Gunnar, Kallevik, Kjell Arne 2008b. *Horisonter 10. RLE for
ungdomstrinnet [Horizons 10. Religious and Moral Education. Lower
Secondary].* Oslo: Gyldendal.

Holth, Gunnar, Kallevik, Kjell Arne, Bugge, Bjørn Øyvinn 2006. *Horisonter 8.
Ressursperm [Horizons 8. Teachers' Handbook].* Oslo: Gyldendal.

Holth, Gunnar, Kallevik, Kjell Arne, Lippe, Marie Von Der 2007. *Horisonter
9. KRL for ungdomstrinnet [Horizons 9. Religious and Moral Education.
Lower Secondary].* Oslo: Gyldendal.

Humphries-Brooks, Stephenson 2006. *Cinematic Savior. Hollywood's Making
of the American Christ.* Westport: Praeger.

Hussain, Amir 2009. Islam. In*: Lyden, J. (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film.* London: Routledge.

Johnston, Robert K. (ed.) 2007. *Reframing Theology and Film. New Focus for an Emerging Discipline.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

Kaptelinin, Victor, Nardi, Bonnie A. 2006. *Acting with Technology. Activity Theory and Interaction Design.* Cambridge MA: The MIT Press.

Kvamme, Ole Andreas, Lindhardt, Eva Mila, Steineger, Agnethe 2008. *I samme verden. Religion og etikk [In a Common World. Religion and Ethics. Upper Secondary School].* Oslo: Cappelen Damm.

Leer-Salvesen, Kjartan 2005. *Fra glansbilde til antihelt. Jesus på film [From Picture Postcard to Antihero. Jesus in the Movies].* Oslo: Verbum.

Legg, Pamela P. Mitchell 1996. Contemporary Films and Religious Exploration: An Opportunity for Religious Education, Part I: Foundational Questions. *Religious Education,* 91**,** 397–406.

Lund, Andreas, Hauge, Trond Eiliv 2011. Designs for Teaching and Learning in Technology-Rich Learning Environments. *Nordic Journal of Digital Literacy,* 6**,** 258–272.

Lyden, John (ed.) 2009. *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film.* London: Routledge.

Marsh, Clive 2004. *Cinema & Sentiment. Film's Challenge to Theology.* Milton Keynes: Paternoster.

Marsh, Clive, Ortiz, Gaye (eds.) 1997. *Explorations in Theology and Film.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

May, John R. (ed.) 1997. *New Image of Religious Film.* Franklin: Sheed & Ward.

Mitchell, Jolyon, Plate, S. Brent (eds.) 2007. *The Religion and Film Reader.* New York: Routledge.

Patwardhan, A. 1983. 'Gandhi': Film as theology. *Economic and Political Weekly,* 18**,** 635-637.

RE curriculum 2006, *Religion and ethics- common core subject in programme for general studies. Upper Secondary.* Oslo: Ministry of Education and Research.

RE curriculum 2008, *Curriculum for Religion, philosophies of life and ethics. Primary and lower secondary.* Oslo: Ministry of Education and Research.

Riley, Robin 2003. *Film, Faith, and Cultural Conflict. The Case of Martin Scorcese's The Last Temptation of Christ.* Westport: Praeger.

Rindge, Matthew S. 2010. Teaching the Bible and Film: Pedagogical Promises, Pitfalls, and Proposals. *Teaching Theology and Religion,* 13**,** 140–155.

Stone, Bryan 2009. Modern Protestant Approaches to Film (1960 to the Present). In*:* Lyden, J. (ed.) *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film.* London: Routledge.

Tatum, W. Barnes 2004. *Jesus at the Movies.* Santa Rosa: Polebridge Press.

Vestøl, Jon Magne 2011. Digital Tools and Educational Designs in Norwegian Textbooks of Religious and Moral Education. *Nordic Journal of Digital Literacy,* 6**,** 75-88.

Vygotsky, L. S. 1978. *Mind in Society. The Development of Higher Psychological Processes. Ed. by Michael Cole et. al.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Webb, Roberet L. 2004. *The Passion* and the Influence of Emmerich's *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.* In*:* Corley, K. E. & Webb, R. L. (eds.) *Jesus and Mel Gibson's The Passion of the Christ. The Film, the gospels and the Claims of History.* London: Continuum.

Wertsch, James V. 1985. *Vygotsky and the Social Formation of Mind.* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Wertsch, James V. 1991/1997. *Voices of the Mind. A Sociocultural Approach to Mediated Action.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wertsch, James V. 1998. *Mind as Action.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wiik, Pål, Waale, Ragnhild Bakke 2006a. *Under samme himmel 1 [Together Under the Sky 1. Lower Secondary].* Oslo: Cappelen.

Wiik, Pål, Waale, Ragnhild Bakke 2006b. *Under samme himmel 1. Lærerens bok [Together Under the Sky 1. Teachers' Handbook].* Oslo: Cappelen.

Wiik, Pål, Waale, Ragnhild Bakke 2006c. *Under samme himmel 2 [Together Under the Sky 2. Lower Secondary].* Oslo: Cappelen.

Wiik, Pål, Waale, Ragnhild Bakke 2006d. *Under samme himmel 2. Lærerens bok [Together Under the Sky 2. Teachers' Handbook].* Oslo: Cappelen.

Wiik, Pål, Waale, Ragnhild Bakke 2007a. *Under samme himmel 3 [Together Under the Sky 3. Lower Secondary]*. Oslo: Cappelen.

Wiik, Pål, Waale, Ragnhild Bakke 2007b. *Under samme himmel 3. Lærerens bok [Together Under the Sky 3. Teachers' Handbook]*. Oslo: Cappelen.

Ziebertz, Hans Georg 2004. Religionspädagogik und Empirische Methodologie. In*: Schweitzer, F. & Schlag, T. (eds.) *Religionspädagogik im 21. Jahrhundert.* Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus.

Zorgdrager, Nellejet 1997. *De rettferdiges strid. Kautokeino 1852. Samisk motstand mot norsk kolonialisme. [The Struggle of the Justified. Kautokeino 1852]*. Nesbru: Norsk Folkemuseum og Vett & Viten.

Author

Jon Magne Vestøl is Associate Professor of Religious and Moral Education in the Department of Teacher Education and School Research, University of Oslo. Address: PO Box 1099, Blindern, 0317 Oslo, Norway. Email: j.m.vestol@ils.uio.no