

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN GREECE

Its Origin, Development and Future.

With special reference to Religious Education in England*

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PART TWO

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ENGLAND

CHAPTER III

RECENT TENDENCIES IN ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL THEORY

1. Peter's concept of Education.

In recent years a great deal of development has been made in the field of Philosophy as far as it is concerned with education. Thus, a new branch of Philosophy emerged which is called «Philosophy of Education». Some educationists who are engaged in this branch attempted to elucidate the concept of the word «education», to define the criteria which are involved in it as well as to set up the processes which are counted as educational. Philosophers of education who undertook this task, based on analytical philosophy, have produced a considerable number of essays and monographs which contribute to a great extent to the current discussion about the nature of education and educational theory.

The most influential attempt in defining and elaborating the concept of education is that which has been expressed firstly by Professor R.S. Peters alone and recently with the collaboration of Professor P. Hirst.⁶³

Professor Peters conceives of education as a concept which has an intrinsic rather than an instrumental value. Thus, both etymologies of the word education are regarded inadequate for explaining the meaning of the word by him.⁶⁴ Furthermore he argues that education is not

* Συνέχεια εκ τῆς σελ. 516 τοῦ προηγούμενου τεύχους.

63. P. H. Hirst and R. S. Peters (1970).

64. That is: 'educere'='to lead out' and 'educare'='to bring up' or 'rear'. See R. S. Peters (1966), p. 36. See also *idem* (1973), p. 127.

an activity, because if it were so, then, by education we would mean that we want to achieve something which is external to it. Rather education implies criteria which processes must satisfy. As he points out: «Education implies that something worthwhile is being or has been intentionally transmitted in a morally acceptable manner». ⁶⁵ Thus, he continues, what is needed is to focus on what is meant by worthwhile. ⁶⁶

The educationally worthwhile, according to Peters, is connected specifically with the possession of knowledge and understanding. He points out that:

We would not call a man who was merely well-informed an educated man. He must also have some understanding of the 'reason why' of things. ⁶⁷

Moreover, the last point implies that the educated man should care not only about understanding things or thoughts in general but also how to grasp the inner function of each form of knowledge. Thus, the educated man must be on the inside of all forms of knowledge by recognizing that each of them operates with its own norms and has its own validity and standards of appraisal. ⁶⁸ Knowledge and understanding, therefore, are criteria of education.

Another criterion of education is the so-called «cognitive perspective». This aspect of education differentiates it from such processes as for example «training». Cognitive perspective, then, means that:

'Education is of the whole man' bears witness not simply to a protest against too much specialized training, but also to the conceptual connection between 'education' and seeing what is being done in a perspective that is not too limited... Whereas 'training' suggests the development of competence in a limited skill or mode of thought. ⁶⁹

65. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

66. «Such a connection between 'education' and what is valuable does not imply any particular commitment to content... All that is implied is a commitment to what is thought valuable». *Ibid.*, p. 25.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

68. See *ibid.*, p. 31. Also: «To be 'educated' implies (a) caring about what is worthwhile and (b) being brought to care about it and to possess the relevant knowledge or skill in a way that involves at least a minimum of understanding and voluntariness», R. S. Peters (1973), p. 92.

69. R. S. Peters, (1966), p. 32.

'Education', therefore, has a broad meaning, whereas 'training', as a matter of fact, has a limited one.

Peters holds that education is not an activity. Instead processes such as 'teaching', 'instruction', 'initiation' and so forth are used to «introduce people to what is valuable in an intelligible and voluntary manner».70 However, only if these processes satisfy all the criteria implied by 'education', can they claim to be educational processes.

Peters' concept of education might well be summarized by his own words:

To be educated is not to have arrived at a destination; it is to travel with a different view. What is required is not feverish preparation for something that lies ahead, but to work with precision, passion and taste at worthwhile things that lie to hand.⁷¹

Peters' thesis that education has an intrinsic value as well as the definition of what is worthwhile given by him has been challenged. Thus, Glenn Langford argues that education is the name of an activity and that to become educated is to learn to be a person.⁷²

It is not our concern to enter into details of such a discussion as it is beyond the purpose of this dissertation. But some remarks concerning Peters' concept of education are needed in so far as they are concerned with the notion 'worthwhile'.

It is quite obvious that by arguing that education has an intrinsic value in itself we attribute to the concept an absolute meaning. No doubt this conceptualization prevents us from regarding education as a process towards a content, as the old school of education believed. On the other hand, this definition helps us to set up criteria according to which we could check our educational processes. In this respect Peters' criteria (knowledge, understanding and cognitive perspective) could be regarded as profound. But an open question still remains: What is worthwhile and how could we define it? In addition to Peters' given reasons for defining what is meant by worthwhile⁷³ we think that it is not an exag-

70. R. S. Peters (1973), p. 97. See also *idem* (1966), pp. 35ff.

71. R. S. Peters (1973), p. 107.

72. Glenn Langford, «The Concept of Education» in Glenn Langford and D. J. O' Connor (eds.) (1973), pp. 3-32. Also by the same author, «Values in Education (1)», *op. cit.*, pp. 115-134. See reply on criticisms by R. S. Peters, «Values in Education (2)», *op. cit.*, pp. 135-146.

73. «The 'worthwhile' can be illustrated by the case of a man like Socrates who regarded discussing fundamental problems with young men as 'worthwhile' even

generation to say that worthwhile depends upon men's philosophy of life as well as publicly acceptable traditions which are articulated in language and forms of thought. Peters, however, denies the last point because: «it fails to mark out the difference between education and other forms of socialization». ⁷⁴

But this is the case which, we think, needs more elucidation in Professor Peters' concept of education.

2. *Education and Indoctrination.*

As we have already seen, according to Peters and his followers education has some criteria which educational processes must satisfy. According to this point an important question has been raised between philosophers of education as far as indoctrination is concerned. The question is whether indoctrination is an educational process. The core, therefore, of the discussion about indoctrination consists of what the concept means and what are the criteria according to which indoctrination might be regarded as an educational process or not.

J. White points out that:

The word 'indoctrination' was often used in the past to refer to teaching generally: to indoctrinate a person was merely to get him to learn something. In this century the word has taken on more precise meanings. It now usually refers to particular *types* of teaching, distinguished by different intentions that some teachers have in mind, e.g. to get children to learn by rote, or without reasons, or in an unshakable way — intentions that were not clearly distinguished in the past when the word was used more widely. ⁷⁵

though he may have found it boring at times. The 'worth' of such activities derives from the demand that reasons should be given for belief or courses of action and the refusal to take things on trust and from authorities. This demand has little to do with values of a hedonistic sort; for being concerned about truth has a worth which is independent of its benefit. Indeed the state of mind of one who is determined to find out what is true, and who is not obviously deluded or mistaken about how things are, or about what he really wants as distinct from what he thinks he wants, can be regarded as an ultimate value which provides one of the criteria of benefit... And there are a group of virtues which are inseparable from any attempt to decide questions in this way. These are virtues such as clarity, non-arbitrariness, impartiality, a sense of relevance, consistency, respect for evidence, sincerity and truth-telling», R. S. Peters, «Values in Education (2)», *op. cit.*, p. 141.

74. R. S. Peters (1973), p. 84.

75. J. P. White (1967), p. 180.

Philosophers of education have tried to elucidate the concept by setting up criteria which are distinctive of it. Thus, three criteria have been set up as far as indoctrination is concerned. These are: *intention* (aim), *method* and *content*. It is, however, worth noting that not all educationists agree that all those three criteria are necessary. Rather the criteria vary from one of the above mentioned, to various combinations of all three.

For J. White, as it is seen from the above quotation, indoctrination is definable solely in terms of the intention according to which:

Indoctrinating someone is trying to get him to believe that a proposition 'p' is true, in such a way that nothing will shake that belief.⁷⁶

J. Wilson, on the other hand, argues that an indoctrinator could indoctrinate either intentionally or not. But besides intention, he holds that:

It is also logically necessary to the concept of indoctrination that the indoctrinated person arrives at the belief by non-rational methods.⁷⁷

He moreover argues that any belief which is taught with non-rational methods could be regarded as dogmatic (as for example political, moral and religious beliefs).

For Wilson, rational belief is that which:

Is based on the real world, and will change only if the world changes (as opposed to if some authority changes its mind, or if the believer's inner feelings change).

Thus he discerns a closed relation between method and rational belief. He points out:

A certain type of process — namely, a process which brings the pupil up against the real world, and helps him to control it by the use of language, perceptions, and logic — can teach the pupil to behave rationally; that is, to follow rules in virtue of which his behaviour will be more than that of an automaton, and his beliefs more than parroted words.⁷⁸

76. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

77. J. Wilson, «Indoctrination and Rationality» in *Concepts of Indoctrination*, ed. by I. A. Snook (1972), p. 19.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

He concludes, however, by emphasizing that indoctrination is connected with teaching beliefs which are not rational (doctrines).⁷⁹

R.S. Peters shares Wilson's thesis when he writes:

Whatever else 'indoctrination' may mean it obviously has something to do with doctrines, which are a species of beliefs.⁸⁰

Patricia Smart has challenged Wilson's thesis with considerably strong arguments. Firstly, she holds that indoctrination is concerned with method, although she does not deny the importance of intention.⁸¹ Secondly, she rightly argues that indoctrination can occur in every area of enquiry, except for elementary mathematics. Although it could occur *about* mathematics.⁸² Thirdly, with regard to the doctrines («irrational beliefs» in the words of J. Wilson) P. Smart argues that:

A doctrine cannot adequately be distinguished from a scientific statement on the grounds of logic alone, i.e. in terms of verifiability. For neither a doctrine nor a proposition of science need be verifiable or falsifiable... A doctrine can be distinguished from other forms of unverifiable statements by the attitude which is reflected towards evidence against that proposition... Whether a proposition is to be afforded doctrinal status depends upon how far we are prepared to allow it refutability.⁸³

In concluding this section we could make the following remarks.

Education, as we discussed it in the previous section, uses educational processes in order to transmit what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it. Educational processes, therefore, must satisfy those criteria involved in education, that is: knowledge, understanding and cognitive perspective. However, from what we said about indoctrination it is obvious that it cannot be regarded as an educational pro-

79. «Indoctrinated beliefs, if they really are beliefs, must be meant: what distinguishes them is that they are irrational». *Ibid.*, p. 20.

80. R. S. Peters (1966), p. 41.

81. «To talk of indoctrination is to suggest that the teacher uses unfair means to induce the child to come to conclusions which he himself intends him to make, but which the subject matter does not necessarily demand». Patricia Smart, «The Concept of Indoctrination» in Glenn Langford and D. J. O'Connor (eds.) (1973), p. 37. See also *ibid.*, p. 36.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 42. See more discussion on the issue of 'beliefs' and 'indoctrination' as far as it is concerned with R.E. in the section 3 of Chapter IV of this dissertation and also notice no 134.

cess. Whatever criterion we admit as being involved in indoctrination (that is: intention, method, content) it is plain that it is (are) against the criteria set up by Peters for education.

To regard, however, indoctrination as a non-educational process is of great importance as far as this kind of teaching is still used widely by many institutions, societies, teachers and so forth.

Finally, the connexion between indoctrination and R.E. is not only obvious but of great significance inasmuch as the latter claims to be justified on educational grounds. This issue however, is discussed in the next Chapter.

3. Religion as a «realm of meaning» or «form of knowledge».

Some philosophers of education tried to construct a philosophy of the school curriculum according to the current tendencies held in the field of the philosophy of education. They thought that the area in which the aims of education are applicable is mainly the schools. What is, then, the basic concern of these educationists is how to design a school curriculum which will transmit what is worthwhile according to the criteria of education.

Two distinguished philosophers of education have made an important attempt to define curriculum objectives as far as they are concerned with modes of knowledge and experiences.

Thus, the American Professor P. Phenix argues that a philosophy of curriculum is needed in order to engender an integration outlook of life according to the aims of education, which for him are:

A complete person should be skilled in the use of speech, symbol, and gesture, factually well informed, capable of creating and appreciating objects of esthetic significance, endowed with a rich and disciplined life in relation to self and others, able to make wise decisions and to judge between right and wrong, and possessed of an integral outlook. These are the aims of general education for the development of whole persons.⁸⁴

Moreover, Phenix argues that:

Human beings are essentially creatures who have the power to

84. P. H. Phenix, «Realms of Meaning» in *Curriculum Design* ed. by M. Golby, T. Greenwald and R. West (1975), p. 169.

experience *meanings*. Distinctively human existence consists in a pattern of meanings. Furthermore, *general education is the process of engendering essential meanings*.⁸⁵

Curriculum, therefore, should be designed with particular attention to patterns of meaning.⁸⁶

According to Phenix's analysis of the modes of human understanding, six patterns or realms of meaning have emerged. These are: *symbolics, empirics, esthetics, synnoetics, ethics, and synoptics*.

The first realm, *symbolics*, comprises ordinary language, mathematics, and various types of nondiscursive symbolic forms, such as gestures, rituals, rhythmic patterns, and the like.

The second realm, *empirics*, includes the sciences of the physical world, of living things, and of man.

The third realm, *esthetics*, contains the various arts, such as music, the visual arts, the arts of movement, and literature.

The fourth realm, *synnoetics*, signifies «relational insight» or «direct awareness». It is analogous in the sphere of knowing to sympathy in the sphere of feeling. This personal or relational knowledge is concrete, direct, and essential. It may apply to other persons, to oneself, or even to things.

The fifth realm, *ethics*, includes moral meanings that express obligation rather than fact, perceptual form, or awareness of relation.

The sixth realm, *synoptics*, refers to meanings that are comprehensively integrative. It includes history, religion, and philosophy. These disciplines combine empirical, esthetic, and synnoetic meanings into coherent wholes... Religion is concerned with ultimate meanings, that is, with meanings from any realm whatsoever, considered from the standpoint of such boundary concepts as the Whole, the Comprehensive, and the Transcendent.⁸⁷

The other important work on the philosophy of the curriculum is that of Professor P. Hirst. Hirst classifies knowledge more or less in the same way as Phenix does. His approach, however, it must be said, is more speculative and rational. What Hirst means by a form of knowledge is that it is:

A distinct way in which our experience becomes structured

85. *Ibid.*, p. 166.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

87. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168.

round the use of accepted public symbols. The symbols thus having public meaning, their use is in some way testable against experience and there is the progressive development of series of tested symbolic expressions.⁸⁸

Moreover, in the developed forms of knowledge he distinguishes four features. Firstly, they each involve certain central concepts that are peculiar in character to the form. Secondly, the form has a distinctive logical structure. Thirdly, each form has distinctive expressions that are testable against experience in accordance with particular criteria that are peculiar to the form. Fourthly, the forms have developed particular techniques and skills for exploring experience and testing their distinctive expressions.⁸⁹

In addition to these features he makes another classification of knowledge which he calls fields of knowledge. They are distinguished by their subject matter rather than by a logically distinct form of expression.⁹⁰

Thus the forms of knowledge, according to Professor Hirst's classifications are:

I. Distinct disciplines or forms of knowledge (subdivisible): mathematics, physical sciences, human sciences, history, religion, literature and the fine arts, philosophy.

II. Fields of knowledge: theoretical, practical (these may or may not include elements of moral knowledge).⁹¹

Both philosophers of education regard religion as a part of a comprehensive and integrated curriculum.

A notice, however, is needed to be made with regard to Hirst's thesis about religion as a form of knowledge and R.E. in particular. That is, although he claims that religion is a form of knowledge, he argues elsewhere that:

If in fact, as seems to be the case, at present, there are no agreed public tests whereby true and false can be distinguished in religious claims, then we can hardly maintain that we have a domain of religious knowledge and truth. All that we can claim

88. P. H. Hirst (1974a), p. 44.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

90. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

there is, is a domain of beliefs and the acceptance of any one set of these must be recognised as a matter of personal decision.⁹²

But this argument contradicts his first thesis according to which religion is a form of knowledge. Of course, we are aware that he basically argues against educating pupils in a particular set of beliefs, whereas he is in favour of teaching about religion(s). In this respect he points out:

My view then is that maintained schools should teach 'about' religion, provided that is interpreted to include a direct study of religions, which means entering as fully as possible into an understanding of what they claim to be true.⁹³

But, again, this view is incompatible with his general thesis that religion is a form of knowledge in so far as, using his own words, «we are uncertain not only about the truth of religious claims, but about the kind of meaning they have».⁹⁴

If, however, we are not sure that religious claims are true then how could we teach even about religion(s)? Furthermore, another question is raised, that is, why religion is regarded as a form of knowledge when its claims and propositions are not testable against experience?⁹⁵

More, however, on the claim to teach *about religion* we discuss in the third section of the next Chapter.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 187. Also elsewhere he points out: «What knowledge we teach, we each because it comes up to publicly accepted rational tests, convinced that all those prepared to investigate the matter to the appropriate extent will agree on the results», *op. cit.*, p. 180.

95. See also D. Z. Phillips' criticism on Hirst's view about religious beliefs and religious knowledge in an article entitled: «Philosophy and Religious Education» in *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. XVIII (1970), No. 1, pp. 5-17. And R. Barrow, «Religion in Schools» in *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1974.

CHAPTER IV

R.E. IN THE ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

1. The Background.

Education in England till 1870 was dominated by the Church and from the earliest times R.E., as a matter of fact, had a constant place in the English school curriculum. In the nineteenth century however, when the State entered the field of education the place of R.E. started to be disputed. The core of the dispute was whether or not R.E. should have a denominational character. By the Elementary Education Act of 1870 an agreement was reached according to which denominational religious instruction was allowed to be taught in the voluntary schools, whereas in board schools a denominational catechism should not be taught. Local school boards, however, had the right to decide whether or not religious teaching should be given in the schools under their jurisdiction. Furthermore, each local school board was prevented by law from teaching any «religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination». This is the famous 'Cowper-Temple clause' of the Act. Most of the school boards followed London School Board's syllabus according to which teaching religion meant teaching the Bible.⁹⁶

By the 1944 Education Act religious instruction (R.I.) became a compulsory subject in the school curriculum, though the prohibition of the Cowper-Temple clause was repeated. There are, of course, reasons which justify the introduction of a compulsory Christian R.I. into State Schools. Such reasons are: Firstly, England was regarded as a Christian country in which general public opinion, a large proportion of the Churches as well as the majority of the teachers agreed with the decision made. Secondly, the frustration and distraction from the results of the Second World War, reinforced the hope for more freedom, democracy and such values derived from the western Christian tradition. This hope

96. See Schools Council Working Paper 36 (1971), pp. 7-11 and The Fourth R (1970), Chapter 1: «The Origin and Development of R.E. in England».

was seen by many people in the connexion between Christianity and democracy, as Professor Niblett points out, as well as in the way in which many Christians were interested in social questions at this time.⁹⁷ Thirdly, R.E. was seen as the most influential means for transmitting Moral Education, the importance of which was emphatically reinforced immediately after the War.⁹⁸

Thus, as the subject became compulsory in the school curriculum new syllabuses were drawn up according to the Education Act of 1944. Most of the new syllabuses were still based on teaching the Bible. As B. Gates points out:

There has been deliberate concentration on the history of Israel and the text of the Old and New Testaments, with occasional forays into Church history. Most public examinations in religion have been entitled 'Scripture', without further qualification, and concerned with pupils' knowledge of the text.⁹⁹

Also the Durham Report points out:

The syllabuses tended to be more subject-centred than pupil-related, drawn up more to satisfy scholars and churchmen than to meet the needs of the pupils.¹⁰⁰

It was only during the 1960s when the 'Biblical Type' R.E. was challenged. In the next section we attempt to indicate some reasons for such challenge as well as to illustrate those writings which are regarded as having contributed to an open R.E. in a secular society.

2. R.E. in the 1960s. The 'neo-confessional' and 'implicit religion' approaches.

In the early 1960s many of the reasons which justified a compulsory R.E. in the school curriculum through the Education Act of 1944 ceased to be vital and others were put into question. This happened because many social, theological and educational changes have been taking place in British society since 1944 which inevitably affected R.E.

97. W. R. Niblett, «The Religious Education Clauses of the 1944 Act—Aims, Hopes and Fulfilment» in A. G. Wedderspoon (ed.) (1966), pp. 18-21.

98. *Op. cit.*, p. 24. Also The Fourth R, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

99. B. Gates (1973b), p. 53. See also on the same page his critique of the 'Biblical Type' R.E.

100. The Fourth R (1970), p. 16.

The social situation in Britain of the 1960s is well illustrated by the Working Paper 36:

'Secondary education for all' was followed by the introduction of 'the Welfare State', with improved health services and social security. Economic recovery from the War was accompanied by a wider distribution of affluence, the spread of the mass media of communication, advertising, and entertainment, teenage fashions, 'pop' culture, greater freedom and permissiveness in speech and conduct, increased opportunities for travel and a great expansion in opportunities for higher education. At the same time Britain's dominant role in world affairs had come to an end and there has been much uncertainty of purpose in national life. The influx of Asian, African, and West Indian immigrants has added to the complexity of this situation.¹⁰¹

Also, at the same time many traditional beliefs of Christian Theology were put into question. Bishop John Robinson's book 'Honest to God' published in 1963 is a very influential theological book of the time, which attempted «to encourage responsible adults in the twentieth century to think about Christian beliefs in a responsible, adult, and contemporary way».¹⁰²

In addition to the social and theological changes new developments in the theory of education and developmental educational psychology gave an impetus for reconsideration and reexamination of the role of R.E. in the school curriculum. R. Goldman's work is the vivid expression of the influence of the developmental educational psychology upon R.E.¹⁰³

Goldman, based on Piaget's developmental cognitive stages, attempted to examine children's capacity to see whether they understand properly all the Biblical materials presented to them by agreed syllabuses. He found that children are taught in schools a lot about the Bible during their early ages which they cannot assimilate or understand because their intellectual capacity has not yet been developed enough. According to his view, very little biblical material is suitable before secondary schooling. He argues, therefore, that children should not be

101. Schools Council Working Paper 36, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

102. The Fourth R, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

103. R. Goldman (1964).

taught theological concepts until they reach the period of adolescence. He maintains that:

The Bible is not a children's book and the concepts demanded by the experiences described in our three Bible stories [Moses and the Burning Bush, The Crossing of the Red Sea, The Temptation of Jesus] are only just beginning to be comprehended in early adolescence and are beyond the limitations of experience and thinking powers of all Infant and most Junior children.¹⁰⁴

Thus, Goldman suggested a new approach to R.E. which should take into account children's needs and abilities. In a second book of his he defines the aims of Christian education as follows:

The aims of Christian education should be directed towards the fulfilment of a child's personal needs as they are felt at the various stages of his development.¹⁰⁵

Moreover, Goldman holds that the child has not specific religious needs. What he needs, he argues, is:

religion, in its widest meaning... A child has physical needs, emotional and intellectual needs, he needs security and he needs standards of behaviour, but they are not religious in a narrow sense.¹⁰⁶

What then is needed, in Goldman's view, is that religion should be taught not as a separate subject in the school curriculum but rather through other subjects. This claim, however, seems to be inconsistent with his previous argument according to which:

Christianity should be taught because it is true, because it answers the deepest needs of human nature, and without a knowledge of the love of God and a relationship with him men and women will live impoverished lives.¹⁰⁷

If, however, Christian education or R.E. in general is taught through the other school subjects, religious experiences lose at least partly their

104. *Op. cit.*, p. 227.

105. R. Goldman (1965), p. 65.

106. *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

107. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

transcendental and specific meaning. Moreover, he reduces Christian faith from its transcendental concern, when he points out that:

The Christian faith is a frame of reference through which everything can be experienced, related and interpreted. As such it has an outstanding contribution to make to the intellectual development of children.¹⁰⁸

Goldman's work could be characterized as a 'neo-confessional' one as far as it is concerned with the teaching of a specific religion, that is, Christianity. It, however, hardly needs to be pointed out that his approach to Christian education might be considered as too secular. With regard to Goldman's approach to R.E. in general, the Working Paper 36 points out:

This neo-confessionalism, though undoubtedly sincere, cannot be the basis of religious education in maintained schools; it is just as open to objection from non-Christian teachers as the old confessionalism.¹⁰⁹

Another more open approach to R.E. than that of Goldman is that of H. Loukes. His two books: 'Teenage Religion' (1961) and 'New Ground in Christian Education' (1965) illustrate very well his approach to R.E. which has been called the 'implicit religion' or 'personal quest' approach.¹¹⁰

The ground on which Loukes' approach is based is that religion is a way of living. It should be therefore concerned with practical issues and not merely with academic disciplines. His aim consists in 'learning through experience'. He points out that:

The schools must guarantee to their pupils such mastery of a certain body of knowledge as will bring them into an encounter with a certain body of belief, in the hope that they will enlarge their view of the world and human life, and make a personal response which will govern their attitudes and actions in the future.¹¹¹

With regard to the place of the Bible in R.E. he condemns the

108. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

109. Schools Council Working Paper 36, p. 31.

110. See respectively Working Paper 36, *op. cit.*, p. 34 and M. Grimmit (1973), p. 22.

111. H. Loukes (1965), p. 45.

'Biblical type' R.E. as inadequate for an open-ended R.E.¹¹² Thus he claims that:

We must start from the position that the Bible is not about the Bible but about the human situation, and that in itself it claims no more authority than it carries to its hearers.¹¹³

Although Loukes argues that all subjects have their 'religious' dimension he prefers there to be a separate period for R.E. in the school timetable as more suitable for the adequate exploration of those dimensions. Also, he maintains that any constructive dialogue in a R.E. classroom could be a 'process of dialogue about experience' which is taking place in an atmosphere of sympathy.

The point, in Loukes' open-ended approach, which has been more criticized is that although he defines 'religion' and 'religious' in a very broad sense he insists on arguing that the Christian tradition provides the framework within which any religious exploration should take place. Then, it might be said, by implication the 'implicit religion' approach becomes implicit with regard to Christian religion only.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless his broad definition of 'religion' and 'religious' has no less been criticized, though rightly. Thus the Working Paper 36 from which we quote points out:

To describe as religion any 'quest for meaning' in life, poetic insight, artistic vision, etc., which involves no necessary reference to any transcendent spiritual order or being for its interpretive principle is surely doing violence to language. Many subjects of human concern can be interpreted religiously, but not all attempts at interpreting life can meaningfully or accurately be designated 'religious'.¹¹⁵

It hardly needs to be noticed that both approaches, that is to say Goldman's and Loukes', had inspired many Agreed Syllabuses for a long time. They are known as far as they are concerned with the Agreed Syllabuses as 'Life-Theme' and 'Problem Syllabus' approaches respectively. B. Gates characterizes both approaches as 'Life and Living' type R.E.

112. «Let them know the Bible, it was said. We tried, with a wealth of ingenuity and concern, to let them know it. And at the end, they barely know the first thing about it». *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

113. *Op. cit.*, p. 158.

114. M. Grimmitt (1973), p. 25.

115. Working Paper 36, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

because they begin with the world of today and seek to deal with the pupils 'where they are' and to meet their 'felt needs'.¹¹⁶ Moreover, he is right when he points out that:

R.E. of the *Life and Living* type excels in pointing up that religion divorced from life is a contradiction in terms [in contrast with the 'Biblical' type R.E.]. Religion is mummified without an existential dimension. But in so far as there are other occasions in the school curriculum that deal with life, the onus is on the R.E. teacher to demonstrate the distinctive contribution which he can make. R.E. is redundant if it has nothing but gaps in the curriculum to rely upon.¹¹⁷

3. *The effects of current educational theory on R.E.*

The various achievements in different fields of human experience (i.e. Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Sciences and the rest) in recent years have become the main concern of the philosophers of education and those educationists who are responsible for planning and designing school curricula. Crucial and important issues which have been raised by different disciplines of knowledge should be examined in the light of education. Issues such as human freedom, autonomy, equality and so on, to mention only a few, have been the centre of the discussion in educational circles. The need, therefore, for providing new school curricula which could be suitable to these new circumstances has become more than urgent. In a previous section of this dissertation we have already discussed some aspects of the recent tendencies of English educational theory. In this section we are mainly interested in seeing how these tendencies have affected R.E.

Inevitably R.E. from its nature has been one of the most controversial subjects in the discussion about designing new school curricula. The questions which have been asked by educationists could be roughly classified as follows:

Should R.E. have a place in the school curriculum? If the answer is yes, what form, then, should R.E. take?

The last question could be divided in two subquestions such as:

Is teaching only Christianity in schools educationally justified?

116. B. Gates (1973b), p. 54.

117. *Op. cit.*, p. 55. See also his criticism with regard to the 'Life and Living' type R.E. *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

And, if it is not, what might then be an alternative?

With regard to the first question many attempts have been made by educationists either to justify the presence of the subject in the school curriculum on educational grounds or to exclude it as educationally inadequate. A representative of the latter attempt might be regarded as R.F. Dearden, whereas of the former P. Phenix and P. Hirst. In a previous Chapter we have discussed extensively the view of both Phenix and Hirst as far as it is concerned with religion as a 'realm of meaning' or 'form of knowledge' respectively. To avoid repetitions we are going to discuss here, though very briefly, Hirst's proposed model of teaching R.E. in schools.¹¹⁸

To start, firstly, from the view of those educationists who consider R.E. in schools as educationally inadequate it is worth noting Dearden's argument. He points out that:

If, as is indisputable, the truth of the doctrines of religion is seriously doubted, on excellent grounds, then it is an objectionable form of indoctrination to propagate the doctrines in common, public schools as if they were unquestionably true. One might also add that it would be equally unjustified to refer to them as if they were unquestionably false.¹¹⁹

Thus, according to Dearden, religious indoctrination could be challenged for three reasons: Firstly, because it is against the notion of a liberal and democratic education. Secondly, because it is incompatible with respect for personal autonomy. Thirdly, «it runs the risk of unfortunate collapse should those in whom faith has been so established later come to doubt».¹²⁰ He concludes, therefore, that:

The primary schools should, for the epistemological and moral reasons already given, lead the way on religion, for which a sufficient legal change at the present juncture would probably be that what is at present an obligation be reduced to permission.¹²¹

Nevertheless, Dearden holds that instead of indoctrinating pupils into religious doctrines it is fair enough to teach *about* religion, «which need imply only a belief on one's own part that certain things

118. See Chapter III, section 3 of this dissertation.

119. R. F. Dearden (1968), p. 55.

120. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

121. *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

are the beliefs of others». That is to say, to teach religion only descriptively, because «there are good cultural and historical grounds for teaching *about* religion», and not more than that.¹²²

What might be appreciated in Dearden's view about the place of R.E. in State schools is the objection which he raises against indoctrination of a set of particular beliefs, which is taught without any question or by a deliberate ignoring of other beliefs. This is because, as we have seen elsewhere, indoctrination does not satisfy the criteria of education and therefore it could not be regarded as an educational process at all. But to argue because of that that R.E. should be excluded from the school curriculum altogether is perhaps unfair and uneducational. We, of course, could avoid indoctrination and we must do so, but to avoid teaching religion in schools implies, if not anything else, that we could not claim that we are properly educated. This is because we ignore, then, the different and various religious experiences of mankind and we are not able to understand sympathetically the religious insights which people, cultures, symbols, language and so on around us might have. For the same reasons, in our view, the model suggested by Dearden of teaching *about* religion only descriptively is inadequate, as we will discuss later.

With regard to the second view according to which R.E. should have a legitimate place in the school curriculum between other subjects we would concentrate on the view held by educationists such as P. Hirst and P. Phenix. We have already seen elsewhere that Professor Hirst regards religion as a form of knowledge. Also we tried to indicate some inconsistencies raised from his definition of what is a form of knowledge in so far as it is concerned with religion in general and teaching religion in schools in particular.¹²³ What we have to add here is that in one of his recent books written with the collaboration of Professor Peters, he maintains that:

Religious claims in their traditional forms certainly make use of concepts which, it is now maintained, are irreducible in character. Whether or not there are objective grounds for what is asserted is again a matter on which much more has yet to be said. The case would certainly seem to be one that cannot be simply dismissed.¹²⁴

122. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

123. See section 3 of Chapter III.

124. P. Hirst and R. Peters (1970), p. 64.

Thus, Hirst's view, in contrast with that of Dearden's, is that R.E. must have a place in the school curriculum. Moreover, the model of teaching *about* religion(s) proposed by him seems to be more comprehensive than that of Dearden. This is because he argues that teaching *about* religion(s) means to enter «as fully as possible into an understanding of what they claim to be true».¹²⁵

It is, however, worth noting that Hirst is strongly opposed to educating pupils in State schools to be Christians. He argues that:

Adequate instruction about religious beliefs must surely include treatment of their significance for human life and in our society it is surely imperative that the part played by Christian beliefs in determining our way of life must be taught. This is not, however, to educate children as Christians.¹²⁶

Although Hirst, as it is seen from the quotation cited above, does not ignore the role which Christianity played «in determining our way of life», in a very recent book of his he condemns Christian education as 'nonsense' altogether.¹²⁷ He justifies his argument by regarding education as passing on knowledge and understanding and reason. But immediately he runs to say that:

This account of a secularized concept of autonomous education, which is committed to reason and nothing beyond that, is in no sense anti-religious.¹²⁸

Hirst's arguments against Christian education have been well criticized by Dr. J. Hull in an article entitled «Christian Theology and Educational Theory: Can there be connections?». Hull tries to show that «the arguments which Hirst uses to disallow the possibility of connections between Christian theology and educational theory are unconvincing in themselves and inconsistent with his arguments elsewhere in the book about the relation between Christian theology and other spheres such as ethics». ¹²⁹

Phenix, as we have seen in section 3, Chapter III proclaims

125. P. Hirst (1974a), p. 187.

126. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

127. «There has now emerged in our society a concept of education which makes the whole idea of Christian education a kind of nonsense». P. Hirst (1974b), p. 77.

128. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

129. J. Hull (1976), p. 142.

religion as the most inclusive of all of the realms of meaning into which the content of the curriculum can be analysed: «...religious inquiry is directed towards ultimacy in the sense of the most comprehensive, most profound, most unified meanings obtainable».¹³⁰ His approach to teaching *about* religion(s) in schools is based on the claim that religion should be regarded as a phenomenon. According to him, because religion is the 'ground of being' the 'ultimate concern' thus every human experience has a religious dimension. He argues therefore, that children should be helped to explore these implicit religious dimensions not only by rational norms but also by imagination and sympathetic treatment of religious phenomena.¹³¹

So far we have discussed the arguments which are against teaching religion in schools as well as those which are in favour of such a teaching. We have also seen that the prevailing model of teaching religion among those educationists who belong to the second category is teaching *about* religion.

However, against this model of teaching some serious objections have been raised especially as far as it is concerned with Hirst's proposed model. Firstly, this model reduces the phenomenon of religion as such because it limits religion to a factual information. Secondly, the model of teaching *about* religion(s) seems to emphasize very much the cognitive and intellectual aspect of religion, whereas it ignores the role of the emotions, feelings and experiences which are involved in religion by its very nature.¹³²

We could conclude this section by pointing out that R.E. in its traditional form, that is, teaching only the doctrines or beliefs of one specific religion, is incompatible with the current educational theory. Teaching only Christianity in the State schools therefore, to answer our first subquestion which we put in the beginning of the section, obviously cannot be justified on educational grounds.¹³³ Christian teachers, the Churches, theologians and the rest who might insist on teaching only Christianity in the State schools are confronted with the accusation that they try to indoctrinate pupils. This accusation could be valid in so far as indoctrination is concerned only with intention and method and not with content. This is because religious beliefs or doctrines

130. Cited in B. Gates (1973a), p. 59.

131. See P. Phenix (1972) and B. Gates, *op. cit.*, pp. 58ff.

132. See also R. M. Rummery (1975), p. 161.

133. See M. Grimmitt (1973), pp. 16ff.

could not be necessarily regarded irrational or false as some educationists argue.¹³⁴

In brief, Christianity could have a place in the State schools of Britain as long as it does not form the whole range of R.E. Christianity ought to be a part of R.E.—and maybe in some cases the major proportion of it—but at any rate cannot be the whole part of it. How this claim could be justified and what should be the alternative (see our last subquestion) we turn immediately to discuss.

4. The present situation. The 'phenomenological' or 'implicit religion' approach.

In the second section of this Chapter we discussed how the rapid social, theological and educational changes which have happened within British society since 1960 influenced R.E. Also, in the previous section we saw the current educational debate about the place of R.E. in the school curriculum. Finally, we concluded this section by saying that for educational reasons R.E. ought to have a place in the State school provided that the concept should have a wider meaning and by no means could it be defined as identical to Christian education (or teaching only Christianity).

The last point has been explored by people such as E. Cox, J. W. D. Smith and Professor N. Smart. According to E. Cox :

'Openended' religious education will largely involve teaching of the sources and faith of Christianity. It will include also some consideration of the ultimate explanations of existence given by other world religions, and of philosophies, such as Humanism and Marxism, which have maintained that adequate explanations can be framed without reference to the supernatural. But Christianity has contributed more than any other source to Western thought on these questions, and its historical importance would seem to justify making its study a major part of religious education.¹³⁵

134. See section 2 of Chapter III and also J. Wilson, «Education and Indoctrination» in T. B. Hollins (ed.), *The Aims of Education*, Manchester 1964. A. Flew, «Indoctrination and Doctrines» in I. A. Snook (ed.) (1972), esp. pp. 74ff. in which he challenges Wilson's argument according to which one of the model cases of indoctrination is 'teaching Christianity by the threat of torture or damnation, forcing people by early training to accept social roles'. B. G. Mitchell, «Indoctrination» in *The Durham Report* (1970), pp. 353-358.

135. E. Cox (1966), p. 68.

As, however, it is seen from the above quotation E. Cox, although he does not identify R.E. with Christian education, puts considerable weight on teaching primarily Christianity in schools.

Smith's approach is based on the same lines. He argues that 'Christian education' must give way to educationally motivated 'religious' teaching which should embody an objective study primarily of Christianity but also of other world religions adapted to the various capacities of age and ability groups.¹³⁶ But as the Working Paper 36 comments:

A concealed apology for Christianity runs through the book, despite the author's wish to avoid this.¹³⁷

A pioneer contribution to R.E. in a pluralist society seems to be Professor Smart's approach. Smart attempted to define R.E. as it should operate in a pluralist society, like that of Britain. He started his attempt by examining the inner logic of religion. In his book 'Secular Education and the Logic of Religion' he argues that it is incompatible not only with the aims of a liberal and democratic education but also with the logic of religion itself to teach only Christianity (theology) in the secular universities, colleges, and schools. According to Smart, religion consists of six dimensions:

1. The *doctrinal* dimension: i.e. the fact that religions typically teach doctrines.

2. The *mythological* dimension: i.e. a religion typically contains beliefs which are cast in story form, whether the stories concern actual historical events interpreted religiously or non-historical 'transcendental' or sacred events.

3. *Ethical* dimension: i.e. a religion prescribes an ethical path. Its ethics are often woven in part out of doctrinal and mythological threads. Jesus' death on the cross illuminates the meaning of Christian love, for example.

4. *Ritual* dimension: such as worship.

5. *Experiential* dimension: i.e. personal experience of God, sense of presence, or of other world.

6. *Social* dimension: i.e. communal organization of believers. Social roots and effects of religion.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ J. W. D. Smith (1975) and Working Paper 36, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹³⁸ N. Smart (1968), pp. 15-18.

Moreover, Smart, elsewhere, includes under the concept of religion not only the traditional religions but also those ideologies like for example Maoism and Marxism, in so far as they have a similar role and dimensional analogy to religions.¹³⁹ He also goes further by trying to explore the meaning of religion in general. According to his analysis, to put it crudely, he starts by asking what a religious question is. He argues that there are not religious questions as such, rather there are questions which spring from problems of human existence and meaning. These questions, in effect, become religious questions in so far as the religions supply answers. But the questions about ultimate meaning which can be regarded as religious are to do with values. He points out that:

We can reckon some questions about value to be sufficiently 'deep' and serious to warrant their being called religious, even if they are not posed in explicitly religious terms. But since the degree of value is not absolute, but a matter (to be obvious) of degree, it follows that all value-questions have some degree of religious significance. It is only that the more highly charged ones have such an amount of 'ultimacy' that their religious significance becomes obvious... However, it would be very foolish to think that all value-questions are *ipso facto* religious.

And he concludes:

Though all value-questions have in principle a religious aspect, in fact it is more practical to see the deeper value-questions as religious. Individual choice is now in our society and in our world, implicit in the very idea of religious education, so the study of some of these deeper questions will be part of R.E.¹⁴⁰

Professor Smart, therefore, draws a useful distinction between explicit and implicit aspects in religion. He also uses alternative terms in order to characterize the study of religion. Thus, the term 'parahistorical' (i.e. 'explicit') is referred to those studies and arguments which concern the truth, value and so forth of religion, whereas the term 'historical' (i.e. 'implicit') is referred to the descriptive studies of religion. He gives the following example:

139. N. Smart, «What is Religion?» in *New Movements in Religious Education*, ed. by N. Smart and D. Horder (1975).

140. *Op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

The question of whether mystical experience contains an unvarying central core is an historical question; but the question of whether one knows God through mystical experience is a parahistorical one.¹⁴¹

Admittedly a new model of teaching religion in schools derives from Smart's analysis of religion as a phenomenon. This model is concerned with teaching *how* and it is entirely distinct from the model of teaching *that*. In his words:

The question about teaching is this: that it can either mean teaching *that* or teaching *how*. In the first sense it connects with usages like 'the teaching of the Church on this matter is...' and implies the authoritative laying down of what is to be believed. In the second sense, teaching is much more a matter of getting people to do things, to think about a subject, to appreciate things... The essence of education, I would suggest, is teaching *how*.¹⁴²

Also the suggested model differs remarkably from the model of teaching *about* religion, because the latter is concerned with teaching religion only descriptively. That is, it takes into account more the implicit aspects of religion than the explicit.

Based on the prevailing claim in some current educational circles that 'education and learning transcend the informative', Smart dismisses the evangelistic function of religious education. He argues that:

One way in which religious education could in theory transcend the informative is by arousing faith — by arousing love of the Being whom Christian religious teaching is about. It could be then that the function of religious education is evangelistic. It is designed on this view, to impart faith, and information only as instrumental to that aim... The evangelizing view in any event seems to be incompatible with the demands of a secular, neutralist society.¹⁴³

Thus, if R.E. should be justified on educational grounds, according to Smart, it ought to be designed to give people the capacity to understand

141. N. Smart (1968), pp. 13-14. See also N. Smart (1973), especially Chapter I and *idem* (1969).

142. N. Smart (1968), pp. 91 and 95.

143. *Op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

religious phenomena, to discuss sensitively religious claims, to see the interrelations between religion and society and so forth... The second way, then, in which R.E. can transcend the informative is by being a sensitive induction into religious studies, not with the aim of evangelizing but with the aim of creating certain capacities to understand and think about religion».¹⁴⁴ And Smart sums up his arguments by proposing five aims of R.E.:

1. R.E. must transcend the informative.
2. It should do so not in the direction of evangelizing, but in the direction of initiation into understanding the meaning of, and into questions about the truth and worth of, religion.
3. Religious Studies do not exclude a committed approach, provided that it is open, and so does not artificially restrict understanding and choice.
4. Religious Studies should provide a service in helping people to understand history and other cultures than our own. It can thus play a vital role in breaking the limits of European cultural tribalism.
5. Religious Studies should emphasize the descriptive, historical side of religion, but needs thereby to enter into dialogue with the parahistorical claims of religions and antireligious outlooks.¹⁴⁵

Smart's approach to R.E. could be considered as more comprehensive than any previous one for three reasons. Firstly, it treats religions phenomenologically by exploring equally both aspects of them, that is, implicit and explicit. Every religion is examined as a six-dimensional phenomenon within its own unique background, that is, with respect to its claims of truth, tradition, culture and so forth. Thus, by this kind of objective study, every religion preserves its own character and identity. Secondly, it satisfies the criteria of a liberal and democratic education to a great extent. Thirdly, it seems to be more suitable in a pluralistic, multicultural and multiracial society such as the British. The characterization, therefore, of it as 'phenomenological' or 'explicit religion' or 'undogmatic' approach is not unfair at all.

Nevertheless, some difficulties could be raised with regard to the implications of this approach. Firstly, it could be educationally inap-

144. *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.

145. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106.

appropriate for children of the primary school who have not any experience of a faith or other faiths to be called to deal with them. Of course, proper material drawn more on the mythological, ritual and experiential dimensions of religion and less, or not at all, on the others, could be designed. But still for children of Infant and Junior school who live in such areas in which minority groups do not exist or their parents do not practice any religion, it is not so easy to overcome the difficulty. Secondly, teaching religion as a phenomenon conceals the fear that children of the early ages could be confused. This is because no comparison is allowed between the existing different aspects of religions.¹⁴⁶ Thirdly, the latter difficulty is closely connected to a great extent with the commitment of the R.E. teacher. In this respect E. Hulmes contends that:

To take religious education seriously the teacher must accept that children need help in the techniques of decision-making. This is not the same as teaching *for* 'decision', which is inadmissible in a state school... The child who asks, 'But which one is right?' is more likely to be helped if the teacher has felt free to declare his own commitment and then to understand the implications of new beliefs and ideals for his own faith than by the teacher whose studied neutrality is, in effect, the expression of an impartiality which is alien to his deepest convictions.¹⁴⁷

What Professor Smart, on the other hand, argues on the problem of commitment is that:

The test of one who is teaching reasonably in a society such as ours is openness, not what his commitments are. The Humanist teacher should give some imaginative grasp of religion; just as the Christian teacher should be able to elicit from his pupils an appreciation of the force of Humanism. The Christian should be able to teach Buddhist studies, and to do so without judgmental attitudes. It should in any event be a cause of joy that there is good in others, not a defensive cause of sorrow and fear.¹⁴⁸

146. Cf. B. Gates' argument according to which: «There would be no blurring of differences which bespeak the vitality of man's religion; rather care to get the distinctive 'feel' and knowledge of particular traditions». B. Gates (1973b).

147. E. Hulmes, «The Problem of Commitment» in *World Faiths in Education*, ed. by W. Owen Cole (1978), pp. 30-31.

148. N. Smart (1968), p. 98. See also what the Working Paper 36 says about objectivity, pp. 22 ff. And B. Gates, «Please, Sir, Do You Believe in God» in *World*

From the above quotations it is obvious that both writers presuppose an openness on the part of the R.E. teacher. Only with that openness and respect of pupils' freedom the teacher could help them for their search in discovering the truth in religion. Neutrality or impartiality are both inadequate for a proper education. At any rate, it should be said that the problem of commitment still remains one of the most difficult problems for all school subjects but especially for the humanities and, in effect, for R.E.

Before ending this section we would have to say that Professor Smart's approach has been welcomed by a remarkable number of educationists and R.E. teachers. Also, projects have been carried out in order to design material for teaching world religions in the primary and secondary schools. On the other hand, some Colleges of Education, let alone Universities, have adapted their curriculum to the lines of the new approach for training R.E. specialists.

5. Recent developments in R.E. among English speaking Roman-Catholics and the Church of England.

In recent years a remarkable discussion about the role of R.E. has been carried out among some English speaking Roman-Catholics. They attempted to re-examine and redefine the role of R.E. (i.e. Christian education) in order that it might become an up-to-date process which could reflect properly the various changes which have occurred within society. The attempt was primarily based on theological assumptions. The core of the discussion was focused on the re-interpretation of revelation. Some theologian-educationists who were involved in this task tried to show that the nature of revelation itself had not been explored enough in the past and thus it needed to look at it again in the light of the modern research occurred in other relevant fields of theology (i.e., Biblical studies, Liturgical studies and so on). This task, they argued, could enable people involved in catechesis and R.E. to readjust theologically their work according to the modern educational, anthropological and sociocultural claims.

One of the most well-known representatives of the renewal of R.E. among English speaking Roman-Catholics is the American theolo-

Faiths in Education (1978), pp. 38-42. Also R. Jackson's critique on Hulmes' arguments about commitment in *British Journal of Religious Education*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1978-79, pp. 77-80.

gian-educationist Gabriel Moran. Moran in his writings¹⁴⁹ explores theologically the nature of revelation which, in his view, is to be the basis for setting up the adequate aims of a modern and up-to-date R.E. He conceives of Christian revelation as:

A personal communion of knowledge, an inter-relationship of God and the individual within a believing community. God's bestowal and man's acceptance are both indispensable to the process... Humanity stands within the process and not outside of it, and revelation is not a 'thing' at all but exists only in the present, continuing, conscious experience of people, that is, in the relation of God and his people.¹⁵⁰

The above interpretation of revelation seems to be quite different, if not opposite, from the traditional idea about revelation held by many Roman-Catholic theologians. According to this, revelation «is something that is 'outside' man and must be placed 'inside' him», whereas Moran argues that:

Revelation is a personal relationship being participated in by the Jewish community, by the man Jesus, and by every man who lives today in the continuing revelation of the Church.¹⁵¹

This interpretation of revelation given by Moran leads him to point out that Christian education should aim at enabling children to understand what it means to be a Christian. In this sense, he argues that Christianity is fully understood and accepted by adults. Christian religion, therefore, seems to be a religion for adults. In one of his books entitled: 'Vision and Tactics' with the subtitle 'Towards an Adult Church', he explores this thesis by pointing out:

We begin by thinking of Christianity as a religion that can be truly understood and freely accepted only by the adult. After that, we teach adults as those who can grasp the Christian faith, and we teach children as those who are becoming adults.¹⁵²

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to go into details about Moran's interpretation of revelation. A theological comment from our

149. G. Moran (1966a), (1966b), (1968), (1970).

150. G. Moran (1966b), p. 19.

151. *Op. cit.*, p. 22.

152. G. Moran (1968), p. 33.

own religious point of view — that is, the Christian Orthodox — would be a desirable task, but it still would lead us very far away. Thus, we prefer to point out some remarks as far as they are concerned with what we have discussed in the previous Chapter and this Chapter. That is to say that we intend to make some remarks which are related to the current educational process, and the place of religion within that process.

Firstly, Moran might be right that Christian education should aim at enabling pupils to understand the Christian faith not by transmitting it but by bearing in mind that «Christianity is to free human intelligence for constant, never ending growth in belief».¹⁵³

Secondly, the above thesis is fairly compatible with the current educational theory and the aims of education on the following grounds: i) it satisfies the criterion that education must involve knowledge and understanding and some kind of cognitive perspective, which are not inert; ii) it satisfies the criterion that education at least rules out some procedures of transmission, on the grounds that they lack willingness and voluntariness on the part of the learner. With regard, however, to the iii) criterion that education implies the transmission of what is worthwhile some reservations should be pointed out as far as Moran's interpretation of revelation is concerned. For many Christians 'worthwhile' is what is accounted as revelation of God in the person of the Incarnate Jesus Christ. Through him, his Church, and the Holy Spirit, God reveals himself constantly till today to every person committed to the Christian Church. Children who have been baptized in the Christian Church are called to participate in this 'worthwhile' activity not by imposing it on them but by discussing and understanding it. In this respect, pupils ought to feel free to express their own experiences, to react or accept critically the Christian faith. In this sense, Moran seems to us, from what he says about revelation, to reduce the specific meaning which revelation has for the Christian. As K. Nichols points out:

If everything we experience is thought of as part of revelation, that concept is bound to become blurred and uncertain. If we try to make revelation mean almost everything, it is bound to end up meaning almost nothing.¹⁵⁴

To avoid this reduction it is not unfair at all to use Smart's phen-

153. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

154. K. Nichols (1978), p. 66,

omenological approach in pluralist societies in so far as it preserves the explicit element of religion. Towards this direction the Australian Roman-Catholic R. Rummery has successfully worked. Rummery has shown that catechesis converges with the claims of the phenomenological approach. After a detailed analysis of this convergence in chapter seven of his book entitled 'Catechesis and Religious Education in a Pluralist Society' Rummery concludes:

There seems every justification for saying that there are strong lines of convergence between the catechetical model 'the education of (the) faith' and the principles of Working Paper No 36 [in which Smart explores his approach], despite some of the important differences noted. This is not simply to limit the value of the Working Paper to its function as a possible platform towards catechesis but rather to applaud the breadth of an approach to the teaching and learning of religion which values the importance of addressing the man of today in terms of his own surroundings, of affording a vision which, at one and the same time, is open to man and the immanent but also to God and the transcendent, and to a practical involvement with ecumenism which leads in the direction of a unity of faith. When we have said all this, we have described an education which leads towards faith; we have described at least an important prelude to the 'education of faith'.¹⁵⁵

With regard to the attitude of the Anglican Church towards the current educational theory and its influence on R.E., a comprehensive Report on Religious Education was released in 1970 by a committee of expert theologians and educationists under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Durham, Ian T. Ramsey. The Report took into account all the factors which have influenced R.E. in recent years, that is, theological, educational, social and so on. Grounded on that basis the Report claimed that the aims of R.E. in a pluralist society should be the following:

To explore the place and significance of religion in human life and so to make a distinctive contribution to each pupil's search for a faith by which to live. To achieve this aim, the teacher will seek to introduce most pupils to that biblical, historical, and theolo-

155. R. Rummery (1975), p. 191.

gical knowledge which forms the cognitive basis of the Christian faith. This will be done with careful reference to the ages, interests, and degrees of comprehension of the pupils. The teacher will also seek to show his pupils the insights provided by Christian faith and experience into a wide range of personal, social, and ethical problems. Moreover, he will seek to discuss with his pupils the various answers and approaches provided by this faith to those basic questions of life and existence which perplex all thoughtful men. Where appropriate, he will also study other religions and belief systems. The teacher is thus seeking rather to initiate his pupils into knowledge which he encourages them to explore and appreciate, than into a system of belief which he requires them to accept. To press for acceptance of a particular faith or belief system is the duty and privilege of the Churches and other similar religious bodies. It is certainly not the task of a teacher in a county school. If the teacher is to press for any conversion, it is conversion from a shallow and unreflective attitude to life. If he is to press for commitment, it is commitment to the religious quest, to that search for meaning, purpose, and value which is open to all men.¹⁵⁶

From the above long quotation it is obvious how open and suitable these aims seem to be for a pluralist society, like that of Britain. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out, that the Report does not tackle so much the theological presuppositions which could justify such an openness. Rather it seems to accept more or less the current humanistic view about education without putting into question its assumptions from a Christian theological point of view.

156. Durham Report (1970), pp. 103-104.

CONCLUSIONS

Some Considerations and Proposals for the Future of R.E. in Greece.

In Part One of this dissertation we saw how R.E. in Greece has been developed since the earliest times till today by examining both implicit and explicit factors which affected this development. In Part Two we examined the current educational process in Britain and its effects on R.E. in this country. In this last concluding Chapter we try to consider and make some suggestions which could help R.E. in Greece to develop more constructively and overcome the present difficulties, taking into account the current British educational process. Nevertheless we would like to draw the attention of the readers of this dissertation to the fact that in our arguments a notion prevails that Greek society is quite different from the British in many respects and especially in the respect that Greece is not a pluralist society. Also our readers have to bear in mind that the function of the Christian Orthodox religion in Greece is quite different from that of the Christian religion with its various faiths and denominations in Britain. This is because Greek Orthodoxy preserves to a great extent its homogeneity, and, therefore, is regarded as the dominant, so-called 'civil religion' of the country in so far as the vast majority of the population is baptized and at least formally belongs to that Church.

Since the last two decades many things have changed within Greek society. These changes are primarily concerned with the emergence of the urban cities and the rapid industrialization of the country. Many people moved from the villages and small towns to the big cities which became centres of the industrial estates. Thus, inevitably because of the urbanization of many parts of the country a rapid process of secularization occurred within the Greek cities. This process was also reinforced by the increased number of the universities, the influence of the mass media (radio, television, cinema, etc.) and the various kinds of communications (telephones, transport, etc.) and the foreign visitors to Greece (tourists), the increased influence of the press (newspapers, journals, books, etc.), the travels of many people abroad, especially among the students, and so forth, affected the traditional way of transmitting the culture with the prevailing faith into the new generation.

Thus, in the urban cities, although the transmission of the faith (i.e. the Christian Orthodox) continues, it would be unfair to assert that it continues in the same way as in the past. It would also be worth noticing that since the Second World War the authority of family, Church, traditional morality and so on was put into question and the younger generation was brought up within a climate of revolt, doubt, anxiety and so forth. Ideals broke down and young people started to look for new ones. Their enthusiasm, however, stopped for seven years during the dictatorship, when their European and American colleagues were striving to find new directions for both survival and revival within a society captured by social injustice and discrimination against young people and students. The young people, however, were those who revolted against the colonels of Greece, by asking for democratic education and freedom.

In all these attempts young people did not find any significant help on the part of the official Church. It is not our purpose to analyze here the reasons of the Church's indifference towards the young people's expectations. What, however, should be said in this respect is that a lot of young people, although they did not renounce their Christian Orthodox faith, have been removed from the life of the Church. Of course, many young people who belong to the left-wing political organizations and have absorbed the Marxist ideas are not interested in religion at all. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that some other young people envisage a Christian Orthodox Church which could use a modern language in order to encounter the rapid changes occurring in the world as well as to be able to tackle satisfactorily people's real problems. The old language used by the Church is not acceptable any more to the young generation. It is also of great importance that there are some people amongst the young who are interested in the mystical and ascetic theology of the Orthodox Church. These same people are more or less those who regard Orthodoxy as a part of our national heritage rooted in the Byzantine past.

In this polarization, therefore, R.E. (i.e. Christian education) is called to offer its service in the Greek school. On the other hand, its uncertain future is reflected in the current debates which are concerned with the separation of the Church from the State. Also in some educational circles R.E. has started to be put into question in so far as it is concerned with the uneducational process of indoctrination.¹⁵⁷ In short,

157. See article by A. Kazepides entitled: "The Ideological Confusion and Indoc-

R.E. undoubtedly is confronted with all these serious problems at the present time.

Without denying our own Christian Orthodox tradition, we have to consider the above problems very carefully and realistically by taking into account people's interests—especially those of the young—the rapid changes occurring in our society as well as the current educational claims. Bearing these factors in mind we would like to suggest the following:

Firstly, the school is a social institution which aims at educating pupils. We have said quite a lot about what we mean by education throughout Part Two of this dissertation. We agree with Working Paper 36, when it argues that:

Schools should not look for their perspective either to organized religion or to the body politic, but to the insights of disciplined scholarship. That is to say, they are neither religious nor civic, but academic institutions. So far as teaching and learning are concerned, their primary loyalty is not to a traditional organized faith nor to the views of the body politic, but to the onward-going enterprise of scholars in the various fields of disciplined investigation.¹⁵⁸

In this sense, the role of the State school is different from that of the Sunday School. This is because the latter is primarily concerned with the evangelization of the Christian Orthodox faith and catechesis, whereas the former is concerned with the education of pupils into religion.

Secondly, even though the State school differs considerably from the Sunday School it does not mean that R.E. should be excluded from the State school curriculum. We saw elsewhere why religion should have a place in the school curriculum. What, however, could be objected to as being against educational claims is to indoctrinate pupils into a specific set of beliefs by ignoring intentionally all others or minimizing their value and significance.

Thirdly, the Christian Orthodox religion undoubtedly should

trination of Young People in Greek Education» in the Journal of Greek Secondary Teachers' Association: *Logos and Praxis*, Vol. 1, No. 7, 1979, pp. 61-74 (in Greek). See also critique of this article by K. Gregoriades, «The Greek Christian Orthodox Witness for the Education of our Young», *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, No 8, 1979, pp. 82-96 (in Greek).

158. Schools Council Working Paper 36 (1971), p. 27.

have the priority amongst the other beliefs which should be taught through the R.E. curriculum. This is because, as we have already seen above, Orthodoxy played and still plays an important role within the national and religious life of Greek society. But we must teach the Christian Orthodox faith in such a way as to enable pupils (who could be either believers or non-believers or indifferent towards religion) to understand it, to get inside it as well as to leave them free to make their own decision. We have also to be prepared that their decision might be either to accept or reject the Christian Orthodox faith. Whatever, however, the decision making is, at least it should be regarded as the pupils' own decision which was taken after a critical investigation. This decision must be accepted and respected by R.E. teachers, parents, Church and so on. The very nature of Christianity is against any pressure for accepting its teaching. The history and the practice of the early Church towards the evangelization of the gentiles and other non-believers as well as the evangelistic task of the great Fathers could teach us a lot on the matter under consideration. Any claim of pressure, therefore, towards pupils to accept any particular faith could be regarded not only as uneducational but also as un-Christian as it would be against the Christian teaching of love, tolerance, respect of human freedom and so on.

It is not the place here to explore how pupils should get inside the Christian Orthodox faith and tradition. Some proposals, however, should be made. In our view, the rich symbolism of the Orthodox liturgy, the iconography, the Byzantine architecture and art in general, the festivals of the Orthodox Church, the religious customs which are inseparable parts of the daily life and experience of many Greeks, especially of those who live in the villages and rural towns, and so on should be explored and properly understood by the pupils. By this exploration pupils could see how deeply the Christian Orthodox faith is rooted in the Greek people's life.

The Christian Orthodox faith, therefore, should not be taught as an abstract teaching irrelevant to the pupils' daily experiences. On the contrary, it should be taught as something which has been practised since the earliest times of Christianity and it is still being practised by many people. To indicate and discuss in this light the changes and developments which happened within the Orthodox Church since the earliest times till today should be a desirable task. In this respect it would also be a very desirable task to enable pupils to know and understand how the other Orthodox Christians (Russian, Roumanian, and so on)

practise the Orthodox faith and under which circumstances. For the same reasons an objective exploration and understanding of the other Christian denominations would help pupils considerably to consider better the Christian ecumenical dialogue. This process might also be regarded as very important in so far as our country is going very soon to be a full member of the Common Market and European Community.

In our view, by teaching the Christian Orthodox faith and Christianity in general, according to the above suggested approach, we take seriously into account—at least to a great extent—what Greek pupils would expect from the R.E. of today. In this case, we are convinced that we reckon with pupils' interests, expectations and daily experiences which are of a great importance for designing a modern R.E. syllabus which could complete the long deficiency of all the R.E. syllabuses till now.

Fourthly, to fulfil pupils' interests on the one hand and to satisfy educational claims on the other, it would be appropriate to introduce into all the levels of secondary school and to the last year of primary school the teaching of other world religions more systematically. Pupils want to know more about the other world religions as a recent research has shown, held among Greek students.¹⁵⁹ Of course, in the sixth form pupils are taught a few elements about the doctrines of the other world religions. But this is not enough. Pupils should become aware of the other major world religions by enabling them to get inside the six dimensions of each religion.¹⁶⁰ As the Working Paper 36 points out:

In the past the focus of study has been too much on the doctrines of other religions and too little on the other five dimensions — mythology, ethical outlook, liturgical life, inner experience, and social expression. Each of these is a piece of the jigsaw puzzle, and for a true picture of a given religion all must be studied. Moreover, there are many academic standpoints from which they may be viewed; the insights of history, psychology, and sociology are particularly important. At the same time, every effort must be made to allow the phenomena to speak for themselves and not to impose upon them any presuppositions. The use of other disciplines is to facilitate understanding, not to explain

159. See P. Kyriakides (1978), p. 31ff.

160. See more on the six dimensions of religion in section 4 of Chapter IV of this dissertation.

things away. Religious beliefs and practices are not solely the product of non-religious factors.¹⁶¹

It is not, therefore, educationally proper to exalt in schools any particular faith at the expense of others. Pupils could alone see the differences and resemblances between the religions of the world and could decide for their value, acceptance or rejection. On the other hand, any condemnation of any religion or faith could be characterized as un-Christian in so far as it rejects the principle of Christian love and respect of people's freedom, faith and so on.¹⁶²

Fifthly, based on the same reasons given above in our fourth proposal, it could be a desirable task to introduce into our R.E. syllabuses the teaching of some non-religious faiths, as for example Marxism, in so far as our pupils are interested in that. Our own experience from teaching catechesis in Sunday Schools the last few years has showed that young people are very interested in knowing what are the differences or similarities which exist between the Christian and the Marxist faiths. Of course, in the State schools we could not indoctrinate pupils into one or another belief or faith. On the contrary our assumption in teaching whatever faith — religious or non-religious — is to teach and present it as objectively as we can. This is a perennial educational claim in a democratic and free educational system.¹⁶³

161. Working Paper 36, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

162. See Chr. Gotsis' constructive criticism on the textbooks of R.E. in the sixth form of Greek schools in which some elements of the major world religions are given. Chr. Gotsis (1978), p. 189.

163. For teaching Marxism objectively through R.E. curriculum see D. Naylor and J. Krejci, «Teaching about Marxism» in *World Faiths in Education*, ed. by W. Owen Cole (1978), pp. 116-134. See also e.g. the following books which criticize Marxism from a Christian point of view: Hans-Gerhard Koch, *The Abolition of God. Materialistic Atheism and Christian Religion*, London: SCM Press, 1963; Donald Evans, *Communist Faith and Christian Faith*, London: SCM Press, 1964; Helmut Gollwitzer, *The Christian Faith and the Marxist Criticism of Religion*, Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1970.

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