RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND ITS UNDERLYING STRUCTURE.

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ABSTRACT

Part 1 of this thesis is an historical survey of the legislation and development of Religious Education as a school subject.

Part 2 is a study of the different approaches to the subject. The thesis outlines a continuing tension within the subject between those who see Religious Education as a phenomenological study; those who see it as a confessional opportunity; and those who view it as a broad discussion period or nurturing experience. There is also an examination of the issues relating to Moral Education within this subject.

Part 3 summarises the historical perspective, examines the nature of the subject in the light of educational theory, makes a brief examination of the 1992 White Paper (Choice and Diversity) and finally sets out the idea that if the right approaches to the subject are adopted there is no need for the opting-out clauses in the Government legislation.
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INTRODUCTION

The 1992/93 White Paper, 'Choice and Diversity', is once again revealing the same problem as all previous legislation which has tried to deal with the subject of Religious Education. This is because there has never been a concise understanding of the underlying structure of the subject. Other subjects in the curriculum have experienced new developments, novel ideas, sudden changes, but Religious Education has attracted considerable legislation as a response to ecclesiastical and later social demands, but seldom for educational reasons.

The legislation surrounding Religious Education has often been heated because of factors more external than internal to the subject, and the consequences have been to confuse and complicate the nature of the subject both for the teacher and those who are taught. Legislation will never solve the problems associated with the subject because there has never been a consensus of opinion as to its underlying structure. To pass an Act of Parliament on Transport without first defining 'Transport' would be impossible, and the failure to agree on the aims and
objectives of Religious Education has led the subject into the arena of parliamentary, public and educational conflict.

The most recent White Paper (Choice and Diversity) indicates that the polemic has not changed since it became an issue in the 1870 Education Act. The first part of this thesis examines the history of the subject, and it will be seen that while educationalists and others have tried to examine and define the nature of the subject, politicians have used it as a response to a social situation or to reach an ideal of society which they envisage. So for example it will be seen that the 1870 Act was a political response to the ecclesiastical conflicts of the day, that the Religious Education clauses of the 1944 Act were a 'Christian/moral' hope for post war society, and that the 1988 Act and current Bill use the religious clauses mainly as a good citizen programme. The politicians have, by and large, ignored the work of the educationalists in this field, and the educationalists themselves have differed as to the precise structure of the subject.

By the nature of our constitution the legislature and its executive have the final word which must by law be followed. No other academic discipline has been so subject to the personal views and aspirations of politicians who are mainly the
products of the independent school system, and yet who legislate for a very different and rapidly changing society.

As a result of this chequered history four distinct elements have emerged within the underlying structure of Religious Education, and these are examined in part two of this thesis. All four elements (Confessionalism, Implicit, Explicit, Moral) have been studied in the past and well documented.

The third part of the thesis draws together the historical problem and illustrates that from the vast majority of educational perspectives one of these structures (Confessionalism) has nothing to do with true education; that two (Implicit and Explicit) are educationally important but should be regarded as separate and distinct from one another, and this should be made unequivocally clear by a new nomenclature. The originality or novelty of this idea is to clarify this underlying structure and by so doing indicate that once the various elements are clearly defined the subject is enhanced in value and becomes much more teachable. If these differences within the current structure are understood by politicians and public alike, there would be no need for the legislative opting out clauses, and the subject need not be used as a political vehicle.

The appendix contains some empirical research
carried out in the independent system, the educational background of many politicians, and demonstrates that those who are taught have the ability to grasp these fundamental differences and so enjoy and gain more from this subject.
PART 1

CHAPTER 1

Religious Education

A Brief History to 1944

Church and State

In the days before the State took an active interest and role in education, the study of religion was, naturally enough, Christian in nature, missionary in basis and ecclesiastical in aim. The Church had been the foundation of education in England and saw, as its inalienable duty, the right to educate young people into the conviction of the Christian faith, and thereby attendance in Church. Given the historical background of the Church, and its stimulus to education, it is not surprising to find the Church, especially the established Church of England, so dominant even into the twentieth century. The 'vast majority of schools were maintained by the churches' (1) prior to 1870, and by this date over three quarters of grant-aided elementary schools were Anglican in foundation.
During this period the Nonconformists became politically more powerful, and their reaction to the Anglican interest was prompt. They exerted considerable influence by establishing the British and Foreign School Society in 1814. Roman Catholics, released by the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, started their Poor School Committee and worked towards their own denominational schools. The Government assisted all these various Church educational enterprises with financial aid.

The Church of England was also deeply involved in the Public Schools. The term, 'publicae scolae' was not a common term, probably first used in the 'Opus de Miraculis Sancti AEdmundi', written about 1180, by Abbot Samson of Bury. These traditional English Schools had started as acts of charity but quickly developed into schools for educating the sons of the rich and influential.

Religious Education and the Beginning of Contention

Because the churches had taken such an interest in both public school and elementary school development, Religious Education was firmly established within the curriculum well before 1870. In 1869 the Birmingham Educational League was formed;
based on secularist ideals, it sought universal, free, compulsory and unsectarian elementary education. It was too small to exert any serious pressure, though it may have influenced the Act of 1870 to a small degree. This secularist cause 'was later taken up by the trade union and Labour Party (1895-1911), but was quietly dropped by them because of the opposition of their own Roman Catholic members.' (2)

However, it was not the secularists who caused the Government grave concern but the denominations who failed to co-operate at any rational level. As the Bishop of London in the next century was to admit:

"The bitterness of feeling between Protestant Dissent and Tractarian Anglicanism prevented any common Christian action." (3)

Denominational Conflict and the Cowper-Temple Clause in the 1870 Act

The Church of England was the most powerful and influential of the Christian denominations. W.E. Forster in a Parliamentary debate pointed out that:
"There are denominational inspectors all through the Kingdom, crossing one another continually in the most curious and inconvenient manner .... it is only in the Church of England that inspectors have any power to examine with respect to religious doctrine. Now we do not think that fair to other religious denominations." (4)

In the debates leading up to the 1870 Act there was considerable antagonistic feeling. The whole question as to whether Religious Education should be retained caused some controversy. The various points of view soon polarised into the different church and political camps. The Radicals demanding a secular system, the Tractarian High Church claiming that education was the right of the Church alone, and an evangelical view which sought co-operation with the state. In the end the Nonconformists, who were strongly politically linked with the Liberal Party, became a major pressure group in the field of education. The Liberal M.P. W.F. Cowper-Temple successfully moved a clause that 'no religious catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught' (Elementary Act, 1870, Section 14,2.) in the newly established Board Schools. He undoubtedly saw this clause as a means by which he could bring peace to
the situation. The Act also permitted parents to withdraw their children from religious instruction or worship, and, to enable this, schools were required to timetable religious teaching at the start or end of the day. Although Religious Education did take place, in one form or another, in the period 1870–1944 'Religious Education was not required by law in England and Wales.' (5)

Church and State post 1870

By 1900 the proportion of church schools stood as high as 53%, but by 1938 had fallen to 30% and by 1985 was as low as 22%. (6) The conflict between denominations did not help in the development of the subject. Some Nonconformists, after the 1902 Act’s rate-aid clause, were prepared to go to prison rather than pay their rates to such a cause, while some High Churchmen would have demanded that the State left the entire education of the country in their hands. Yet the system seemed to move along reasonably well, much to the relief of Forster and his parliamentary colleagues. The National Society was able to report that in one of their largest schools over a period of ten to twelve years there had been only four cases of
complaints about the 'religious difficulty.' (7) One majority report stressed the need for positive religious and moral training and demanded the repeal of the Cowper-Temple clause, and rate-aid to voluntary schools. A minority report rejected these recommendations. This particular report was undoubtedly the result of anti-denominational dissatisfaction, because amongst their demands was the complete state takeover since there was the objection that in some areas there was no choice but to attend a church school. However, the 'line of least political resistance was to leave things as they were.' (8)

The Cowper-Temple clause was the most heated element of the educational legislation of this period. So, for example, in the debates of 1902, Mr Dillon (Mayo East) 'said he could not support the Amendment, because the effect of it would be to introduce the Cowper-Temple clause, which he regarded as the concentrated essence of all evil...’ (9) With statements of this magnitude being made in the House it is not difficult to understand the passions involved.

On the other side of such demands was the work of the Moral Instruction League started in 1897 which made an attempt 'to draw up a syllabus of ethical and moral teaching which could take the place
of religious teaching. The efforts of the League collapsed in 1919.' (10) This approach was to add yet another dimension to the tension felt within the subject of Religious Education, namely that Religious Education is a subject to be 'considered largely as a means of making social beings out of recalcitrant children.' (11) This view was to dominate much of the legislation and study of Religious Education to the present day.

The 1902 Act

By the turn of the century it was apparent that new legislation was required, and although the new Prime Minister, Balfour took responsibility for the drafting and the passage of the Act, it was really the work of Robert Morant who later served as Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education. (12) This new Act extended rate-aid to Church Schools and so made them responsible only for capital expenditure and repairs. This was done in order to make sure that they survived and in the hope that the financial relief would assist them in raising their standards. Voluntary Schools were placed under the jurisdiction of LEAs, they were renamed Non-Provided Schools, but although the denominational schools were thus more
closely incorporated into the state system their structure of managers permitted them to retain their identity. The High Church had pressed for Anglican teaching to Anglican children in Board Schools but after some debate this was turned down. In one sense the Cross Commission's Majority report had found some justification. 'It took fifty nine days of bitter debates to force the measure through Parliament, the great bulk of this time being consumed by argument over those sections of the Act concerned with the religious issues.' (13)

The Nonconformists felt bitter because they perceived that the Established Church had used its influence to dominate the education debate. Mr Lloyd George pointed out that 'there were 8,000 parishes which would be affected by the amendment. They contained 9,000 denominational schools, and non-conformists would be bound to send their children to those schools where the only religious education they could get would be contrary to the doctrine of their own church', receiving the reply from Balfour 'that even churches were not always talking about their differences'. (14)
High or Low Church of England apart, it was going to be impossible to have any kind of uniform system, but it was most apparent in the teaching of Religious Education. The Cowper-Temple clause remained. In some voluntary schools there would be a confessional approach to the subject, while in the Provided Schools there would be a non-doctrinal approach, stipulated by law.

During the years of 1906 and 1908 no less than three major Educational Bills were introduced in order to withdraw the rate-aid to church schools and/or abolish the dual system. They failed because the system was working with a higher degree of harmony than its critics had ever anticipated.

More to the point was the fact that Religious Education persisted as part of the curriculum in all schools. As early as 1904 the West Riding of Yorkshire produced what could be described as one of the first Agreed Syllabuses. The most famous was to come in 1924, namely the Cambridgeshire Syllabus, but the 1904 West Riding of Yorkshire Syllabus established the principle that some kind of agreement could be reached for the 'growing concern for good religious teaching in council schools.'(15)
During this period Religious Education tended to mean Christian nurture. Church schools, however, adopted a more direct confessional church membership type approach. Some of the provided schools were more neutral, and were content to relate the stories of the Bible as their lesson content. 'Religious Education in state schools began at a time when it was possible to define the English culture as Christian.'(16)

The Churches begin to Relate

The First World War, with all its attendant horror, tended to minimise the issues which had been so important in the immediate years following the 1901 Act.

Not only the First World War, but the loss of influence by the Nonconformists, had its effect.(17) Not because they were any longer a challenge to the established Church but because there were the first signs of genuine co-operation between the denominations. As early as 1910 the World Missionary Conference was held in Edinburgh, which many regard as the start of the modern ecumenical scene.
In March 1923 two Advisory Committees were established to investigate the possibilities of a single system of administration, and in the following year (1924) the Cambridgeshire County Council produced the first real and recognised Agreed Syllabus. It was an important landmark, not so much because of its content, but because of the indication that co-operation between the Churches of the protestant faith was now possible. Although the Cambridgeshire Syllabus was an historical landmark the Cowper-Temple clause was very much in evidence. Doctrinal, confessional or nurturing type Religious Education was not permitted in provided schools, but was very much in existence in Church schools.

The 1930s

The 1930s was a decade in which the subject of Religious Education was looked at more and more seriously. In 1933 the Board of Education called a conference to consider the possibility of improving facilities to help teachers in the task of Religious Education. Meanwhile the Church continued to strengthen its role within the dual structure of English education. The 1936 Education Act gave the Church 'a real opportunity in regard to the provision of senior schools. The Act allowed a Government grant
of up to 75% of the cost to the promoters of such schools', (18) though in fact the proportion of Church Schools declined to 30% by 1938. Despite the weakening position of the Anglican Church, its influence was widely responsible for the 'acceptance in 1944 of compulsory religious worship and instruction in all state maintained schools.' (19)

The Roman Catholic Church indicated its position in 1929, when Pope Pius XI published his encyclical letter, 'Divini Illius Magistri' which stated that 'the specific and immediate purpose of Christian Education is to co-operate with Divine Grace in forming the true and perfect Christian.' (20) He also rejected, in the same letter, religiously mixed schools on the grounds that 'the mere fact that religious teaching (often very meagre) is imparted in a school does not make it satisfy the rights of the Church and the family, nor render it fit to be attended by Catholic pupils.' (21) The social or public response to Religious Education was somewhat different. In the 1930s the middle classes did not want their children to be blue but white collared workers, and this impulse gave rise to a new status for the grammar schools. Religious Education was therefore seen as appropriate 'by the parents for a professional career. Knowledge was deemed
worthwhile, if it could lead to a better standard of living.' (22)

The Spens Report

The Spens report urged Religious Education upon the schools, although, at that time, it was still not a legal requirement. Indeed the Report put 'Religious Education in the forefront as the focus of national motive.' (23) The Report grappled with many problems relating to the subject, not least the aims and objectives of the subject. The nomenclature of the subject underpinned this problem:

"When we include Religious Knowledge in the first group, we are thinking mainly of the religious or moral education which can be given in the classroom, though Religious Instruction or 'Scripture' is, of course, only a part of Religious Education." (24)

This 'two-tension' aspect emerged when the Committee grappled with the problems of examination. They found that in one respect the 'teaching of religion is not, and cannot be, examinable' and later that 'this is not necessarily also the case in the teaching of scripture, provided a principle be adopted which we regard as in itself a right
principle.' (25)

The Spens Report was also to highlight one of the continuing problems of Religious Education, namely the lack of expertise amongst teachers, and encouraged further training of specialists. Here, however, they tended to downgrade the subject in so far that they regarded it as 'important that teachers primarily responsible for organising the study of scriptures in a school should not be specialists in the narrow sense that their own teaching has been confined to that subject...' (26) The Norwood Report, a few years later, was also to state that 'a Local Authority or Head of a school would be perfectly justified in advertising that a teacher was needed, capable of taking a form in Latin, English and Scripture, and no one could feel that there was any intolerance in what would be an action of plain common sense.' (27)

The War Years and the Norwood Report

While the Spens Committee was busy with its considerations there was, from 1937 to 1941, a Joint Conference between Anglicans and Evangelical Free Churchmen. They issued a Report in December of 1938 in which they urged that in addition to corporate worship in schools Religious Instruction should have
its due place among the subjects recognised by the community and all the educational authorities.

The Church as a whole busied itself with the issue, hammering at the doors of Parliament and the educational authorities. In 1941 the Archbishops of Canterbury and York issued a joint statement:

'There is an ever-deepening conviction that in this present struggle we are fighting to preserve those elements in human civilization and in our own national tradition which owe their origin to the Christian faith. Yet we find on every side profound ignorance of the Christian faith itself. There is evidently an urgent need to strengthen our foundations by securing that effective Christian education should be given in all schools to the children, the future citizens, of our country.' (28)

The next major report was on the Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools, chaired by Sir Cyril Norwood, (President of St John’s College, Oxford, and a former Master of Marlborough). It extended the Spens Report, took on board the feelings of the Church and made some important statements about the subject of Religious Education.

The chapter in the Report dealing with Religious Education, started with a realistic appraisal of the Christian life of the country. It
pointed to the fact that the home was no longer a place for religious instruction, and the churches were not attended as well as they could be; it even pointed out, cynically, but realistically, that Sunday Schools were frequently a repository for noisy children on a Sunday afternoon. (29) The Report also stressed the need for Religious Instruction, qualifying the conscience clause (Cowper-Temple clause 1870) and supporting the concept of the Agreed Syllabus.

As with the Spens Report the Norwood Committee also had to cope with the 'two-tension' nature of the subject. They drew a distinction between Scripture Knowledge and Religious Education. The Norwood Committee called the Scripture Knowledge teaching a mixture of Religious Instruction, Scripture or Divinity, and thoroughly endorsed the Spens Report in its statement that the study of Scripture is historical and objective, and can be examined. It then bewailed the lack of expertise amongst the teachers. The same theme came through from the Spens Report as mentioned above, namely, that although there is a desire for specialists, it was considered preferable that Scripture could be offered with one or two other subjects.
Vaguely, and ill-defined, the Report eventually came to the conclusion that Religious Instruction is the objective examinable part, 'but only a part of Religious Education as a whole.'(30)

The aims and objectives of the subject had proved impossible to define, but the Cowper-Temple clause, by excluding religious catechism, had at least laid a small part of the foundation for the teaching of the subject from a purely academic approach.
PART 1

CHAPTER 2

THE 1944 EDUCATION ACT

General Background

It would be curious to speculate on one of the 'ifs' of history, namely would the 1944 Education Act have passed in its form through Parliament had it not been for the Second World War? As Lord Rankeillour in the House of Lords Debate said: "There never was a time when men of good will thought more what they agreed upon than what they differed upon." (1) The country, hard at war, the Nazi foe the common enemy, made the differences of the past seem trivial, and the common good of the future the horizon to strive towards. The Government looked towards education as something which was not simply to train young people for a vocation or task, but to secure a happier childhood, and to develop talents in order to
enrich the inheritance of the country.

With this as the Government's policy it was their intention to switch 'educational activity away from a former emphasis on purely vocational training for the good of society to a concern for the development of the individual child to his or her full potential.' (2) The 1944 Act, taken so much for granted, and much criticised in the light of recent educational investigation, was one of the great Acts of the war years. It 'was probably the greatest single advance in English Educational History, its provisions showing real breadth of outlook and educational vision.' (3) There is little doubt that the horror and suffering of the war years obliged men to look to a better future and to seek a goal of peace and happiness. A sense of common aim was required and perhaps a tinge of nostalgic feeling for the past. The fascist states had shown, albeit in an evil way, a sense of drive and energy which had nearly brought English democracy to its knees. 'The fascists had shown the power of a nation united behind the values of an ideology: the war effort of a democratic nation could in part demonstrate and in part demand a corresponding cohesion of society around the national tradition of values and its roots.' (4)
Some of this hope for the future and the nostalgia for the past could be found in the religious elements of the Act: 'much of the inspiration for the religious settlement of 1944 emerged from a period in wartime when our democratic society needed a dynamic sense of national purpose with which to confront totalitarian ideologies. There is no doubt that the intentions of our legislators were predominantly social at the time; namely that the Christian religion could provide a purpose and an ethic which the whole nation could share.' (5) There was undoubtedly the hope that the Christian faith could act as a form of moral, cultural and social bulwark for the fabric of society.

Few critics, then or now, have doubted that what passed through the legislature was the feeling of the people, as Leeson wrote later: 'there can be no doubt that in it Parliament was expressing the will of the nation.' (6) Moreover, the general feeling was supported by research carried out by F.E.Morton (1944) in which an attitude scale was administered to groups of adults and adolescents to discover their attitudes towards religion. In the adult group, the responses were favourable towards religion though few went to church, and they certainly wanted their children exposed to the Christian faith. A 'few favoured denominational teaching, slightly more
favoured 'no religious teaching at all', but the overwhelming majority divided themselves almost equally between 'undenominational teaching' and 'teaching in many religions.' (7)

This, of course, was a natural reaction; the war years had seen moral values questioned and frequently laid aside. Atrocities were reported from all over the world, and the problem of force having to be met by force must have compelled many people of good will to wonder what the future held. Throughout English history, morality and religion had always been closely associated both at the personal and national level. So it was that to 'religious education people looked primarily to assist in this task of redefining and re-inforcing personal and social moral values and standards in the minds of the children who would pass through the nation's schools.' (8) The Government White Paper, published in 1943 in preparation for the Bill, had expressed the fact that people wanted religious education because it sprang from the desire to revive the spiritual and personal values in society.

For some years the press had also made the point. As early as 1940 (17th February), The Times wrote: 'that religion must form the basis of any education worth the name, and that education with religion omitted is not really education at all'.
Later in 1941 (16th January) that 'the future of religious education involves the future of our national life and character.' The Times Educational Supplement of October 30th 1944, indicated that Religious Education would give a sense of cohesion to society. From the popular point of view there is no doubt that the ordinary man equated a better future with a moral future, and that was necessarily linked with religion. 'At the level of the common people, there was a tendency to equate Christianity with 'common decency' and as much respect for formal Christianity as was compatible with not actually going to Church.' (9)

There was no doubt that the vast majority of people supported the White Paper and especially the religious clauses. 'There were moments for many people when they were aware that religion was a heritage they valued. At this level, religious belief was felt as something that bound the nation together rather than dividing it.' (10) Even Churchill in his broadcast speech of 21st March 1943 referred to religion as the 'fundamental element in school life.' (11) There is also little doubt that these religious provisions 'had the backing both of the teachers' (12) and nearly all the other elements in society.
For many people there was a close association between the traditional beliefs of Christianity and democracy, if only because fascism was not religious. Christians at this time had a fairly sympathetic public who viewed the Church as being abreast of 'the times.' The Malvern Conference of 1941 had met on the subject of industry and daily living, and Church personnel had been involved as everyone else had in the war effort. Temple was a popular and respected authoritative figure, and had established the BCC, and was seen as a man prepared to co-operate with other denominations. His neutrality in this area suited the state policy of the Cowper-Temple clause. In short, the ground was ready and prepared for the new Education Act and its clauses regarding religion and Church schools.

Lord Butler was to write later:

'My general aim and intention in framing the clauses dealing with religious education in what became the Education Act of 1944 was to recognise formally this special place of religion in education. In particular I was concerned to give effect, so far as practicable, and as part of a wider ranging settlement acceptable not only to all denominations with their differing interests but also to the other partners in the public education system...' (13)
Church Influence

The fear of the controversies of the past was a spectre that all wanted to avoid. Lord Addison, on introducing the Bill in the House of Lords referred to the bitter acrimony of years gone by and stated that with 'the willingness of the different denominations to co-operate, we can secure this compromise, we shall have gained immeasurably. I shall say no more about it,' (14) The 'it' being the denominational rows of earlier years.

At one stage in the Lords Debate the issue nearly arose. Lord Rochester, a free Churchman, expressed some disappointment that the proposed Act maintained the dual system. Later the Lord Bishop of St Albans criticised Lord Rochester for not putting teachers of the subject to some testing system. To which he received the reply: "I felt everything depended on having teachers who had a personal experience of Jesus." (15) The Bishop replied that he was looking for a test on the knowledge of the subject, to which Rochester interjected "No sectarian tests." (16) Later the Bishop attacked the Cowper-Temple clause because 'undenominational Christianity produces undenominational Christians.' (17) The
danger of past acrimony did not emerge with any major impact, and many of these problems in the Lords were once again due to the failure to give appropriate voice to the fact that the subject was twofold. The Bishop referred to the question of 'Instruction' on the one hand and 'Education' on the other. The White Paper made this point, but it was not sufficiently emphasised in a way which enabled everyone to understand, and thus the degree of tension continued.

Much of the confusion was evident simply because the Church had created an area of influential pressure, and with such a vested interest it was understandable that many saw the subject as purely 'confessional' and at the very worst as 'pew filling' potential. The Church of England was the main influence, and although many saw the Established Church as 'the Tory party at prayer', the reality was that 'the leadership of the Church of England managed with generally conspicuous success to avoid identifying the Church of England with the policies or fortunes of any political party.'(18) Nevertheless, the Anglican Church was adept at politics, and there are those who believe that the 'provision for compulsory religious teaching in schools was justified in terms of Christian heritage ... but it was also expedient as a sop to the churches which had given ground over the reform of
the dual system.' (19) R. Butler admitted that he had paid particular attention to the five points of the three Archbishops (20) put forward in 1941, and Fisher stated in an interview regarding his relationship with Temple that 'Willie Temple and I were both schoolmasters and that tells you all you need to know.' (21) Temple was held in high esteem and was well respected by Butler and many members of government. The Archbishops threw their weight behind the compulsory element of Religious Education 'as a means of ensuring that the subject would be taken seriously in the schools at a vital but confused time in the nation's history.' (22)

The Churches were now seen as co-operating; the Established Church because of its undoubted influence took the lead, and because of this influence the Government found little difficulty in making Religious Education compulsory for the first time in English educational history. The various leaders 'regarded it as axiomatic that Religious Education was Christian Education.' (23) Those in positions of power assumed, from their own background, that England was a Christian country, that the people would respond to Christian education, that the educators were Christians, and that young people would respond and find a meaningful experience
in their schools’ Religious Education classes. The Archbishop could see no alternative, in the Lords Debate he claimed that ‘all education must of its very nature be either religious or atheistic. It cannot be neutral. That is impossible. Neutrality in religion is atheism.’ (24) Just as strongly, and understandably so since Lord Rankeillour was a Roman Catholic, came the statement that Religious Education must be dogmatic, "I am glad," he said, "we have got rid of the nonsense that used to be talked thirty or forty years ago about undogmatic religion. If a thing is undogmatic it is not religion. It may be an emotion, it may be a speculation....". (25) Lord Quickswood (Provost of Eton) voiced the general feeling of many influential people when he said "that a very great part of the population are growing up not to be practising Christians, and we want to bring that to an end. We want to make our educational system such that it will turn out practising Christians." (26)

Other Views

There were a few, and only a few, who wanted the subject taught from a purely objective
historical point of view; the Assistant Masters wanted to be left free to design their own course, 'an historical outline, given in a detached and impartial manner, of the main beliefs of the great religions of the world,' (27) while the Committee of the Association of Headmistresses protested that because worship is a spiritual matter, it should not have been made a compulsory area. Nevertheless, despite these protests the government largely ignored them because their influence was minimal.

There was very little opposition to the plans, in the House of Commons 'two voices were to protest against the whole venture, Mr Gallacher and Mr Bevan arguing that education has nothing to do with the next world and that therefore the Churches should have nothing to do with the schools; and that the religious clauses were a plot to foist religion on the state.' (28) Their protest was undoubtedly a reaction to the idea that Religious Education was to be a 'pew-filler', and because of the lively attitude of the Church in this debate it is understandable why they came to this conclusion. It would be interesting to know where they would have stood had they heard the critical point of view of the Assistant Masters, who wanted the subject to survive at least as an academic subject in its own right.
The Religious Clauses

It is quite clear that the two aspects of the subject, referred to in the White Paper as Instruction and Education, had not been sufficiently explained in order to be understood by intelligent lay people involved in the debate. By Religious Instruction there was a specific reference to the objective and examinable part of the subject, to what is today referred to as the explicit or phenomenological approach. The broader term, Religious Education, had much wider connotations as already noted, and was clearly meant to include a mixture of confessionalism and explicit style teaching.

The broad debate concluded that Religious Education should be compulsory, it did not have to be taught at the end or the beginning of the day, and it was open to inspection by the Inspectorate. This certainly increased its effectiveness and prestige. (29) Worship also became compulsory whereas in the past it had been left to the discretion of the schools. The Act also extended the conscience clause for teachers to be able to withdraw. This further underlined the intention that Religious Education was to be wider than Instruction, though 'Instruction' is
used in the wording of the Act. If the subject had been seen as purely academic then teachers would have had little right to withdraw on grounds of conscience but only on grounds of inadequacy. A master of history cannot use grounds of conscience for refusing to teach English literacy, but could claim that he has no expertise in chemistry. In the staff room there is little doubt that this opting-out clause has under-valued the subject for many, and, with regard to professional status, has caused many to shy away from being associated with the subject. The confusion over Education and Instruction both at legislative and school staff room level has caused many problems and misunderstandings regarding the subject. It has been said that 'some teachers contrast that educational purpose with the supposed Instructional purpose of Religious Instruction under the 1944 Act. In fact it is most unlikely that the legislators intended to pass so sophisticated an educational judgment.' (30) Yet the White Paper did try and clarify the matter; in the House of Lords the Lord Bishop of St Albans tried to clarify the issue, but in the end it was debated by people who failed to see the two-tension nature of the subject, or to be prepared to admit that there are two subjects on the agenda.

The Act also made provision for parents to
withdraw their children, and also, where possible, to enable them to receive denominational instruction. The Act ensured the continuance of the Dual system. These important provisions were all seen in the same package, and it is not surprising that the objective teaching of Religion was lost to sight. It was a matter of Christian religion, though the Act (probably out of sympathy for the few Jewish schools) stopped short of actually stating this as such. This at least allowed, in later years, the possibility for teaching other religions, and thus gave some flexibility for the future. (31)

The Act was not definite about the age limits and as a result some 6th Form schools dropped the subject. The Archbishop criticised the White Paper since the subject was seen as a component unnecessary for young people's colleges. (32) Again the subject was thus undervalued, since there would be those who saw it as something one could grow out of or away from. The subject was not regarded as serious or necessary, and after a certain age could be safely dropped as something vaguely childish.

The subject was seen as Christian and also Bible based. The Act, in its Fifth Schedule prescribed the procedure for the adoption of an Agreed Syllabus. A local conference could be called
by the LEA consisting of the following representatives:

'(a) such religious denominations as, in the opinion of the authority, ought, having regard to the circumstances of the area, to be represented;

(b) except in the case of an area in Wales or Monmouthshire, the Church of England;

(c) such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought, having regard to the circumstances of the area, to be represented; and

(d) the authority.' (33)

Each had one vote, they could adopt an existing syllabus, or parts of another syllabus. The four components of the Committee, could in theory, have at least three votes of Anglican sympathy. Also, 'these provisions are unique to religious education. Religion is the only subject which by law the schools are required to teach, and the agreed syllabus is part of a wider agreement by means of which the church schools and the county schools have become more closely integrated.' (34) The Agreed Syllabuses, as mentioned earlier, were mainly based on the standard set by the 1924 Cambridgeshire Syllabus, and were not drastically changed until the late 1960s. Subsequently there were no great changes by law as to
what should be taught. The subject of Religious Instruction was to be Bible based throughout and Christian. The degree of the 'confessional' or 'objective' nature of the subject was to be left to the schools, but more often to the strengths or weaknesses, or, indeed, the inclination and persuasions of individual teachers.

The Aims of Religious Education Remain Confused

It has been said that 'only a negligible amount of thought and inventiveness was applied to the kind of Religious Education that might best satisfy all the many levels of aspiration which made the settlement possible. To claim the settlement as the charter of a narrow confessionalism is flagrantly untrue to the wide range of concerns expressed at the time.' (35) Because there had been little academic study of the nature of Religious Education there was considerable confusion over the nature of the subject. It may not have been intended that Religious Education should be entirely confessional, the White Paper was fairly clear on this, but the debates made it clear that many considered it as such. At the very beginning of his presentation speech in the House of Lords, the Earl of Selbourne said:
"These syllabuses are based on the New Testament, the Apostle's Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and I should like to say, as the father of six children who has himself taught them daily from the age of three or four years until they were confirmed, that there is all the material in these documents to allow full Christian instruction to be given to young children by anyone who is himself a Christian." (36)

In the same debate, the Archbishop tried, as the Bishop of St Albans did later, to indicate that there were two aspects. The Archbishop clearly pointed out that Religious Education is more than Instruction. The 'Instruction' was, for him, the knowledge, the objective facts of religion, the historical outline; the part of Religious Education which was able to be examined like any other subject on the curriculum. The Bishop of St Albans was in fact critical that the White Paper was not as clear on the issue as it could have been:

"It may be my false reading of the White Paper, but it seems to me that the White Paper rather mixes up instruction and education as if they were interchangable terms... Education, especially Education in the Christian Religion and the Christian
way of life, is something different from mere instruction as to what the Christian faith is or what the Christian way of life is. It is education in the ever increasing knowledge of God as being the basis of all Christian character, and incidentally as the basis of loving your neighbour as yourself." (37)

This statement, by a theologian in a seat of legislative power is interesting. First he is well aware that in reality two subjects are under discussion with a confused and intermingled nomenclature; secondly the wider aspect of Religious Education is not only confessional but is seen as the means to teaching morality.

For most involved in the debates and formulation of policy it was undoubtedly meant to be a subject to 'Christianise' school pupils and to give them a basis for morality. Only a few recognised the dual tension in the subject, and the Act simply used the expression 'instruction' for the classroom and left the word 'education' to cover all other facets of the subject.
Religious Education in the Post War Years

Although the years following the Second World War were full of social and political change, the subject of Religious Education tended to stay in a comfortable time warp. It was not until the end of the 1950s that serious questions were raised about the subject, and these led to an intellectual upheaval in the next decade. Historically, it seems that following the 1944 Education Act people had the feeling that, regarding the religious clauses, all that could be achieved had been done. Religious Education continued along the lines of the pre-war approach. This was based on the pre-war Agreed Syllabuses and these were founded on the concept that good citizens could be produced by following a pattern of Bible readings and study. If the author
may be permitted a personal note at this stage, he attended primary and secondary school during this period, and on reflection, Religious Instruction, as it was called, was a tedious series of Old Testament stories about Elijah and a hammering home of New Testament parables. It was a subject which was seen as something which 'had to be done', and only the weaker candidates took it seriously because it was supposed to be easy. The question was frequently asked as to whether Religious Knowledge 'O' level could be counted for University entrance. It was seen as an extension of Sunday School and a period to be avoided at any given opportunity.

From the point of view of teachers it was 'the great stumbling block for many (teachers) in the early days ... was the fear of doctrinal teaching. In an effort to avoid controversial issues they clung to the Bible narrative.' (1)

The Dominance of the Confessional Approach

There seems no question that in many schools Religious Education was seen or expected to be confessional in approach. Many saw it as simply a way of bringing young people into the Church, and Religious Education was viewed as evangelical
outreach. Leeson, an influential Churchman with strong educational connexions, claimed that ‘the England of the future is under God being forged into shape in the Secondary Modern Schools.’ (2) He also claimed that the fostering of Christianity would be easier in the Grammar Schools because of the age of their traditions, as ‘much as for the daughters of the Church as Winchester and Eton.’ (3) It was the belief that Religious Education was intended to bring young people to Christ. Leeson saw the Church as having a major role to play in the subject at whatever level it was taught:

"I believe that at no time within the last century, since the intellectual assault on the faith first opened, have the opportunities before the Church for the exercise of her teaching office, in homes, schools, colleges and the general world outside, not only demanded so much, but also promised so much, as they do to-day." (4)

The teaching in the schools was based on the various Agreed Syllabuses in circulation, and they tended to express the same aims. The 1945 Surrey Syllabus, which was in common use, claimed that its aim was to help young pupils ‘to seek for themselves in Christianity principles which give purpose to life
and a guide to all their problems; and may find inspiration, power and courage to work for their own welfare, for that of their fellow creatures, and for the growth of God's Kingdom.' (5)

It is not surprising that this development took place. The 1944 Act had allowed LEAs to hand over decisions about what should be taught to the Syllabus Conferences and these 'contained a high proportion of distinguished Church Leaders and eminent theologians, whose opinions were treated with respect by members of the LEA and teacher association panels.' (6) Their interests would have been protestant by nature, and therefore Bible orientated. The West Riding Agreed Syllabus (1947) contained several paragraphs on Baptism and Holy Communion, and, as Leeson observed:

"Another indication of change may be found in the increasing stress laid on the truth that the school teaching of religion cannot be held effective unless it leads the children to active membership in the worshipping community of a church, whatever that may be, or, if they are already in membership of a church, confirms them in it." (7)

Leeson, typically of this period, believed that the new approach to Religious Instruction should take children into a worshipping
community and unless it did it would have to be judged as a failure, (8) since ‘all religious teaching must have an evangelistic purpose.’ (9) Leeson, like many others, justified his views with the argument that children are instructed in other subjects, so they should be instructed and given guidance in those matters which are ‘the deepest concerns of their lives here and hereafter.’ (10) The concept that young people have the right to discover for themselves he discounted on the grounds that detachment is impossible, and a teacher’s convictions will inevitably ‘flow out of himself in spite of himself.’ (11) The days of Goldman and his work on Piaget and the realities discovered by Loukes were less than a decade away, and looking at the period of 1945-1959 it can be seen why the 1960s were so revolutionnary for the subject. For Leeson it would have been incomprehensible that a teacher in this subject should be anything else than a convinced church-going committed Christian.

Another writer of this decade was A.V. Murray, who in his books, Education into Religion (1955) and Teaching the Bible (1953), accepted that the lives of great Christians may be of some value but, first and foremost, we must never move away from the fundamental truths of the Bible. These books
underlined the high regard with which the authority of the scriptures was held. They were fundamental to the teaching of Religious Education, and therefore, from his point of view, fundamental for the salvation of one's soul. In 1958 W.M.Wigfield published his book Religious Education in Schools, and with 'an untroubled confidence almost beyond belief the author claimed that for the teacher a sound knowledge of the Bible is more important than knowing how to teach.' (12) The belief that Religious Education was the learning of the Bible with the aim of making committed Christians was the hallmark of the post-war years. The fact that it was doomed to failure on several grounds would not have crossed the minds of those responsible for its progress in these years.

Church Schools

Because of the high level of importance attached to the 'confessional' aspect of the subject the Church continued to struggle with its own schools. Leeson again made several impassioned pleas that the church schools were invaluable to this cause:

"This is the faith in which the Church of England seeks to serve English Education. Her own
schools cannot compare in number with those provided by the state ... we who are of her family believe that Our Lord gave us the Church to carry forward His saving and restoring work, and we must therefore conclude, and we find it confirmed in experience, that only within the worship of a church can anyone, young or old, learn what Christianity is in its fullness. That is why we work so hard for our own schools, and hold by the denominational principle; for, forbidding as the phrase may sound to some, stirring memories of controversy now in great measure forgotten, it embodies essential truth." (13)

With echoes of the war years, Leeson quoted at length from a Ministry of Education publication called 'Citizens Growing Up' (Pamphlet 16, 1949), especially a paragraph from p.19 of that document: 'It is the faith of this pamphlet that spiritual convictions are the vital element in the democratic way of life ... the Christian society in particular needs no advertisement other than its own convictions, with the energy of which it changes the political and social atmosphere...' (14) From this he argued that the State was doing no more than acknowledging the Church’s part in education and could do a good deal more. Referring to the syllabuses he wrote that Christianity ‘will not be
caught from a syllabus alone. That is why we must so deeply deplore the surrender many years ago of their schools by the Free Churches’, (15) and why 'we ought to make the utmost use we legitimately can of the controlled schools for the spiritual welfare of the children.'(16)

The Church Schools were seen by many as an evangelising influence on behalf of the Christian community. However, over the thirty years after the war the Church of England experienced only a 1.02% increase in their school rolls, but the Roman Catholics, who pursued a vigourous policy of using their schools for impressing the Faith, ensured a 121.23% increase. (17) The Methodists, the only other Church to have a significant number of schools, allowed them to decline while the Church of England only managed a holding operation. Leeson pointed out that the Roman Catholics took no part in the Agreed Syllabuses because they were only 'concerned with the teaching of her own interpretation of the faith to her own children in her own schools.' (18) The fact was, Catholic or Anglican, both were retaining their own schools for evangelising purposes, and the Anglicans held a further deep interest, expressed through the SACREs, of ensuring that Religious Education in all schools was active in encouraging young people to become committed Christians.
The Public Schools meanwhile, not touched by the 1944 Act, nor concerned by SACREs and the tensions of the State system, continued to function very much in their own world. Worshipping in their own Chapels, with assigned Chaplains, and teaching Divinity in the classroom, they functioned according to the dictates of their various Headmasters and Headmistresses. Parents opted into their system and not out. Religion was frequently compulsory, a number of attempts were made at making Chapel worship voluntary but were seldom successful. (19) Confirmation into the Church was seen as part of the normal run of school life, and in 1957 of all the ordination candidates for the Church of England some 40% came from the Public School system. (20) Writing about Public Schools during this period George Snow noted:

'...three things particularly strike one about the Christian faith in Public Schools today. First, although the Public schoolboy is comparatively rarely deeply religious, he is on the whole deeply disposed towards the acceptance of the faith as valid and real ... second, boys talk much more freely about religion today, and with lay masters as readily as
with the chaplains ... and third, the whole ethos of the Public School is remarkably a Christian one, and quite unself-consciously .... and one can say without fear of contradiction that the boy at a Public School has very great opportunities for finding real religion, and he will certainly not pass through his schooldays without at any rate knowing that it exists and that it has claims on his serious consideration.’

(21)

The Public Schools had the best environment. Financial resources meant that, as always, only a few had the experience of this privilege. There is little doubt that men like Leeson looked back to their own Public School experience and wondered why it could not be replicated in the State schools. The State schools had to acknowledge the existence of legislation, dealt with a wider variety of child and parent, and did not have the support of a Boarding System which is always so valuable in creating a sense of a Christian Community.

**The Nature of Religious Education comes under Question**

Ten years after the 1944 Education Act the Institute of Christian Education carried out some
research in an attempt to evaluate Religious Education. Three main features came to light; first, the majority of LEAs preferred to use another's Agreed Syllabus rather than produce their own. It transpired that out of eight LEAs only five Agreed Syllabuses were in circulation. Secondly, the number of children sitting Religious Knowledge as a GCE paper was small. Finally, there was a lack of expertise. Out of some 674 grammar schools in the survey 312 had no qualified Religious Education teacher, and in Birmingham 88% of secondary schools were in the same position.(22)

The report certainly pointed to a continuing problem for the subject in its lack of expert teachers. The Report was the product of its age, and Leeson took some delight in noting that the Agreed Syllabus received some judicious praise for the efforts of the Syllabus to achieve 'an end that many have in past days believed impossible - namely, to assemble a body of clear doctrine, dogmatically expressed, that would be accepted, so far as it goes, by all the great churches except one...' (23) The Agreed Syllabuses were overdue for revision, and the report noted that they needed a revision, especially for the less academically inclined child. In its conclusion the report noted that the Syllabuses were
fine for the Grammar Schools but not for the Secondary Modern Schools. They also felt that Religious Instruction was beginning to lose its Biblical foundation and definite moral purpose. The report also recommended that every child should have his own Bible and made a strong plea for Chapels as in the Public School system. This report was significant, not so much because of its actual observations, but the fact that it indicated the subject needed investigation.

In 1959 the Crowther Report noted in its introductory chapter that 'the teenagers with whom we are concerned need, perhaps above all else, to find a faith to live by ... Education can and should play some part in the search.' (24) The Crowther Report suggested that there was something to search for and education should show the pupils where to look and what other men had found. It was, by suggestion, endorsing the traditional view that Christianity had a rightful place in the classroom even though it was evangelical and confessional by nature.

However, by the end of the 1950s, serious questions were being raised as to how Religious Education was succeeding. Some looked towards the growing crime rate and laid the blame at the inefficiency of Religious Studies, making the
traditional assumption that Religious Education is the moral guidance officer for the behaviour of young people. Others, more pertinently, were asking whether the subject was meeting the needs of young people, while others were beginning to explore the fact that the traditional style of teaching and especially the Bible, was over and beyond the developing minds of young people.

The fifteen years following the 1944 Act had revealed serious deficiencies in the subject, in the way it was taught, the legislation, the expectations of churchmen and, more importantly, its effects upon young people. By the late 1950s there was a growing awareness that the centrality of the experience of the child was important. In all the debates and discussions this vital point was seldom mentioned, but this can only be noted with a degree of educational historical hindsight.
The New Researchers

The 1960s was a vital decade for understanding Religious Education today. It was also a period of storm with its investigations, reports and appraisals. There were major social changes, ranging from concern about the rising crime rate amongst adolescents to the influx of an immigrant population. There were theological upheavals and new educational advances. Each and all of these factors had a bearing upon the subject. The names of many of the 1960 researchers are still well known today. Goldman with his educational theories, based on Piaget, but worked through in Religious Education. Loukes with his realistic appraisals of what was actually happening in the classroom. Hyde and others looked at attitudes, Dewar gave a depressing oversight, while men like Hilliard strove for stability and others like Alves and Cox sought a more
balanced view. There were three educational reports, Newsom, Plowden and Gittins, each with a view on the subject.

The Teachers

'The 1960s saw searching criticism directed against Religious Education both by teachers themselves and by the people outside the schools.' (1) The subject became a matter of deep concern for all kinds of interested bodies, not least for those in the classrooms, as the Durham Report noted about the teachers confronted by the children of the sixties:

'... who were profoundly influenced by the drag of the contemporary cynicism and the materialist assumptions of a culture dominated by science and technology. Religion was seen as neither true nor false but merely irrelevant. Methods of teaching evolved in an earlier age became more and more impracticable.' (2)

As Loukes was to point out later in the decade, the teaching of past days had depended for its success on the community, that is on the traditions of family, and the sixties experienced a major social change. The resultant difficulty was a severe shortage of those willing to teach the
subject. An investigation showed that halfway through the decade the proportion of teachers giving Religious Education in all County Secondary Schools was only about one in seven, four fifths had no specialist training and only one in eight had a degree or diploma. (3) Of the teachers interviewed one in six gave Religious Education to ten or more forms each week to probably more than 300 boys and girls. (4) Other disturbing figures were revealed; at the London Institute of Education the number of specialists training for Religious Education amounted to only one fifth of those training for any other subject; and from a random selection of schools it could be seen that there was only one specialist to 660 children, an appallingly low proportion. (5)

**Theological Background of the 1960s**

These statistics clearly indicate the state of Religious Education during these years, but this was the decade when so much was being discovered and investigated. The Christian religion in Western Europe was in a state of great flux, it had been said that ‘theologically the present time (1966) is an age of demolition not of reconstruction.’ (6) This, of course, was only one point of view. Nevertheless, the sixties had started with some new and dramatic
approaches to theology. In 1962 what has become known as the Cambridge theologians produced *Soundings*, and the following year Bishop John Robinson wrote the well-known and more popular book *Honest to God*. It was no longer the age of William Temple with firm and accepted ideas, but the age of doubt and questioning, and questioning what had been the most revered principles of Christian theology.

Hand in hand with this new theology came what was to be known as the 'new morality'. With Canon D.Rhymes's publication, *No New Morality* (and other similar books, coupled with problems like the Profumo Scandal) it was not surprising that the age seemed to be passing through a religious storm.

On the positive side it must not be forgotten that it was because of these religious storms that Tillich and Bonhoeffer became more acceptable to the more widely read public, and helped them ask some of the questions that the more complex modern man demands. This new theology had an undoubted effect upon the subject of Religious Education, 'it appeared to remove from the subject some of its content and to cast doubts on its traditionally dogmatic and confessionally based presentation; in the second instance, it made Religious Education more amenable to an inductive treatment, making it an open search
for the meaning of life.' (7)

Social Background of the 1960s

Bonhoeffer and Tillich, even as popularised in Honest to God were, in reality, one step away from much of ordinary society. What was happening at the social level was to have an effect on the subject of Religious Education. Social irresponsibility was a rising problem. In 1962 there were 28,000 divorces; 81,000 legal cases of drunkeness; (showing a sharp 29.5% over the previous five years) and the general crime rate rose by 27.5% over the same five year period. (8) On the religious front, less than 20% actually went to Church, (9) and with the influx of immigrants and their religions people started to ask whether in fact the country could call itself Christian. This was then, and is today, a much debated issue. T.S.Eliot has frequently been quoted with his statements that 'the great majority of people are neither one thing nor the other, but are living in no-man's land', (10) and 'a society has not ceased to be Christian until it has become positively something else.' (11) However a 'Television and Religion' report in 1964 pointed out that only 8% of men and 4% of women claimed to have no religion, (12)
and England officially viewed itself as a 'Christian' country. The following statistics give a clearer perspective on the situation:

**Church of England.**

Sunday school children per 1,000 population aged three to fourteen years in England.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sunday School Children</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>133</td>
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**Church of England Sunday School Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>196,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>163,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>98,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>85,000 (13)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Falling church numbers in the sixties were causing serious concern. On the surface it appeared that Religious Education should take a back seat. In many ways it did, but not because of the lack of Church attendance. A national poll indicated that over 90% of people were satisfied with the compulsory arrangements regarding Religious
Education. (14) Viewed from a cynical but realistic level, parental support was probably strong because of the traditional view that Religious Education is the same as Moral Education. This view will be examined later in Part 2, but it is sufficient for the moment to note that the subject for some, was expected to do something about the crime rates amongst adolescents. The statistics remained true, a New Society National Opinion Poll on May 27th 1965 indicated that 92.9% of the nation described themselves as Christians; 79.7% saw Britain as a Christian country, and 90% wanted the current arrangements for Religious Education to continue. (15)

Statistics only reveal part of the truth. 'It is worth observing at the very outset that one must beware of simple deductions from figures showing either how many believe in God or how many call themselves Christians.' (16) Belief in God as a reality is very different to mere friendliness towards faith, and a belief that one is a Christian because it seems a step towards an ethical way of life. The 1960s was a decade of growing materialism and a period of serious doubting in religious matters, leaning towards religious apathy rather than considered atheism. Yet it was during these turbulent years that Religious Education was studied to greater
First Research and Evaluation of Religious Education

In 1961 a Research Project by the University of Sheffield Institute of Education into Religious Education in Secondary Schools, revealed that few pupils could remember much of what they had been taught in the subject. The pupils had been taught from the existing Agreed Syllabuses which were Biblically based, and there was an immediate cry for their revision. They had been taught on the age-old tradition of cramming Biblical facts and texts, and it is not surprising that the Sheffield investigation found the subject a general failure. The true significance of this report, from the historical perspective, was that experts were now asking what actually happened in the nation’s classrooms.

Similar studies by Loukes in his book Teenage Religion (1961) came to the same conclusions. There were protests as to the reality of the claims:

'This is disturbing but it is possible to exaggerate the significance of these findings. David Ayerst has pointed out that an enquiry carried out by J.W.Packer at Leeds in 1952 showed that the teaching of history in schools was no more effective than the religious instruction, particularly as regards the
Despite this possible reservation (though perhaps it said as much about the teaching of history?) Loukes's investigations left no shadow of doubt that classroom Religious Education was in a shambles. The amount of ignorance he uncovered was formidable, and he subsequently advocated a less Bible-centred approach for one which was more problem-centred. His findings covered 3,000 pupils from different parts of the country, and three quarters did not know the meaning of Whitsuntide; less than 10% could arrange five Old Testament events in order; and less than a quarter could recall the names of two prophetic writers. This was an appalling indictment of the Agreed Syllabuses which had set out to teach these very facts. The main problem soon transpired to be the aims; the intentions of what should be taught, as Loukes wrote:

'There has been little full-dress appraisal of the aims - the realistic, realizable aims - of religious education in the public system of education; and those who seek to fulfill the charge laid on them have had to skirmish in a no-man's land between the full Christian commitment sought by the Church and the vague 'spiritual values' - a kind of
tepid course of ethical vitamins - that raise two cheers at educational conferences.' (18)

The Implicit Approach

Loukes took a realistic look at what was actually happening in the classroom, including the problem of having to reteach what had been learnt at a literalist level in the junior schools. 'The special task of the secondary school may be defined as an examination of religious concepts, directed towards shedding of infantile forms and the acceptance of adult ones.' (19) Loukes's name has been closely associated with the term 'implicit' religious education; the advocates of this type of approach saw the subject mainly as an unrestricted personal quest for a meaning to life in terms of actual experience, assisted by dialogue between teacher and taught. He came to believe as a result of his work that learning in Religious Education must be a process of dialogue about experience.

In the early sixties Loukes's work was significant from two points of view. In the first place he took an objective look at the classroom situation and noted that it had failed. Secondly, his perceptions concerning 'implicit' Religious Education started another line of thought as to how
the subject was to be taught. It was unconfessional and very different to the traditional style of teaching. As mentioned above it was child-experience-centred, and involved a two-way dialogue. For a time this style of teaching was paramount, and of significant importance not only in many classrooms, but in the overall development of the subject.

It was a period of hope and depression. In 1963 Sir Richard Acland published his book *We Teach Them Wrong*. He argued that in the growing up process the child passes rapidly through all the mental stages that the human race has experienced since evolution. In a later book *Curriculum or Life* (1966) he reconfirmed his thinking and suggested that the term 'religion' should be dropped in favour of the term 'Life' (or 'Life Discussion Period') since the subject involved a personal search for life's meanings and values. There were those critics who pointed out that the subject would become so vague that not only the term 'religion' would disappear, but so would the essential nature of the subject. His overall view tended to be that Primary Religious Education at the traditional level was stable, because children passed through these various stages, and could accept the concrete images and transpose them later as they matured. At the secondary stage, however, such teaching could cause damage because of
repetition. This, of course, was very similar to some of the ideas put forward by Loukes, and what has since been termed the 'implicit' approach. To the more conservative elements there was the criticism that such an approach would water down the subject, and reduce it to a mere moral and social education area, dealt with in many other disciplines of the timetable.

In the same year (1963) some interesting research was carried out by K. Hyde on the question of attitudes. He applied an attitude scale to some 2,500 pupils in secondary schools in Birmingham and compared the results with their religious concepts. The result was a clear sign that conceptual growth only took place when there was already a degree of interest in religion. His book Religious Learning in Adolescence (1965) confirmed this thinking, which, on hindsight may now appear self-evident, but in those days was important, especially since the country's religious attitude, as already mentioned, was changing rapidly in a negative direction.

As a result of these findings the syllabuses were attracting considerable criticism and analysis. F. H. Hilliard wrote in 1963 that 'the syllabuses presuppose too much academic knowledge and
information on the part of the teachers. They do and they must pre-suppose this kind of knowledge.' (20) For Hilliard the syllabuses were the only real guide, yet despite the changes taking place in society there were no great or significant reflections of this in the syllabuses. 'The need for a searching analysis of the relationship between religion and its society and its values existed in the 1960s.' (21) Meanwhile the tension developed between the traditional style of teaching Religious Education and the new 'implicit' approach. Much depended on the individual school and the inclination of the teachers. A child who moved school for any reason could not be certain that Religious Education was consistent, as would be the case with the teaching of History or English literature. By the end of the 1960s this problem was to become even more complex.

The Newsom Report

In 1963 the important Newsom Report 'Half Our Future' was written, mainly produced by Christians for Christians:

'But no Christian could for a moment rest content with an education which brought men face to face with a crucifixion but not with Christ. Religious Instruction in accordance with any LEA's Agreed Syllabus is Instruction in the Christian
and:

'This involves among other things knowing what Christianity is. There is a straightforward teaching job to be done here. Just what do Christians believe about God and Man, Life and death? ... what line should the Christian take? ... it cannot be solved without probing deeply into the heart of man and the heart of the Christian religion; to observe Africans answering it is sometimes to shame ourselves.' (para 516)

The Report's recommendations made it clear that they saw a distinct link between Religious Education and Moral Education, and yet agreed that it was more than just ethics. It also indicated the need to revise the Agreed Syllabuses, and underlined the problem of the lack of trained manpower. The Report also studied the possibility of a closer association between Social Studies and Religious Education, but this was effectively stopped by the legislation regarding the opting-out clauses. The Newsom report tended to lean towards the open discussion style of teaching, and that Religious Education should be made more relevant to the needs of adolescents. Nevertheless, the core of the Report was
fundamentally confessional in its general stance.

Goldman's Research

The year 1964 was important because of the work of the educational psychologist Goldman. He had based his work on Jean Piaget, who had tried to discover from children what was happening in their minds as a result of the different teaching processes to which they were being exposed. Piaget was, in many ways, responsible for the revolution which took place in the teaching of mathematics, and based on his theories Goldman looked at the subject of Religious Education. The main point of Goldman's thinking was that during the mental ages of 6 to 12 years of age children go through a concrete thinking stage, in which symbolic religious statements are taken literally. This clearly indicated that traditional primary school teaching was far too complicated. It was, Goldman argued, only the growing adolescent who was able to think in the abstract, and understand the questions of religious symbol and metaphor. Because of the traditional early stress on the Bible this tended to conflict in the young person's mind with his/her logico-scientific view of reality which was being acquired from their other studies. There was, therefore, a tendency to relegate religious thinking to the level of fairy stories. This again raised two
fundamental questions. On the one hand, at the primary level, the Bible seemed 'too much'; while on the other hand, in the secondary school, there was needed a more open and questioning approach. This theory, the Cognitive Stage theory, was based on three stages altogether, the Intuitive, the Concrete and the Abstract. It had a growing effect upon education. David Elkind was to apply the Piagetian theories in America (Elkind and Flavell 1969), as did the Belgian Professor Godin, Madge, and later Robinson. Indeed, as early as 1961, Ainsworth had written that 'in the light of Piaget's work, the young child's understanding of the parables is questionable.'(22) There were those who ignored these findings, probably more out of fear of psychology itself; the age-old feeling that in some way psychology would undermine the faith. Others felt that religion was neither analysable nor measurable in the statistical and quantative fashion that such research demands.

Other critics claimed, perhaps unfairly, that Goldman was doing away with the scriptures. Goldman himself wrote:

'These limited findings lend support to the view that the Bible is not a children's book and ... when we say that religious education needs to be more
child-centred this is not to minimise the importance of the Bible. It is an observation based upon the demonstrable fact that the Bible itself, although not the ideas and persons of which it speaks, must be introduced in a systematic manner later in the child's development than has previously been practised.' (23)

There were to be, in due course, educational criticisms of both Piaget and Goldman. It was, for example, projected that Goldman and Piaget were wrong 'if one reads either of them in such a way that the transition from a Concrete Stage to an Abstract Stage of thinking is presumed to be rapid (or, even, quasi-instantaneous). The transition itself appears to be a much slower, step-wise progression through an identifiable 'intermediate' stage' (24) as was discovered in some North American students. These were fine points of tuning and Goldman's work had a remarkable impact and effect on Religious Education. A thematic approach was more carefully considered, and a steering away from a Bible-centred tradition. As mentioned earlier there were those critics who accused Goldman of denying the scriptures their rightful place. In fact his aims were 'rather at teaching from the Bible than teaching the Bible'.(25) The Schools Council Working Paper No.36 (1971) was later to dub Goldman's approach as a
'neo-confessionalism' (26) thus adding yet more to the plethora of nomenclature problems.

More Critical Evaluations of Religious Education

While Goldman's research was hitting the educational newstands a journalist, D. Dewar, published (1964) the book *Backward Christian Soldiers*. It was very much a journalistic survey of Religious Education and painted yet again a very gloomy picture of the subject. Nevertheless the book made many pertinent points:

'Striking inequalities exist in the qualifications of those teaching religion at the present. There is also considerable disparity in the amount of time given to the study of Religious Knowledge at the teachers' training colleges.' (27)

and:

'Even from the most materialistic viewpoints, Religious Education in our state schools, which are responsible for most of our children, is a wash-out. Judged by results, this money is grossly misspent.' (28)

It is tempting to make the observation that because of the research being carried out in the
field of Religious Education many writers at all levels found an opportunity to score a few points by jumping on the 'bandwagon.' In the same year (1964) however, a serious and important research project was started by Colin Alves under the auspices of the British Council of Churches, the final report being published in 1968. It was not a journalistic survey, but a long cool appraisal which asked where Religious Education was working well and why it was. In March 1965 20,000 copies of the survey (known as Survey 65) were sent to participant schools, and the results, which were revealing, were not as poor as some of the then current literature tended to suggest. The important aspect of this report was that it looked at the actual practice in the schools:

'Actual practice within the schools has been largely ignored, and attention has been concentrated on the stages and processes of individual religious development.' (29)

**Further Research by Loukes and Goldman**

In the year (1965) that Colin Alves started this major project, both Loukes and Goldman published further research. Loukes in his book *New Ground in Christian Education* (1965) in which he remained pessimistic about the pupils' retention of Religious Knowledge and continued, justifiably, to be critical
of existing methods. At the centre of Loukes's reasoning was the belief that Religious Education had to start from personal experience which was to be examined in depth and had to have religious significance. This approach had a certain attraction for some teachers if only as a contrast to the traditional off-loading of Biblical stories and facts. It was a short-term experiment in many ways, not least because it had little more effect upon the pupils than previous teaching. During the mid-sixties, and, in some features, to the present day, this form of implicit approach was fairly dominant. Loukes was highly critical of those schools which persisted in teaching along Confessional lines. In his survey he discovered that many schools still saw it as their business to make Christians, one headmaster claiming the school's function was as 'a seed plot for the Church', (30) and 'the most forthright statement of this position came from the headmaster who, maddened by the questionnaire, crossed out the whole list of aims and inserted as his single object, to promote intelligent membership of the Church of England.' (31) Loukes's examination of aims revealed a wide variety, but in general he summarised it as:

'It is in some such terms that we can
state the aims of Religious Education as at present practised: to teach the 'facts' of Religious Knowledge and to examine their meaning, in the belief that all men are the larger for having met them, and the hope that some will make a personal response towards the continuation of the task.' (32)

Loukes also pointed out the utter futility, as he saw it, of teaching the Bible; whatever the ingenuity applied to such an approach he saw as 'misdirected' and at the end of the day the pupils knew next to nothing. (33) In this particular appraisal he was in line with Goldman who saw that, not only had traditional Biblical teaching failed, but more to the point, by its very nature it was destined to fail. (34)

In his 1965 publication Readiness for Religion Goldman brought before the public, yet more forcibly, the fact that Biblical teaching focused on an ancient civilization which was minor and rural and meant nothing to the modern pupil. (35) He argued that 'this remoteness of Bible society also encourages adolescents to dismiss Biblical teaching as irrelevant since the experience, language, imagery and assumptions appear to be so vastly different from their own in the 20th Century.' (36) From his
research, he returned to the concept of themes, based upon their own experience which should provide a related view of life, and not try to impose Biblical images to which they could not relate. Loukes and Goldman set the proverbial 'cat among the pigeons' which for some was a great joy, for others it verged almost on the heretical.

Part of this steadying process can be seen when the Hibbert lectures were given over to 'Christianity in Education', and F.H.Hilliard's first two lectures must have gone some way in removing the sense of panic. Hubery published his book Teaching the Christian Faith Today (1965) on the role of the child's experience in his religious education and this, published just after Dewar's book, helped remove some of the apparent bleakness.

During this year a group of Christians and Humanists, based at London University Institute of Education, saw a way forward for the subject to encompass Moral Education because of the more 'implicit' approach. This turn in the tide of events opened many new possible avenues, not least a more level headed approach to Moral Education. For the Humanists it opened the possibility of cooperation and the search for some common ground. There were of course the extremists who also took the opening up of the subject as yet another opportunity to deny its
Pluralism and Comparative Religions

By the mid-sixties another important factor was emerging. It would be difficult if not impossible to pinpoint the particular date when 'pluralism' became significant for Religious Education. During the year 1966, the question of immigrants came under political discussion and the whole question of a pluralistic society provoked some academic interest. Large numbers of immigrants had been coming into the United Kingdom for some time, but it was during the mid-sixties that the general public seemed to become more conscious of the fact. They tended to congregate within the large city complexes, and brought with them not only different expressions of Christianity, but also a wide mixture of religions and people. There were areas where English reaction was unfortunately less than civilised, let alone Christian, but the new arrivals were soon a fact of life and not hostile to their adopted country's education:

'Most of the immigrant communities in Britain at the present time are liberal-minded and anxious to cooperate with Christians. If this cooperation is not welcomed attitudes may change and
a great opportunity be lost.' (37)

Frederick Hilliard in 1966 looked to the future in terms of the new pluralistic society, and pointed out that 'the rapidity of modern communications has brought the non-Christian religions of the Middle and Far East into closer touch with the countries of Europe and the new world whose major religious tradition has been that of Christianity (and, to a lesser degree, Judaism). Teachers therefore need to know more about these other great religions.' (38) One of the immediate questions was whether the immigrant looked to Religious Education as part of their 'enculturing' process, or as an inter-faith programme to give a sense of sympathy with other faiths which were now standing side by side. (39) Those working within the inner-city complexes saw it as an opportunity to widen their teaching, and 'of making a useful contribution to the integration of the immigrants into their community'. (40) Others simply saw the growth of pluralism as the opportunity to teach Comparative Religions, because they felt it 'ought' to be done. As the occasional Mosque and Hindu Temple appeared in parts of England, it gave the study of Comparative Religions a sense of greater realism and made it more stimulating.

This phenomenon was for some the beginning
of the end for the 'implicit' approach, and the more objective style of teaching suddenly seemed appropriate; this has variously been dubbed 'explicit' or 'phenomenological'. It should at once be noted that the teaching of Comparative Religions was not easy. There were four problems for the teacher; first, a wider range of knowledge was demanded if the other religions were to be taught with any sensitivity; secondly, it is difficult to understand any religion without its culture, and these cultures were as foreign to the modern child as the ancient Biblical ones noted by Goldman; thirdly, the problem of teaching any religion from the outside; and, finally, the 20th century empirical and materialistic mind has always found it difficult to grasp spiritual values or concepts, and this was not made easier by having to deal with several religions.

Nevertheless, this ethnic influx was an important factor in the development of Religious Education and was as significant as the research of Goldman and Loukes in terms of the future. Some areas, as usual, moved more ably than others. The 1968 London Agreed Syllabus created an important precedent, and foreshadowed the 1975 Birmingham Syllabus, when it involved representatives of the Jewish and Islamic Communities. This Syllabus also mentioned Marxism and Rationalism, with the proviso
that it had always to be approached from the Christian point of view, and recommended the study of another religion in the 6th form. Nevertheless, this Syllabus was an important step in its time. Nor must the impression be given that everything suddenly changed direction. The 1964 Lancashire Syllabus had a strong evangelistic direction, and the 1966 West Riding of Yorkshire Syllabus stated: 'personal needs are religious needs which are only satisfied by the growing discovery that at the heart of the universe there is a God who cares,' (41) and that God was of course the Christian one. Goldman's influence was within this Syllabus, and the 'neo-confessional' influence is easily detectable. During 1966 Nottingham University Institute of Education published yet another review of Religious Education Meaning or Muddle which illustrated once again the problems of traditional teaching; articles appeared along the same theme (eg: Clark, 'Religious Education Today' in Trends in Education 1966, Oct, No.4. p.9f) but this was no longer the problem, this feature had been accepted; the real issue was now pluralism and how Religious Education was going to cope.

Plowden Report

While the academics and teachers alike struggled with this problem another major Educational
Report was published, by Plowden, with its opposite number in Wales, by Gittins. The Plowden Report was different to the Newsom Report and reflected the massive changes which had taken place in the subject over a few years. In the Plowden Report six pages were devoted to Religious Education, but six of the twenty-five members made notes of reservation on the recommendations. A cautious note was made that worship need not have a Christian basis, and the Gittins Report suggested that the compulsory nature of worship could be done away with, but on the grounds that the Welsh schools needed no compulsion to worship. The Plowden Report was not radical, but it is interesting to note that those who wrote in the reservations pointed out that Religious Education involved theology, and that involved concepts too difficult for primary children to grasp. Nor did they see that Religious Education was a suitable base for Moral Education, since it was based 'on the motive of fear.' (42) It is not surprising to see that this group was led by Professor A.J.Ayer. Despite a few concessions the Plowden Report still carried the atmosphere of the 'confessional' stance. The Gittins Report followed very much along the same line, though it treated Goldman's research with caution. (43) A note of refusal to sign, by H.D.Lewis, was quite different in tenor from that of A.J.Ayer. Professor Lewis valued Religious Education highly:
'It is my view that Religious Education concerns too closely the life of the community as a whole to be left entirely to the discretion of individual teachers ... 'compulsion' and 'voluntary' tend to obscure this issue ... to dispense with all rules would be chaos ... utterly inadequate to think of religion, as many do today, in exclusively moral terms ... there can be no Christianity without historical facts ... there has often been a wrong use of the Bible but the cure for that is not along the defeatist line of Dr Goldman ...' (44)

Neither Plowden nor Gittins could come to a total agreement. Both remained in favour of the basic status quo; both retained the confessional approach; and both had reserve notes, (and the Gittins a refusal) thus indicating that Religious Education was far from being settled in the minds of those whose business it was to pass judgments on this subject.

The Explicit Approach

In the year following the publication of these reports, the University of Newcastle Institute of Education, offered a series of papers under the title 'Comparative Religion in Education.' The year 1968 saw an attempted rationalisation of objective
teaching; as mentioned earlier this was undoubtedly in response to the desire to address the pluralistic situation. The leading exponents of this view were N. Smart and J.W.D. Smith.

Smart, in an attempt to make the study of religions objective and explicit, arrived at a six-dimensional model for the study of religion, well known and often criticised. It was a genuine attempt to indicate that the subject of Religion could be taught like any other subject on the timetable, using observable data and empirical observation. Smart argued cogently that the confessionalist approach could not be justified in a pluralistic society nor was it educationally viable, and would breed resentment amongst the children. (45) He did not argue for the old system of Religious Instruction, (the mere imparting of Biblical data) but that Religious Education should 'transcend the informative'. Any teacher of English Literature would appreciate this viewpoint. The following year (1969) J.W.D. Smith published his work Religious Education in a Secular Setting. He also tried to put Religious Education on a better educational footing, pointing out that discussion was no longer necessary between Christians and Christians as to how well they were coping with their faith, but more necessary was the discussion between Christian and non-Christian colleagues on the role of Religious Education as part of a school's
educational timetable. He continued the argument that the confessional approach should be dropped in the primary schools, and that at secondary level a factual study of Christianity was important, though it should not become an open-ended approach to a closed system of belief and practice.

Following the extensive writing of both Smith, Smart and many others, it seems that the explicit approach was becoming more acceptable than the implicit.

Survival of Confessional Approach

Explicit and Implicit approaches to this subject aside, it is worth noting at this stage that despite the attacks on the confessional style of teaching it was self-evidently surviving in many places. The Agreed Syllabuses during this period broadened in outlook, but, like the most influential one, the West Riding Syllabus (1966), still remained Christian, Biblical to a lesser degree and undoubtedly confessional, albeit mildly so. The Wiltshire Syllabus (1967) allowed senior pupils to become acquainted with Marxism and Humanism, but despite this broader brief was definitely confessional in outlook. There was a rear-guard action against the innovations of the sixties. Some
sprang to the defence of the Agreed Syllabus, claiming that to 'advocate the abolition of all existing Agreed Syllabuses is far too extreme and is simply not practicable. The Agreed Syllabus represents a major advance in Religious Education ... it seeks to ensure that a certain body of Biblical and extra-Biblical material is taught in all the schools of the local authority.' (46) Reaction followed reaction and different polarities of thought quickly took shape. A 1969 Report claimed that children thought the subject so much rubbish, that it contained too many of the Goldman themes, and as a consequence they knew too little about the Bible. (47) It was clear, according to this same report, 'that the traditional slog through selections from the Bible, treated chiefly as historical texts, was still the current practice and only enlivened by interpolations from our own times.' (48) In short it appeared that what aspect of, or what approach to Religious Education a child received was largely a matter of pot luck or was dependent upon the area in which they lived. This did not apply just to England, and it is interesting to note that other Western countries were working their way through the same dilemmas. Karl-Ernst Nipkow wrote about a similar experience during the sixties in Germany:

'...the sixties brought new topics. The earlier
dominant role of the Bible was supplemented and partly replaced by life themes. Much energy was devoted to developing a 'thematic problem-orientated' second didactic type of religious education...' (49)

Roman Catholic and Public Schools

Needless to say, this revolution in religious thought did not so obviously touch upon either the Roman Catholic Schools or the Independent Sector. There was a greater liberality of thought, and a declaration by the second Vatican Council, 28th October 1965 pointed out that the Catholic Church rejected nothing that was true or holy in the other religions. Nevertheless, education for the Roman Catholics meant Catholic schooling, and in 1966 Cardinal Heenan spoke out as to why the Roman Church needed its own schools, with reasons which had not fundamentally changed since their inception. (50)

The Public Schools experienced the social revolution of the sixties, and even those which had been established to serve particular denominations lost their emphasis on sectarian worship, despite the fact that as a group they had strong religious traditions. (51) They were, despite the sixties, traditional in the extreme, and in the classroom they accepted and were taught Divinity for examinations by well trained and interested masters, (52) and
worship, as stated before, was held in the chapels into which the pupils, via their parents, opted in and not out.

Moral Education

Looking back over the sixties one of the interesting features of the decade was the growth of interest in Moral Education. This will be more carefully noted in Part 2, but the undoubted growth of secularism in this period, coupled with the implicit approach to Religious Education encouraged many good-willed Humanists to value the subject differently. Howard Marratt and James Hemming saw many distinct possibilities for Religious Education to have greater educational value if it worked from the ethical point of view. This of course is debatable, but historically speaking it was an aspect of the sixties which cannot be ignored.

Educational Theory

During the sixties there had also been a revolution in educational thinking and the Inductive theories of education were gaining great prominence. This too set a problem for the traditional style of Religious Education teaching. Religion, be it
Christian or Islamic or Jewish, tends to be based on revealed authority. This proved difficult for those who taught from the old ideals. It tended to serve well those who adopted either the implicit or even the explicit approach, and most especially those who looked to Religious Education as a form of Moral Education. The confessional approach could and did take into account the moral aspect, and on reflection it is not surprising that the confessional approach, despite the many levels of criticism, survived. Even those who tried to teach in an objective/explicit way found it difficult. Hirst pointed out that 'many teachers are at present (1967) quite incapable of this objective teaching of religion.'

Final Observations on the 1960s

Considering the revolution in theology, the new ways of thinking in education, the growing secularization and materialism in society, the growth of a pluralistic community, it is not surprising that for Religious Education it was a time of turmoil and discovery. The confessional, or more precisely the 'neo-confessional' approach survived, the 'implicit life-experience' flourished for a time, and while surviving in some areas gave way on the whole to the 'explicit' phenomenological approach. These tensions had polarised into a triangular pull. Edwin Cox in
his book Changing Aims in Religious Education straddles these three components. He believed that children should be presented with a religious view of life, but allowed the total freedom to make up their own minds as to how they would express it in belief and practice.(54)

Always pertinent are Hirst's doubts as to whether such objectivity can be attained by the average teacher, a bias free environment being a rare commodity in a classroom when belief is being discussed.

These three strands still exist in one form or another to the current day; from the educational point of view the 'neo-confessional' must be unacceptable. Even in the Public School with its strong religious affiliations the classroom is a totally captive audience, and to teach in a confessional style must be seen as educationally objectionable. The end of the sixties saw the 'state of play' as being mainly between the implicit and explicit approaches. It is the belief of this writer that the same problem which existed at the turn of the century and was illuminated by the sixties, exists to this day, in that we are dealing not with one subject but two. Both are educationally viable and neither need have conscience clauses attached to them. A study of the phenomena of religion in all aspects (as possibly defined by Smart) is an academic
subject in its own right, as much as a study of History or Literature, and is essential for any educated member of society, whatever their beliefs. The implicit approach, where teacher and pupil explore and seek the truth together, has an attraction even for the Humanist. In the implicit approach Hirst’s criticism relating to the problems of objectivity by the teacher, and the dangers of neo-confessionalism must be constantly reviewed. These questions will be further developed in Part 2, but it seems right to raise it again, since the sixties (which some have seen as a mere Indian Summer) at least raised the issues and tested them.
New Controversial Issues

Whereas it has been possible to write about the history in previous chapters with a degree of objectivity, this chapter, by its 'current nature', will be more discursive, but I hope will remain objective.

The 1960s had been a period of change, but the decades which followed confirmed many of the forecasts made in the previous years, and tended to feed from the fruits of previous scholarship. Various reports and books were written but there was no major seminal work, (1) and the period finished with a major Educational Act which simply confirmed the 1944 Act, (regarding Religion) albeit slightly enlarged to acknowledge the changing society with its pluralistic ingredients.

At the turn of the century there had been a
considerable heated debate between the Anglicans and the Free Churches over the right to have their own schools; the dual system and the Agreed Syllabus seemed to have solved many of the problems. By 1990 the same debates have returned but on a larger scale since they involve not just Christian denominations, but other world faiths. This polemic is inevitably bound up with the teaching of Religious Education. In 1990 the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow argued forcibly on a television programme dealing with this issue, (2) that because we live in a secular society which glories in its pluralistic nature, parents must have rights to send children to their own schools, and that 'children must be given an identity', which for him was a Catholic identity. The same argument was put forward by Mr Phaivish Pink, Headmaster of the Manchester Jewish Boys School, who believed that young Jewish children should be educated in their own faith and heritage. Both points of view were supported by Sir Rhodes Boyson who pointed out that the Nazis had rid themselves of Church Schools. On the other hand Mr Michael Norman, representing the British Humanist Association, argued that he was not for Humanist Schools or against Religious Education, so long as the children had a choice. Ms. Fiona Stephen who had helped establish some integrated...
schools in Belfast indicated that in such establishments children did not have their faith challenged but gained from inter-reaction. Some girls from Glasgow’s Notre Dame school, (single sex, Roman Catholic but admitting all) pointed out that religion was a matter of not only ‘what’ we believed but ‘why’ and that was fortified by questioning and dialogue. In the same school a young Protestant, Moslem and Sikh reflected the same views.

This programme polarised the two views of this latter day period. On the one hand the argument for religious schools with the obvious intention of confessional teaching, on the other integrated schools where an explicit style of teaching would allow children to examine other systems of belief. The political dilemma has yet to be solved, namely the right for Islam to establish its own schools; politically and morally they have right on their side. The government has yet to address the issue fully, but when it does so the indication is that its guiding principles will not be based on the issues of integration or the aims and objectives of Religious Education. The wheel appears to have come full circle, the arguments about dual systems and the nature of Religious Education are still major issues.
Social Background

To understand why this has happened it is necessary to look to the developing social background of the United Kingdom. The influx of immigrants, noted in the sixties, continued with the arrival of world religions in force. In Islam, a militant resurgence plus the need for a cultural identity within English society meant that many of these significant groups demanded that their religious sensitivities and attitudes be taken into account. In a few circles this has happened, but politically there appears to have been a complete failure to appreciate the new situation. The Iranian backlash against 'Satanic Verses' and general problems with the Middle-East have not endeared ordinary English opinion, and extremists on both sides of the various divides have tended to cloud some of the educational issues. The Christian Church, on the other hand seems to be in a parochial vacuum; more concerned with issues as to whether women should be ordained, or the so-called heresy of the Bishop of Durham. While the Church appears to be in this introspective reflective mood it is not surprising that it does not seem to have grappled with the great issues of education. The decline of institutional Christianity and the growing
religious and ideological pluralism within western society are significant factors in the last twenty years. (3)

Yet opinion polls conducted in July 1978 (4) discovered that only 6% of English people say they are atheistic or agnostic, and only a few more actually attend a church. There seems to be a residual belief that human beings are not the only thing in the universe but that the Church Institution is failing in its particular message. In 1986 a survey taken by the Independent Broadcasting Authority indicated that 47% of the population would describe themselves as 'fairly religious;' 42% were certain there was a God; 65% thought religion a good thing because it provided guidelines for life, and only 9% went to a church. (5) In fact the various statistics taken over the years during this century tend to show there has been no significant movement in popular opinion. Although many claim England is still a Christian country it is not the same as saying that Iran is also an Islamic country. In Islam the Mosque is attended, the prayers are said, and the Koran studied and quoted with a religious fervour that many westerners find incomprehensible if not alien. When the average Englishman claims Christianity he is claiming a type of 'folk-lore
Christianity.' That is a Christianity which somehow links him with his heritage, justifies his codes of behaviour, explains parts of his history and is a stabilising influence (or is supposed to be) on the society in which he lives. It means acknowledging that the Church is probably a 'good thing', which is justified by attendance at Easter/Christmas, and attending the occasional offices of baptism, weddings and funerals. This attitude is undoubtedly reflected mainly in the middle classes. Questions of Christology, the nature of Trinity and authority of the Bible would be as alien to the average Englishman as not knowing the Suras of the Koran would be to an Islamic follower in Iran. The United Kingdom, when looked at as a whole, can only be described as a 'folk-lore Christian' country. With the turmoil of recent years, with violence in Belfast, soccer stadiums, strike riots and poll tax riots it is not surprising that politicians (who reflect the middle class on the whole) look to their 'folk-lore religion' as a means of trying to stabilise our society. Thus a sense of mystification when the ardent followers of Islam demand their own schools. In addition to this self-evident pluralism, there must be added the growth of a fundamentally secular type, agnostics, materialists, Marxists and so forth.
Yet the profound social changes which have taken place over the last twenty years do not seem to have been truly reflected in all aspects of Religious Education.

In 1970 the comprehensive Durham Report, *The Fourth R*, was published, but, as efficient as it was in many ways, it nevertheless seemed to give too much of its attention to the future of Church Schools and paid little real heed to the growing nature of pluralism. This Report indicated that public opinion was for the retention of Religious Education, and further argued that it was necessitated by the cultural tradition of the west. It also claimed that Religious Education was an essential basis for Moral Education as well as having its own inherent educational values. This Report set the tone for many years to come. The Schools Council Working Paper 36, 'Religious Education in Secondary Schools', carried out a careful analysis of the different methods used in Religious Education and showed, as did the Bedwell Report in 1977, that there was a number of approaches in Religious Education, but neither offered a viable solution for the classroom teacher in those schools at the forefront of the pluralistic society.
The Birmingham Agreed Syllabus and Teaching in a Pluralistic Society

It was not until the publication of the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus in 1975 that these issues were confronted head on. It became a confrontation when it left the ivory towers of academia and made headlines. 'When the controversies about this syllabus were at their height in 1974-6, it became clear that although the professional debate centred on questions of educational theory, the public debate was about the nature of British society. Is this a Christian country? Is it a secular country? Is it a pluralist country?' (6)

The Birmingham Agreed Syllabus was a genuine attempt to come to terms with the problems of a changing society. Birmingham had a considerable number of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs within its community. Responding to this the conference (which was convened in 1970) included not only different Christian denominations, but also representatives of Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism, and later a Humanist. The Bath Conference a few years earlier had done just this and it was the inclusion of the secular component which caused the greatest outcry from the public. As immigrants were very much the
minority in Bath this issue was not given the prominence as it was in Birmingham. Birmingham had in many ways become a global village, representative of the world’s faiths and belief systems. The reaction to the 1975 Birmingham syllabus was almost violent. The legality of its right was questioned, counsel’s opinion was sought and it was challenged under the terms of the 1944 Act. The Bishop of Birmingham was uneasy and sought the advice of the National Society. It made headlines because it incorporated ‘communism’ and aroused many latent and hostile feelings. This issue was really the crux of the matter, for, as in Bath, it was the proposal to include secular ideologies. In 1968 the London Agreed Syllabus recruited Jewish and Islamic opinion and caused no such national flutter. The Birmingham syllabus was in fact trying to work alongside its own complex community. Whereas the Durham Report had stated:

'Thus to take Christianity as a base for Religious Education does not at all preclude the pupils learning something of the beliefs and sharing in some of the occasions of worship of other religions ... the most that the Christian would ask is that as part of the study of other religions there would be a willingness to explore the reasons why Christian claims and beliefs are considered to be
The Birmingham syllabus tried to acknowledge totally the distinctiveness of all religions and their importance, and also other systems by which men live. The pluralistic situation may have been new for the home-bred population, but it was also a new experience for the immigrants. The question arose that, if Birmingham reacted like this because of its own peculiar situation, should not other areas, where the other religions did not exist to such a degree, also follow on the principle that (immigrants or no immigrants) it was important as part of the educational process for children to be aware and sensitive to other faiths. This question became and still is a question asked by many authorities at all levels of concern. In 1984 the Inner London Education Authority’s conference took advice from every conceivable representation 'to help young people to achieve a knowledge and understanding of religious insights, beliefs and practices, so that they are able to continue in, or come to, their own beliefs and respect the right of other people to hold beliefs different from their own.' (8) In many ways the turmoil in Birmingham had helped pave the way for such reasonable sentiments.
The Department of Education and Science published in 1980 'A Framework for the School Curriculum', and in 1981, 'The School Curriculum', both of which started to investigate the area of secular pluralism but, as with the Bath and Birmingham Agreed Syllabuses, this was still too sensitive an issue to find expression in the 1988 Act. This seems an extraordinary perspective for many, because if one accepts that England is now a pluralistic society, then views other than Christian ought to be examined.(9) It is a difficult and politically sensitive area trying to explain that in looking at a subject like communism one is not necessarily 'teaching' it, but making an attempt to understand what it is all about. As with the teaching of religions of a more easily acceptable nature, it was meant to be an attempt to help children develop lively and enquiring minds, giving them the ability to raise their own questions in a rational fashion, to help them understand the world in which they live. This was certainly a view which found expression in 'Education in Schools', a consultative document published in July 1977.

As a result of the question of pluralistic teaching Religious Education had a temporary appearance under the public microscope. It had to be seen to justify itself as of educational value.
N. Smart and J. W. D. Smith had gone to considerable lengths to make Religious Education acceptable for many by steering its course towards explicit teaching, which seemed justified by the rapidly developing pluralistic society. There continued to exist the fear of doctrinaire or religious blueprints being handed out, and at times the value of the subject was still questioned.

On the other hand there is the opposite reaction voiced from time to time in the press that Christianity is being squeezed out. In some parts of the country there may be a degree of credibility in such claims; as always it is a matter of keeping the balance. George Gale writing in the Daily Mail under the column entitled 'The Voice of Common Sense' wrote an article entitled 'Let's keep religion out of schools' referring to the Ealing Syllabus:

'Insofar as this country is religious at all, it is Christian; and if religion is to be taught, then it should be Christianity. This is not a Hindu, Moslem, Jewish, Confucian or Buddhist country...’ (10)

Although only a newspaper article written by a non-educationalist, it nevertheless probably reflected a considerable amount of thinking in the
population at large. Some may see this as common sense and others as a rearguard reaction of the most bigoted type. It does reflect the continuing dilemma of Religious Education as it continues over more than a century to find aims which are clear and acceptable. Undoubtedly as the country headed towards the new Education Act this line of thinking would have held some sway. The concept behind the National Curriculum has been to improve the standards of school education, and yet some seem to regard Religious Education as a means to forming a coherent national tradition or community.

Another problem was a growing doubt that the explicit way of teaching could remain truly objective. 'The Birmingham syllabus insists that religions are not to be studied with the idea that one is superior to the rest, but objectively and for their own sake. Plainly there is illusion here.' (11) If, it is argued, that a teacher is teaching Hinduism and is asked whether he believes it, a real quandary appears; if he says 'yes' there's a danger of confessionalism, if he says 'no' he is in danger of reducing its objectivity. This seems an unreasonable argument if it is compared to the teaching of English Literature; it is possible to look at the views and values of different writers without being seen as losing objectivity by agreeing or disagreeing in
class.

There is another problem voiced by some that, whereas in the old days teachers were prevented from teaching what they believed in, now the opposite applies, namely they are expected to teach what they do not believe. This again seems unreasonable when in many subjects another viewpoint, however disagreeable (a pro or anti-Reformation view in History, Determinism in Hardy's works and so forth) is examined and discussed.

A truly serious and major problem has arisen with the rise of pluralism. Adequate staffing has always been a problem for Religious Education; now the mere content knowledge of the subject has quadrupled in size. 'Far too often in the past, and in the recent past at that, piety and goodwill have been accepted as adequate substitutes for a degree in Religious Studies and a specialist professional training', (12) and if goodwill is rightly seen as insufficient for teaching Christianity, it is even more dangerous in religions such as Islam and Hinduism where a detailed knowledge, understanding and sensitivity is essential. One of the main problems facing Religious Education in the foreseeable future is bound to be this vexed question of finding qualified staff, especially with the growth of the
subject. It would not be unlike a teacher of History suddenly being expected to be well versed in all world history, and a teacher of English Literature having to suddenly teach world literature. It is an appalling thought for ordinary teaching mortals, and only adds to the other dilemmas which Religious Education faces.

The 1988 Education Act

By the time the 1988 Act was being considered there were still three strands of approach for teaching Religious Studies; the main one was the explicit style which at least enabled competent teachers to cope with the demands of pluralism; confessional teaching remained in some of the church schools, and undoubtedly still in some state schools depending on the staff and the principal; and in places the implicit approach survived. Pluralism had complicated and enriched the efforts, but was viewed differently by educationalists compared to politicians and much of the popular press which tends to reflect public opinion. Many still saw Religious Education as a means of raising the Moral tone of society, and subsequently felt that only Christian ethics could achieve this. In the meantime it was a
conservative government (which undoubtedly reflected, to some degree, the folk-lore Christianity) which sought stability and progress for society through education. It is not surprising to find that contrary to much informed opinion since the early sixties, the Act was a massive exposition of the status quo.

Most experts were of the opinion that the new Education Act would initiate drastic changes regarding the religious clauses. As early as 1965 Goldman had written that 'the indications are that a new Education Act will be drawn up about 1970 or soon after that date, and the debate is already beginning in public and in private as to whether the religious clauses of the 1944 Act should be continued or abandoned.' (13) Goldman also noted that the religious clauses were a way by which the government could give an ethic to the nation, (14) which was always a motive for those who anticipated massive changes in future legislation. Whether they are educationally or realistically justified in such thinking is beside the point, but it is the 'cold' reality of national politics. Some writers in education were not averse to this way of thinking:

'What did emerge clearly from the study, was that the main category of what appeared to be independent thinkers, (those who did not engage in acts of violence and vandalism), were the religious.
Or more properly, those who came from homes that had a strong commitment to a particular set of beliefs. I must say that this set me thinking. We were an aided school in the Church of England tradition, and the children who were not involved in vandalism, were mostly our Muslims... committed Christians had moved out of the area.' (15)

The equation of religious behaviour with ethical behaviour has always had a strong appeal to those involved in legislation. Nevertheless, the majority of opinion had decided that the religious clauses could not stand as they had done since 1944. The Durham Report recommended that the 'statutory provisions relating to Religious Instruction and school worship in the 1944 Education Act should not be continued in their present form in any forthcoming legislation...' (16) The report, conservative by nature, wanted much more flexibility and 'some' flexibility eighteen years later was all that was achieved.

In fact the 1988 Act set out only to reinforce the 1944 legislation in matters of the religious clauses. It helped clarify some issues and took some recognition, albeit limited, of the changed circumstances of society. It transpired to be a mere supplement to the older 1944 Act. As hinted at by
Goldman in 1965, some twenty three years before, the government seemed to be seeking a means of encouraging the moral and cultural welfare of society. This, of course, is a justifiable objective, but it once again loaded Religious Education with some pernicious problems. There is ‘still a large residual element of Christianity. The government seems to be appealing to that residual element to recall some of the lost vision and coherence.’ (17) But with the ever-increasing demands of a pluralistic society it seems strange that the Act appeared to put such emphasis on Christianity. Undoubtedly, the majority of people would still call themselves Christian, but a significant number live in the United Kingdom who subscribe to other faiths with their own code of ethics and who should be acknowledged. The fact that the Christian church seems incapable of holding its own is a factor which cannot be ignored; but the schools cannot be expected to do this on behalf of the churches. The Government appeared, in this new Act, to be appealing to the folk-lore Christian belief that the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule are all that a stable society requires. (18) As noted by Noel Todd, in referring to parents wanting to establish their own schools, they felt that schools were not teaching Christianity.
Although Britain remained ostensibly a Christian culture, it was really committed to secular humanism in disguise, and that 'emasculated Christianity was no longer able to affect behavioural change.' (19) In the same article Noel Todd found that some parents linked falling academic standards and behavioural problems in general with the dilution of Christian education. There is no doubt that this strand of thought runs through the impulse to maintain the religious clauses in the 1988 Act.

The Act states that it 'shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.' (20) This is a broad sweep of the legislative brush, and reflects the mood of the Act and its perpetrators. It may also reflect a growing concern among some that the explicit style of teaching, and its concentration on comparative religions, has started to squeeze Christian Education out.

Religious Education for the Thatcher government, and for many others, really meant Christian Education, and this meant moral and cultural influence. This is not a novel idea, Goldman had pointed out that Religious Education was frequently seen as the cure for social evils. (21)
Yet the general trend in Religious Education had been to treat Christianity as one among many world religions. This approach was acceptable, not only on the grounds of the academic security of the subject in terms of its educational viability, but it also helped cope with the new pluralistic society. There will be those who see this aspect of the Act as realistic, but in terms of the subject of Religious Education it is reactionary. Whether it is taught from the explicit or implicit approach, (and both have a role to play in the future) the subject cannot and must not be confined to a single religion however important it is to millions of individuals. The 1944 Act did not mention the word Christian (probably out of sensitivity for the Jewish Schools) but certainly implied it; the 1988 Act is more specific if only in a tentative way. It is so open-ended that for some it could cause offence, but what it fails to make clear is what is intended by Religious Education. It does not hint at whether it is to be taught from the explicit or implicit approach or both, whether it is meant to be confessional or an encounter experience. Again this is probably due to the fact that the legislators gave it no more thought than a vague belief that morally and culturally it was 'a good thing'. In this sense, although it acknowledges other
religions, it tends to leave them out in the cold, which indicates that they have not been taken seriously enough. This is a real weakness from two substantial points of view.

First and foremost from the academic point of view. Whether one is Christian, or Islamic, or Hindu, to be considered reasonably educated a person should have some working knowledge of world faiths and ways of life, not merely for their historical and literary education but even for their view of current world affairs. If Christianity has little bearing on the English way of life, this is not true of other countries with their respective religions. Any educated person must have some knowledge, understanding and sensitivity about other communities in a world where communication and interaction occur continuously.

Secondly, if the government wants a united society, which is a proper objective for any government, then a greater sensitivity to the existence of other religions in the country is essential. This must include young people having an informed appreciation of one another's cultures and faiths. It is as important for the 'Inner City' child of Christian heritage to at least try and understand the Islamic perspective, as for the young Moslem to understand the Christian heritage in which he/she
lives. History, taught academically and explicitly, will show pupils that the rise of Nazism was not the total engineering of all German people, and therefore, despite Hollywood films, not all Germans are automatically Nazis and evil. Religious Education taught explicitly will go a long way to take away some of the bigotry found on today’s streets. If it is taught implicitly the encounter and dialogue can achieve similar ends.

The subject, much under-rated in the past, still suffers the indignity of the opting-out clauses. Neither the explicit nor the implicit style of teaching justifies such clauses. The explicit approach is as objective as history or literature can be, the implicit is open-ended and acceptable even to Humanists so long as choice is always available. By retaining the clauses this important subject area is relegated to the lower division by both pupils and staff. It may well account for why so many Religious Education teachers invariably change areas as their careers progress. (It would be an interesting study to find out how many RE teachers make the top of their profession by staying with their Cinderella subject.) The opting-out clauses are based on conscience which gives the subject a feeling of ‘strange apartness’, which cannot apply to other
subjects given the ability to teach them. A history teacher cannot refuse to teach the history of war because it offends his conscience, but can refuse to teach physics because he knows nothing about the subject. It is one thing to opt out of Religious Education through ignorance, another for conscience. In this sense the Act is contradictory; it promulgates Religious Education as a worthy subject and then diminishes it by the retention of these historical clauses. It seems as absurd as a Law Reform Bill maintaining 'Trial by Combat'. In essence these clauses only serve to prove that the 'raison d'être' for the subject has not been thought out, even after one hundred years plus of educational history.

The subject is also undervalued within the Act because the National Curriculum seeks a national control with the exception of Religious Education. This not only denies it the same status, but leaves it in a myriad of hands which can only lead to its continued disintegration and even, perhaps, its disappearance. The reasons are difficult to fathom, especially since the Department of Education and Science Circular 3/89 considered the subject to have the same status as other subjects. The following reasons have been suggested for this particular action: 1) existing syllabuses are currently
sufficient, 2) to have attempted otherwise would have lead to dispute, 3) a national agreement was too remote a possibility, 4) the government did not really think Religious Education that important, 5) a lack of expertise, 6) because local authorities know their areas (which would be like all history being reduced to local history projects), 7) inertia. (22)

Some element of the Cowper-Temple clause remains, albeit modified. It is now possible to teach 'about' different formularies but not to teach them. How realistic this is can only be problematic and mainly dependent on the skills of the teacher. (see reference (23) for the details of this section of the Act).

Subsequently the Act maintained the status quo of the subject, and has done nothing to elevate it from the usual quagmire of contempt by many pupils, and being underrated by many staff. The subject remains in the hands of local authorities to do with as they see fit, and still they frequently turn to local help such as church leaders who are not necessarily educational experts. Three of the four panels on the local committees remain the same, namely the Church of England, the LEA and Teacher's Associations. The Fourth, which used to be reserved for other denominations is now extended to 'such
Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;'(24) Quite why the Church of England retains its prominence is difficult to understand; by coincidence (or cynically, by design) three of the four could be Church of England or three Islamic. Since each panel has the vote of veto it can give inordinate power to the Church of England. More to the point the subject is regionalised; something which in other subjects would be considered against the integrity of their discipline. Local history is excellent, but only as part of the whole subject. It is well known that some LEAs have excellent SACREs while others only borrow. It can mean that a child in an inner city has ample opportunity to study world religions because of the Committee's make up, but in a rural area this may be far from the case. In one part of the country the subject may mean something totally different to another. There is not another subject on the timetable which could tolerate such differences, and so it is yet another nail in the coffin of the subject as it seeks some sense of educational plausibility. The SACRE itself can only be a guardian of what happens, as it only has a very mild effect through its annual report.

Where the 1988 Act does depart from the 1944
some interesting features emerge. The term Religious Instruction is now dropped and replaced by Religious Education. This was probably due to recent linguistic terminology rather than any acknowledgement of developments within the subject. But what should happen in the classroom and what happens in worship should be two different functions and should be clearly differentiated by the appropriate nomenclature, and the Act fails to achieve this.

The DES Circular 3/89 stressed the need for the subject to be taught to all attending school, and the 1988 Act adds to this by ensuring that it is also an essential component for those beyond the legal school leaving age. This is an important step if the practicalities can be worked through. No longer should the subject be seen as something which can be rejected when a child comes of age. The timetabling may need considerable rearranging, but a greater difficulty will be the supply of teachers at this level. The pupils' conceptual and abstract thought processes will have grown, and they will need teachers with considerable skills. This will undoubtedly cause a major stumbling block for the near and probably distant future unless there is a revolution in thinking.

Worship remains compulsory in the maintained
school, with the usual opting out clauses, but the timing and grouping is now more flexible. Section 7-(2) states that 'collective worship is of a broadly Christian character if it reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination.' The inner city school will undoubtedly find itself in a quandary at times, but in the final analysis it will, as always, largely depend on the interpretation given by the headteacher of the day. Special Agreement, and Grant Maintained Schools, are not restricted to their premises, and Boarding Schools must be prepared to make special arrangements for pupils of different religions. What will always remain an enigma is that the state can demand from the schools that they oblige children to worship many more times a week than even the most ardent parish priest.

There are criticisms of the Act that it has failed to take into account the social changes (25) which may well be true, but the serious problem as far as Religious Education is concerned is the total failure to acknowledge the scholarship and thought which has taken place since the early 1960s. The Act still takes the simplistic view that Religious Education is a means by which a revival can take place in Christianity and produce better citizens.
Christianity has failed to do this in its own churches, quite how the government can expect schools to fill the gap is questionable. The subject must not revert to the old style confessional teaching with the promotion of a particular faith, and most educationalists would agree that this approach must be laid to rest. In 1944 the Act tried to give a sense of social cohesion via its religious clauses, but since then the pluralistic community has become a reality and the dominance of a single faith cannot answer this problem.

The word 'spiritual' does occur in the Act, but it does not seem to be used so much in the spiritual sense of the word as there is no mention of encountering a transcendental experience. The use of this word in legislation is suspect since it defies easy definition, and in Chapter 12 of this thesis it is looked at through the eyes of a politician currently engaged in the most recent education debate. It is the British traditional view that Religious Education teaches Christianity and this makes good children who follow the ten commandments and have the 'golden rule' as their own. It has been stated as a possibility that the word 'spiritual' finds a place because of the fear that the academic, the phenomenological approach, had been pressed too
far. It seems highly unlikely that politicians and their advisers were that close to the subject, and in the end Religious Education is seen as a subject to make good citizens.

It seems a devastating thought that, despite all the scholarship which has been invested in Religious Education, the most recent Educational Act leaves the subject in a relegated position, confused over its aims and objectives apart from the fact that it is still expected to make good 'little' citizens. It is not that the wheel has turned full circle it has not really turned at all.
PART 2

INTRODUCTION.

Part 1 outlined the historical development of Religious Education. Part 2 investigates the four main approaches to the subject:

i) The Confessional approach both in the narrow and broader concept which is historically the oldest of the approaches to the subject.

ii) The Moral approach which has permeated all aspects of this subject.

iii) The Implicit approach which was prominent in the early 1960s.

iv) The Explicit approach which was held in considerable favour in the late 1960s and, because of the examination system, is currently the major approach.
CONFESSIONALISM

Definitions

When referring to a Confessionalist approach to Religious Education it generally means that religion is taught with the idea of persuading the pupil to come to a certain way of thinking, and to accept certain claims as true. In the days when western culture was entirely Christian, and other faiths and ways of life were regarded as mere superstition and barbaric, the question of the rights and wrongs of the Confessionalist approach were never questioned. The Christian faith was accepted as much beyond question as we accept the arithmetical fact that 2 plus 2 makes 4.

For the purposes of definition and clarity of thought it is proposed to term as 'Narrow
Confessionalism' that style of teaching which attempted to persuade the pupil not only to accept the Christian faith, but a particular branch/denomination of the faith. The early structural collapse of the Church Institution into different denominations meant that prior to 1870 the Narrow Confessionalist approach dominated most of the educational field. The Cowper-Temple clause and the Agreed Syllabuses did much to narrow the opportunity of Narrow Confessionalism, indeed state schools virtually outlawed this approach.

The Confessional approach was a broader effort to convert young people to Christianity without being specific about a particular denomination. This was done openly, and with an over-use of the Bible and the blessing of a community which still saw itself as Christian. It was a form of enculturing process. During the latter part of this century the methods became more subtle, taking into account new developments in education, giving more choice, but pointing always to a belief in God; this has sometimes been dubbed as Neo-Confessionalism.

Narrow Confessionalism

The dual system of education in this country
ensures that the Narrow Confessionalist approach still survives, and is likely to do so for the foreseeable future. The democratic principle allows people to choose and support their own schools, and religious schools exist with the prime motive of instructing their pupils either in their faith, or the denomination of their faith. A few Jewish schools have always existed, and Islam is now on the edge of securing their own place in the system. However, it is the Roman Catholic Church which has the vast majority of such establishments.

Most Roman Catholic schools exist to teach the catechism of their faith. They still maintain what they call their catechetical classes, sometimes only in name, but nearly always, in intention. The main catechetical movement of the Roman Catholic Church has tended to move away from its traditional main texts, (1) but the intention is very much to instruct in the tenants of Roman Catholic doctrine and practice. The word 'catechesis' is a Greek term used by the Early Church to describe 'instruction' of those who were entering the Church as adult believers. The Narrow Confessional approach is designed to lead the pupil to a particular aspect of the Faith. In a typical Roman Catholic secondary
education the five years would be something like this:

First Year           - The Life of Christ.
Second Year          - The commandments, way of life and so forth.
Third Year           - The Sacraments.
Fourth Year          - Doctrine.
Fifth Year           - Probably Apologetics. (2)

Many schools today would vary their approach, but there is no doubt that the Roman Catholic Church maintains its schools, because of its belief that young children of their faith must be brought up as Roman Catholics.

They have no intellectual or practical problems in seeing the work of the Church's preaching as directly related to their work in the schools:

' I feel very strongly that the job of the state school is to provide a bridge between the school and the church, and the church in its widest sense, so that the children might travel easily from one to the other when the time comes.' (3)

The Roman Catholic view is clear and uncluttered, the doctrine must be taught in a way which will grip the minds of the young people:
'Why not ask if the heart of the doctrine had been correctly taught? Has it been presented with a clarity, an insistence, an adequate explanation? Has a good effort been made to have students learn this basic minimum which they will be able to use later on when they have to face the demands of their Christian lives as adults? Youth needs to be provided with the principal reference points of the landscape of their faith.' (4) This phrase in nearly quoted in the 1960s picture today has changed considerably.

As Dewar noted in *Backward Christian Soldiers* (1964) the 'educational lodestar of the Roman Catholic hierarchy is every Roman Catholic child in a Roman Catholic school taught by Roman Catholic teachers.' (5) The Times Educational Supplement always has advertisements for Roman Catholic schools with the initial pre-requisite that the applicant must be a Roman Catholic.

The main bulk of 'Narrow Confessionalism' survives to this day by the existence of Roman Catholic schools with the permission of the dual system. There are also many Jewish schools and today there is a gathering demand for Islamic schools. If they are independent that must be their choice in terms of a democratic society. If they are funded by
the state then the demands of the state must be understood. There is a tendency in current political thinking that a Christian background is necessary for understanding the culture of this country and the western world. It is clear that an understanding of the majority belief of an adopted country is essential, but if an alien faith is taught confessionally there will be serious problems of conscience for the teacher and the taught.

Confessionalism

The 1950s probably saw the last of the other main church denominations supporting the narrow approach. The Church of England took the more general Confessional line, namely that instructing in the Christian Faith was sufficient. Spencer Leeson in his book *Christian Education Reviewed* (1957) came dangerously close to suggesting the narrow approach, but generally argued that the main aim was to instruct pupils in the Christian faith.

Many exponents of this broader Confessionalism claim it is impossible to do
otherwise: '...the line between evangelism and Christian education is, in some senses a narrow one, and the two aspects can never be isolated from each other,' (6) and '...what happens in the county schools must be an essential part of the Church's concern, and a constant challenge to the Church's thought and prayers.' (7)

The 1944 Act was strongly Confessional, although it did not mention the Christian faith (probably out of sympathy for the Jewish Schools) it was implied both in the Act and in the debates. As the Archbishop of Canterbury said in the House of Lords, "a Christian speaking about history judges the events and the characters of history by standards which are Christian standards"(8) thus making the assumption that the Act was for Christians by Christians. The Newsom Report was broadly Confessional as was the work of Goldman and the syllabuses of the 1960s. Because of the educational advances this was generally known as the 'Neo-Confessional' period, though there is no significant difference in intention between Confessional and Neo-Confessional. The reality is that there is Narrow Confessionalism and Confessionalism, and both survive in various schools to this day.
Implications of Confessionalism

Confessionalism, of either variety, is a form of indoctrination, acceptable in the years when England regarded itself as Christian, but today, less acceptable. Although Matthew Arnold used the word indoctrination to mean simply teaching it is now used in the pejorative sense. (9) It is possible to suggest that we indoctrinate in Maths and Physics, but this is better described as instruction in well-attested empirical facts, which are acceptable and neutral to the community. Indoctrination takes on its full meaning when we refer to matters of opinion, belief and theory. If a teacher preaches party politics it is justifiably seen as indoctrination; he is able to do so (assuming he so chooses) because he is in a position of authority, with a captive audience over a period of time. The teacher can use the various skills of his methodology such as emotion, anger, enthusiasm. The committed Jesuits claim (or at least this is rumoured) that given a child until he was seven he was their’s for life. Indoctrination cannot occur, in the meaning of the word, if the teacher is talking about verifiable information or data. In religion such factors exist, thus one of the strengths of the Explicit approach,
which deals with verifiable data. Confessionalism goes beyond the facts to belief and theory and demands acceptance. Thus indoctrination involves the use of particular material which is usually disputatious within the community. To educate in obeying the law would not be seen as indoctrination whereas belief in Satan most certainly would. To indoctrinate is the same as saying "this view is the only view because it is the truth", and, as such, tends to close the minds of pupils to other possible views and their claims for validity. In this sense indoctrination is not educational, (which is seen as opening the minds of young people) but more a blinkering of minds.

It is difficult for some teachers to appreciate that Confessionalism is a form of indoctrination, because such is the strength of their conviction that they feel the belief factor is as strong as empirical evidence.

Many Confessionalists will argue that it is impossible to teach without bias and so their approach may as well be accepted. Even some modern research tends to support this view: 'A teacher is not an evangelist, in the narrow sense of the word, yet of necessity he communicates his own attitudes and beliefs.' (10) A good teacher however tries to
ensure that the pupils make up their own minds, and he does not use his position to make up their minds for them. This is, essentially, what Confessionalism does, because, by its very nature it is a form of indoctrination. Indoctrination is counter-productive to education because it has the immediate side-effect of closing the mind to other claims. A Narrow Confessionalism therefore has the effect of narrowing that process even further, and closing the mind even more.

A Matter of Choice

Indoctrination has long been regarded as counter-productive to the true educational process, yet because of the democratic right of choice it is allowed to continue. It is based on the assumption that parents know best for their children, which is a sensitive and sometimes questionable outlook.

The worst scenario could be (and in illustrating this picture it does not mean that it happens as a matter of course, but the very fact that the potential is there is sufficient to raise serious misgivings) that in a Roman Catholic School, for example, a child could be taught that salvation is only through the Roman Catholic interpretation and
practice of the faith. This can therefore lead to the belief that other forms of Christianity are heretical and therefore their adherents sinful; that other religions are barbaric and based on mere superstition. History can be effected by such an interpretation, as well as literature and other subjects. In such a school there can exist a closed community which stops young people from mixing with those of other beliefs; this in itself can be damaging since there will be no comparison and no opportunity to learn from one another leading to a "them and us" situation. Furthermore, the system is perpetuated since the children's children will demand the same processing.

It is a strange enigma that the democratic system, by its very nature, permits a form of Narrow Confessionalism which the average English person would normally only associate with some Middle or Far Eastern mysterious theocracy.

Broader Confessionalism, which identifies with a belief system as a whole, and not a singular part of that system, continues in many schools. Many Church of England Schools would assume this approach, and also many Public Schools. Parents opt into the Independent School system for a variety of reasons, mainly social and academic, but few would probably
give serious thought as to what happens in the 'Divinity' lessons. Consequently, it can happen that Jewish and other faiths find their children not so much being taught what the Christian faith is 'about', but being taught the Christian faith. Few parents in some Public Schools would put the state of religion high in the choice of schools. Again, this is the right of the democratic principle of freedom of choice.

In the Maintained School the picture is very different. A Methodist family may not wish their child to be influenced by the authority of a teacher to become an Anglican or a Roman Catholic; a Roman Catholic family may well be unhappy if their child returns as an atheist, and a Humanist family must have the right to know that although their child is learning about religion, he is not necessarily being converted to one. Again, democracy must support them in their views.

Conclusion

Modern educational theory has been cautious for some time regarding doctrinal methods and approaches of teaching: 'In this use, "education" involves initiating people into various forms of
thought and activity in such a way that they are helped to become better informed, more understanding, and more reasonable. Education in religion in this sense cannot (logically) be a matter of inculcating or persuading people into a particular religious faith, or into the religious attitude generally.' (11) To indoctrinate a child is not to treat him as a human being with his own rights. Neither society nor parents own children in the way they do possessions. (12) In fact it can only be viewed as disreputable to use methods of persuasion which are indoctrinatory rather than educational. To inculcate a religious creed does not belong to the field of proper education. 'To put it briefly, the notion of cultural transmission is only relevant to any educational aim in so far as it is the transmission (or simply teaching) of various forms of thought and factual information.' (13)

It has been argued that 'when it comes to cherishing the pupil's personal autonomy, we are in the region, not merely of reason, but of love. And, if there is this kind of teacher-pupil relation, there can be no reasonable objection to the teacher's positive statement of his own beliefs.' (14) Although there may be considerable popular support for this view, the fact remains that once a teacher feels free
to be 'positive' in placing his political or religious views before the pupils, the next step can all too easily be the dogmatic-style of teaching, and indoctrination.

Emotions can run dangerously high in support of Confessionalism: 'To those who say that the teacher should not indoctrinate, one would answer: Did Jesus indoctrinate? Did Saint Paul indoctrinate? Would it not be better to stop talking nonsense about indoctrination?',(15) and 'the uncritical employment of open methods can, paradoxically, lead to what has recently been called an initiation into agnosticism,'(16) and '...one may be tempted to suspect that teachers who welcome an invitation to shelve their own opinions may not have any opinions to shelve.' (17)

Yet Confessionalism is to preach and not simply to educate, at its best it is benevolent indoctrination, and, at its worse, it is the closing down of young people's minds to other views. It is the teacher telling the pupil what to believe and what to reject: '...the acceptance or rejection of a particular religious position is not an optional extra in the study of religions, but an essential ingredient. Indeed, it is the prime datum.'(18)

Adherents to this view are in severe danger
of treating those in their care as second class: 'Children, precisely because they are inexperienced and need guidance, require help in decision making, in choosing for themselves on the basis of the evidence presented to them.'(19) Presenting the 'evidence' from the Confessionalist view, is to present from a particular point of view and can only be indoctrination. There is also the danger that the Confessionalist style teacher can view his own status as above that of ordinary mortals: 'The teacher is not only a communicator but a model.'(20)

An anti-Confessionalist approach does not deny the importance of teaching Christianity. To introduce a child to history or literature it is self-evidently best to start with British History and English Literature. Equally, Christianity is the obvious starting base for the study of most British children in the study of Religion. This does not imply that we therefore indoctrinate young people into the Christian faith, but educate them in this important area of life.

It has been claimed that 'we must be careful, however, not to make too much of the distinction between education and nurture',(21) yet here is the thin end of the wedge. If the distinction is not understood in Religious Education, the
Confessionalist approach can so easily dominate.

For many years it has been recognised that modern children 'are increasingly objecting to teaching which fails to be open and fair.' (22) The very nature of the Confessionalist approach is a form of intellectual dictation, and it is surprising that its existence continues at a time when children 'are supposed to discover for themselves that Christianity is the true way, rather than be told that it is.' (23) Yet the Confessionalist style is very much alive today. The Association of Christian Teachers produced in 1990 a much publicised pamphlet entitled Calling or Compromise, (24) claiming that teachers with strong Christian beliefs are being driven out of Religious Education in favour of other religions. It is probably not so much that Islamic or Hindu teachers are necessarily favoured, but the recognition that any Confessionalist approach is no longer acceptable to modern education.

From the Christian perspective it should never be the practice to preach to the unwilling, and with a captive audience of pupils in any class it can always be a possibility. Many Christians would not want this to happen on these and other grounds of principle; the teacher is not necessarily a priest, anymore than a priest is a teacher. The thinking
adherent to any faith must be cautious to the dangers of Confessionalism. Teachers have been aware for a long time that Confessionalism is not the way forward for Religious Education, yet it persists either by deliberate intention or poor practice. The 1988 Act does not give any guidelines, in fact it seems to bend towards the Confessionalist approach, even though this approach has long been regarded as counter-productive to good education.

In any serious study of Religious Education the Narrow Confessionalist and Confessionalist approach must be abandoned. It will survive in some schools, as noted, but perhaps the nomenclature must be changed if Religious Education, as it is now commonly termed, is to survive as an educationally viable subject. Religious Education must not be confused with instruction or catechism into a faith or a particular denomination.
Background

Consciously, or sub-consciously, Religious Education has always been associated with Moral Education. This position has occasionally been challenged, as early as 1897 the Moral Education League established itself for a brief duration, and the 1960s produced several serious studies to show that Moral and Religious Studies were distinctive subjects. Nevertheless, historically and today, popular opinion tends to see the two subjects as either inter-changeable, or assume that if religion is taught then morality is the natural consequence. Traditionally, it has always been considered that if a young person can be convinced in the Christian faith, then the Christian ethic is a natural counterpart. Politically there seems little doubt that Religious Education has always been viewed from this perspective, and this is reflected in the

The 1944 Act saw in the religious clauses an undoubted utilitarian purpose. (1) They were seen as necessary for moral education for tomorrow's citizens, especially as a natural reaction against Fascism and Communism. It has been claimed that the British are by nature inclined towards Pelagianism, (2) (and Protestantism has always had a strong moral stance) and that the vast majority of parents are happy for Religious Education to be taught, if only because they will feel assured that it is for their children's good. The Norwood Report certainly regarded the Christian ethical standard 'as the highest teaching known to man'. (3) The Plowden Report followed a similar view claiming that 'by example at first hand children can learn to love and care for others, to be generous, kind and courageous. Good experiences in personal relationships in early life will make a most important contribution to an understanding of spiritual and moral values when children are older'. (4) A National Opinion Poll published in New Society (5) indicated that over 96% of 1,730 respondents wanted their children to understand Christianity. This high percentage undoubtedly, as it still does today, reflected parents wanting their children to come under the influence of a morality, which most people still see
as essentially connected to a religious faith. There is no question that in popular thinking Christianity is seen as a means of 'making social beings out of recalcitrant children.' (6) During the 1980s there was a sharp upturn in parents providing their children with private education, a rise from 5.75% of the taught population to 7.3%. (7) This reflects not only increased wealth, a desire for higher academic standards and social elevation, but also, a desire that their children be taught the traditional values of folk-lore Christianity, and the ethical standards such teaching demands.

Expectations

Since the 1960s it has been observed many times that the standards of morality within society are not demonstrably improving. Statistics, as far as they can be trusted, indicate quite the opposite. This can be blamed on a multitudinous number of factors. The loss of direction being experienced by the Church structures; the growth of self-seeking materialism; and, for some, the failure of Religious Education. Yet the question must be asked whether it is the task of Religious Education
to teach moral standards? This is an assertion often claimed and, if not stated, then assumed. In the staff-room it is frequently assumed that the RE specialist must be the source of all good works, 'the frowner upon bad deeds', and his department is expected to ensure that the pupils 'behave themselves'. Too often the RE specialist has found him or herself as a 'quasi' or 'pseudo' cleric, expected to produce worshipping assemblies, and homilies on moral expectations, from which staff and pupils can opt out.

There is no doubt that the public see teachers generally as 'moral agents' (8), but most especially the Religious Education department. There is considerable confusion. Some see Moral Education as a separate subject, others view it as part of Religious Education, and some as part of all subjects.

There are those who argue that Moral Education must be kept apart from Religious Education for a variety of reasons, not least being the claim that because there are so many negative attitudes towards Religious Education, it must not be allowed to infect Moral Education. In today's pluralistic society the issue is further complicated by the knowledge that Christianity does not have the only ethical system; other religions and secular
ideologies can offer up their own claims and systems. 'The beliefs of men like Ghandi and Dag Hammarskjold are examples'(9) that 'the Christian does not wish to claim a monopoly of moral goodness for the adherents of his faith'.(10) There is also considerable difficulty in judging the value of one system against another, unless the pupil already has a basis from which to start.(11) These are issues which must be faced, and especially when it is claimed, undoubtedly correctly, that some schools, in abandoning Religious Education, have also abandoned Moral Education.(12) No society would wish its young people to pass through the school years without some form of education in what is right and what is wrong. Therefore, the question must be asked, what is Morality and what does its teaching demand?

What is Morality?

Moral, from the Latin mores, can simply mean the accepted customs and demands of a society. This primitive view (Hirst) can mean that each and every country or civilization has its own moral code, and it would be impossible to judge whether one is worthier than another. The moral code of the South American cannibal would differ sharply from the
Buddhist; the Christian code from the Nazi philosophy. Morality then becomes a matter of initiation, of inducting young people into the social traditions of their environment. This naturally has problems in a pluralistic society (to say nothing of the right and wrongs of indoctrinating young people into Nazism, but this assumes another basis from which to pass a critical insight) in which different religious/moral cultures exist side by side, only governed by the rules of law. It can assume unpleasant social and legal proportions in such areas as polygamy, which is morally acceptable to Islam; the right to execute heretics as in the Rushdie affair; and the right of Sikhs not to wear crash helmets. If morality is based simply on the customs of a culture, major problems appear not only in terms of peaceful co-existence, but what is ultimately right for human existence.

Subsequently, down through generations, mankind has sought another meaning to morality, a meaning which is supposed to be universal in its application, and therefore not confined to a particular group at a particular time and place. Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics was a major attempt to formulate a Moral or Ethical System based on reason. Many such efforts through history have foundered,
either because the intellectual exercise of such systems has proved to be beyond the grasp of most people, or the authority of such exercises was minimal; or that such systems were soon reduced to the original 'mores', namely good for a particular time and place only.

The final view, which many people subscribe to subconsciously, or by social tacit approval, is that there is a moral code which is more profound than mere human choice. Kant struggled with the Categorical Imperative, and many theologians and philosophers have argued for a Divine consciousness implanted in human creation. For Islam it is the Will of Allah; for Christians the Will of God; for Jews the Will of Yahweh, and so forth. It is not surprising that Religious Education and Moral Education have been seen as inseparable. This does not solve the problem, because there are those who interpret their God's Will as different to others, and there are those who are fundamentally without belief in anything beyond human existence.

If Morality is taught from the religious view, then it can only be pertinent to those who subscribe to the existence of God as the source of all moral values. Others, therefore, try and follow the Aristotelian theory that there is an ethical view which can be derived from the nature of the universe.
and man’s reason. Various principles are sought, happiness, utilitarianism and so forth. These principles which can be empirically grasped are easy to accept, but no such system has yet emerged which carries sufficient universal appeal to be worthwhile. If the moral view of ‘God relation’, and the moral view of ‘the nature of things’ are found inadequate, this leaves only the possibility of personal choice. This is based on the emotion of approval, when the moral verb ‘ought’ must be replaced by ‘approve’, which is dangerously close to the primitive view of reducing morality to what a particular society demands. This puzzle can leave us simply with the view that morality is ultimate and therefore indefinable. (13) Yet we are all conscious that moral choices exist, that one action is right and another wrong, and that the exercise of that choice is the basis of human freedom. Furthermore, the most mundane of human decisions, frequently has a moral basis as its ultimate and frequently sub-conscious motivation. It could be claimed that the most fundamental elements of human existence depend on moral choice, that is to say it is more important how we live, than what we own. More important than a knowledge of chemistry and physics are the moral choices we make. It is in this area of education that parents have the
greatest expectations, and, along with Religious Education, there is a great deal of confusion over the definition of the subject.

The teaching of Morality demands that teachers help their pupils to understand in what circumstances an action is right or wrong; secondly, that there is a distinction between the two; and, finally, an attempt to persuade them to make the appropriate decision. To do this the teacher must have an acceptable basis from which to start. In the past the answer has been simple, namely the folk-lore Christian approach that the Sermon on the Mount, and the Golden Rule are all we need. The 1988 Act, in its religious clauses, tends to subscribe to this approach, and there would be many who would say this is common sense. It is not as clear-cut as many would wish. Even those who see Moral Education as inextricably bound up with Religious Education must note that Religious Education is *more* than Moral Education, and that the moral element must be secondary. (14) On the other hand, Professor A.J Ayer, in his note of reservation on Religious Education in the Plowden Report, noted that 'if Religious Education is to remain obligatory, we support our colleagues in recommending that the moral element should predominate over the theological.'(15)

In times gone by the majority of pupils would
have seen a natural connection between Religious Education and Moral Education. This view is undoubtedly shared by many parents, politicians and teachers. It seems to be the case that pupils today no longer see this connection. Edwin Cox(16) looked at the views of children and discovered from some 6th Formers that only 10.4% of boys and 4.3% of girls, justified their views of Religious Education, by saying it was necessary for Moral Education. To test this view the author asked 244 14 year olds from Eton College, after their first year in the school, (in which time they had experienced Explicit teaching of RE) whether they saw the study of religion as the teaching of moral values. Only 2.5% agreed, although 4.5% wished it to be that way. There was little difference of opinion in the final years of 18/19 years of age. (May 25th 1990)

Two Distinct Subjects. Religious and Moral Education

During the 1960s a move was made to separate the two subjects. Under the direction of John Wilson, the Farmington Trust Project was established with the aim of making valid recommendations to schools of effective Moral Education in the areas of curriculum, the social
arrangements of the school, and the teacher personality. (17) More empiric researches were carried out by P. McPhail to 'foster in pupils sensitivity to the feelings of others and a sense of responsibility for the consequences of their own actions.' (18) The tendency was, by the late 1960s, to see Moral and Religious Education as two distinct subjects:

'Morality, if autonomous, is equally distinct from and independent of science and religion - a position disappointing to those believers who want to subordinate morality to religion, to argue that it does not make sense to think of morality apart from religion, but encouraging to others who want rather to proceed to religion by way of morality.' (19)

There were, and are, those who see Religion as being distinctly no good for Moral Education. Both Piaget and Durkheim agreed that Christianity was a great obstacle for Moral Education since they did not want the search for Morality to be encumbered by dogmatism and intolerance. (20) They tended to view Christian morality as 'pedestrian' at best, and thought that religion should be excluded as a matter of principle. Professor A.J. Ayer, in his Plowden Report note of reservation, endorsed this view by pointing out that morality from the religious
prespective is simply based on 'fear'. (21) Ayer may have been reflecting on Voltaire, who claimed that they are 'much to be pitied who need the help of religion to be honest men.'

As mentioned earlier, the Moral Education League started in 1897, but faded. In 1955 Margaret Knight, a Humanist Psychologist, broadcast on the BBC a programme entitled 'Morals without Religion'. (22) She raised the problem not only before members of the public concerned with the issue under consideration, but those concerned with the rising delinquency of the post war years which focused attention on Moral Education.

Those who support the separation of Religious and Moral Education claim there is no logical connection between morality and religion, that it is impossible to derive 'ought' from 'is'. They also claim, that in deriving authority from a moral God, assumes, 'a priori', that we do in fact obey, and that we are his creatures. Others argue that there is a problem if we say that it is good, because God commands it, when God commands the good because it is good. Finally, there is the old and well known complaint, similar to that argued by Professor A.J. Ayer, of fear as the basis of action, and its natural counterpart that we are good in the hope of heaven.
Those Humanists who wish to separate the subjects frequently take another approach. They point out that religious morality is perfectionist, which is subsequently unsuitable for beginners, and that there is a considerable gap between preaching and action. Some Humanists also argue that religious morality is symbolised by a culture from the past which is not relevant to the issues of today. They also claim that religious morality is highly authoritarian, and has little value in the genuine search for ethical conclusions. (23)

It has been argued that because Religion is not taught in a systematic way, and in some schools it is not taught at all, that Moral Education must exist in its own right. As recently as 1984 Robert Holtby wrote: 'Within schools, there are the various ways in which religion appears (or disappears) in integrated studies, or humanities; Moral Education has come of age as an autonomous discipline...'.(24)

Conclusions

Despite these formidable arguments, it is extremely difficult to separate morality from religion. This is not to say that one religion can claim moral supremacy. All the major world faiths
have a morality system bound in with their belief, or view of their creator, with millions of adherents who accept this without question. The Christian faith has given its ethic to western culture and law, and underlies many of our basic assumptions. Indeed, in a pluralistic society, a study of different morality systems can carry many essential side benefits. This form of education can help young people identify with others, it can help them think through the facts and reach critical conclusions, and, finally, it can help them seek a personal stand for their own actions. In Ninian Smart's analysis of the six dimensions of religion one of the six is the ethical, and as such cannot be avoided if pupils are to be exposed to all aspects of religion.

It must be noted at this point that ethics is only one of the six possible dimensions, and while some people worry about the effect that religion has upon the teaching of morality, the same argument can be held in reverse. Namely, that the teaching of religion must not be reduced to the mere teaching of moral codes. It would distort any religion merely to see it as a conveyance for teaching a system of ethics. Professor H.D.Lewis, in his note of refusal to sign the Gittins Report, also pointed out that it 'is utterly inadequate to think of religion, as many do today, in exclusively moral
Religion and Morality have much in common. Religion frequently demands a moral code, and if religion is to be studied this must also be taken into account. Both religion and morality have attitudes and beliefs upon which the recipient is expected to react, and most especially in terms of behaviour. Our current society, whether we like it or not, has founded much of its moral standards on religious teachings in the past.

Academics, of one discipline or another, have tried to show that there are two distinct subjects, but Religious Education and Moral Education can never be seen as totally divorced. First, at the practical level, the vast majority of people will never grasp the finer issues or accept the division. Secondly, there is a distinctive, and widely held view, that morality does have something to do with our creation, and therefore God. Finally, both morality and religion are to do with ultimate questions.

Owing to the fact that both subjects deal with ultimate questions they are open to disputation, this is well known and accepted in terms of Religious Education, but it is equally true of Moral Education. If those who teach Morality reject the religious basis they are left with either the primitive
initiation system, or the related 'approval' system. This is just as disputatious as religion, since Morality is not just a private matter, but of public concern.

It must be noted that Religious Education is not Moral Education, no more than Moral Education is Religious Education. Yet Religious Education must include some Moral Education because some views of morality are bound up with religion, and teachers of Morality must, therefore, include religious views. This must be true unless the teacher is indoctrinating one specific view. The teaching of Moral Education can be no more indoctrination than the teaching of religion. In the true sense of 'education', the teaching of religion and morality must be an open-search which does not close minds to any one given theory; it must be an exploration not a commandment. No teacher of Religious Education, and no serious minded Humanist, can object to this. An open-search enlightens, and does not close the mind. This implicit approach to Morality ties in well with the implicit approach to religion.

It is worthy of note, at this juncture, that Moral Education should pervade the whole School Community and Curriculum. It cannot be confined to a period on the timetable. In terms of the school
community there must be an understanding of moral ground rules for the community to exist, and an awareness of those rules is part of the Moral education process. In terms of the curriculum Moral education inevitably enters the study of English and English Literature, History and many other subjects such as Health Education, Economics et cetera. No subject on the timetable ought to claim it is devoid of any element of Moral education.

The experience of classroom teachers tends to show that the teaching of Moral Education in isolation is not only unrealistic but dreary. On the practical side, to establish yet another period, will cause serious problems within an already fully structured government-controlled timetable.

The complete autonomy of ethics has not yet been established. The 1971 School Council Working Paper 36 blandly claimed that 'moral knowledge is autonomous: it is perfectly possible to have moral education without reference to moral sanctions and presuppositions.' (27) It is not possible to isolate an open search in Moral Education from an open search in Religious Education nor in many other subjects; that much is just common sense. Of course, it would be indoctrinatory, and wrong, to link pupil's thinking with one morality system in the same way that it would be wrong to indoctrinate in Religious
Education. This does not preclude either an implicit or explicit research into the moral codes, beliefs and systems of mankind.

As such the subject of Moral Education is the business of the whole school, but so long as the approach (explicit or implicit or both) is education and not indoctrination, there is much value in Religious Education taking some of the subject into account. In the words of Edwin Cox, instead of seeing the two subjects as 'potential divorcees, it might be wiser to look on them as Siamese twins.' (28)
The British Humanist Association wrote in a 1975 pamphlet that: 'If one feels that education is responsible for the whole person, then educationalists must face the problems surrounding ultimate questions and concern.' (1) There is little doubt that this statement is true for all involved in the area of education, but its veracity goes beyond the scope of educational theory and idealism. The very nature of young people is such that they will always ask questions of this nature. If educationalists seek to promote enquiring minds then questions of an ultimate nature will always be asked by students. Teachers, even with limited experience, know that sometime in a school period a class member will ask a question which goes over and beyond mere factual content. Such questions are not limited to
Religious Education. A history lesson dealing with, for example, the First World War, may be factually based, but larger questions as to why and the behaviour of man invariably appear. An English lesson on the text of King Lear will inevitably raise questions as to the nature of man.

In Religious Education the study of world religions will raise questions as to the veracity of different truth claims; ultimate questions such as 'why is there something and not nothing?' and 'does God exist?' are frequently found in class discussion. This is equally true of moral questions when behaviour and ethical problems can stimulate major and sincere discussion. Such questions can hardly be put aside as being non-educational if education is to do with the whole person. Health and Environmental education is now accepted as a proper task of schools, and emotions can hardly be omitted as if they no value to the educational purpose. 'Religious Education, properly considered, is first and foremost a part of the education of the emotions.'(2)

There are, however, genuine problems in the classroom when it comes to dealing with 'ultimate questions' because they involve emotions and opinions. If the teacher puts forward only one view, and does it with the authority of the pedagogue, then there is the danger of confessionalism. 'In
particular, a county school must not so structure its education that it is biased one way or another amongst stances for living, or amongst the various controversial questions that arise in the discussion of ultimate concerns and beliefs.' (3)

When the young enquiring mind asks such questions they cannot be ignored, but the human tendency to want to give ultimate answers to ultimate questions must be firmly set aside. Instead, a well-trained and sensitive teacher can allow discussion and open enquiry, indeed s/he can encourage an exploration when in pursuit of any truth, but without claiming some assured foreknowledge of a singular truth. The class and teacher can examine issues together, the teacher being a guide to sensible discussion techniques, but not a means for ultimate arbitration of truth claims. Teacher and taught can know that when in search of the truth it is better to set sail and sink, rather than not set sail at all.

In an article in the 'Educational Review' of June 1958 Yeaxlee pointed out that young people with hostile attitudes towards religion were less likely to absorb the material, and this was later confirmed by Hyde's research(4). To inundate a class with the factual detail typical of the explicit approach, without a later possibility of wider questioning, is
bound to increase the hostility level. Despite the importance of the Explicit approach, the Implicit style of teaching permits the pupil to explore the questions which will inevitably arise in discussion, and so increase interest in the subject, or at least diminish some of the hostility which is all too characteristic of this subject. This is especially true when children, as Goldman pointed out, start to develop the ability to think in an abstract mode. (5) In these later years a free but informed discussion becomes essential. (6)

If questions of an ultimate nature, religious or moral, are freely discussed without undue prejudice by the teacher there seems no need for conscience clauses. No educational system can afford to ignore such questions which are always asked by young people. It is how the questions are explored, rather than answered, which is so important. The mainly ignored values of the Implicit approach to Religious Education are of considerable value here, and need to be revitalised if Religious Education is to have any value in the present educational system. It is the contention of this thesis that the Implicit approach to Religious Education is only half of the content of this subject, nevertheless, an essential component.
A Definition of Implicit Teaching

'The advocates of this type of approach see Religious Education primarily as an unrestricted personal quest for meaning in terms of actual experience, assisted by dialogue between pupil and teacher. Such an approach consists less in the communication of information about religion than in an analysis of experience and the relating to it of appropriate material to broaden and deepen insight.'(7) Historically this approach is mainly associated with the work of Loukes who saw Religious Education as a dialogue or conversation between the two generations of the teacher and the taught. The dialogue should be sympathetic, honest and sincere, and should be characterised not by the supplying of definite answers, which would be a form of Confessionalism, but by a mutual exploration in which the search was more important than any black and white answers.

The Implicit Approach includes questions of an ultimate nature and it is because of this that it would be thoroughly wrong for any teacher to attempt to reach a definite answer as a taught conclusion. 'Religion is more than a set of beliefs, of rules, of rituals; more than a body of literature or a social
framework. It reaches the core of the human spirit, its essence is inexpressible by many and expressed by very few ... the dilemma is especially felt in certain areas pertaining to the subject. Examinability is one such point of pressure: clearly we cannot and should not attempt to assess religious experience, and it may well be improper to try to measure sensitivity and receptivity to such an experience.' (8) Although many subjects, including science, can raise issues of an ultimate nature, Religious Education in particular, cannot but 'fail to raise issues relating to the meaning of life and to the human destiny which in the world outside the school are the subject of profound disagreement.' (9) Yet despite the controversial nature of many of these questions they are fundamental to the questioning mind and cannot be ignored. The Norwood Report saw this aspect of education as very definitely apart from the Explicit approach and as such over and beyond the curriculum and 'we believe it to be very much the more important.' (10) Even if the whole subject of Religious Education were dropped from the school timetable, the questions would be raised. A death of a relative, or any traumatic question will raise the issues of life. The gathering spiritual awareness of growing adolescence need to be discussed. As Goldman wrote: 'To me, the basis of
children's needs must be the starting point and the ultimate purpose of Christian education. Religion is eminently a personal search, a personal experience and a personal challenge.'(11) An educational system which is concerned with the growth of the whole person cannot ignore this facet of human development. The type of questions which will occur in the classroom may arise from the contents of an Explicit Religious Education approach, they may arise from home and environmental problems, or from the sheer gathering of growth experience, but if ignored by teachers the classroom will be reduced to the mere communication of data. Open-ended discussion and exploration of life's issues is an essential component of education, and the rejection by many schools of the Implicit approach has been detrimental.

Problems relating to the Implicit Approach

This approach demands a high degree of teaching skill. It is not simply the pedagogic 'talk and chalk,' but keeping control of a class while allowing it genuine freedom to explore in dialogue the issues in hand. The teaching skill must include
an ability to help individuals express themselves, to help others listen and appreciate the opinions of others, and to do this in a way which is not a form of thinly concealed Confessionalism. The teaching skills are so refined that not every teacher would be capable of this approach; but this should not preclude this aspect of the subject from the timetable.

Another problem seen by some critics is that by keeping an objective approach a series of choices is portrayed and that there is a failure to 'nurture the child'. 'Do we, as some religious communities wish, nurture a child in his or her own faith, and in so doing restrict and fragment the curriculum? Do we, if such a thing is possible, give objective information, and in our endeavours underplay or even ignore the passion and partiality of some religions?'(12) To nurture a child in a particular faith is Confessionalism and is the role of the family, it is not the task of education to encourage adherence to one faith or aspect of a faith. If there is no adherence to any faith at home it is still not the right of education to step into the breach. The task of the teacher may well be to give an objective lesson on a variety of views, to invite discussion, but not to direct. The objective view and classroom discussion may well miss the 'passion' of a religion,
although a sound teacher may be able to give some sense of the feelings involved. This is not surprising in an academic atmosphere; war novels and poetry in a literature lesson, however well taught, may not convey the true passion and feelings of the reality of war. A teacher who knows his job may well be able to give good pointers, and yet retain a sense of objectivity even if the class is moving in a particular direction. This argument must assume that the teacher is well-trained and knowledgable in his subject.

A wide ranging discussion by young people of different cultures, faiths and stances of living can only broaden the mind and hopefully encourage tolerance. The weakness of Confessionalism, from the educational point of view, is that it closes the mind to the possibility of truth in other religions. The strength of the Implicit approach, with its open exploration, is a possible broadening of the mind and a greater receptivity to other points of view.

The Norwood Report claimed 'that it is a perfectly good reason for refusing to teach the subject that you reject the validity of any spiritual interpretation of the universe.'(13) It can be argued from this line of thinking that it is impossible for any religion or life stance to be taught, unless the

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teacher is an adherent. This would make the discussion of religion virtually impossible in any pluralistic society. A teacher, sensitive to his subject and the feelings of others, can guide a discussion about another faith in a fair and balanced way. Nor is it unreasonable to ask outside speakers and experts to talk to a group and follow up with discussion later. An atheist with good teaching skills can lead a discussion on what Christians, Muslims and other theists believe.

This point of view naturally gives way to the accusation that a teacher's own bias will inevitably come through and influence the class. It is certainly unreasonable to expect even the most objective teachers to hide their own thinking. If a pupil asks a teacher what he votes the teacher has every right to keep his business to himself. If, in a free exploratory discussion about religion, the teacher refuses to state what his personal feelings are, the discussion will lose its impact. However, the teacher can say what he believes, but immediately point out that this is only his point of view, and because he follows this line of thinking does not make it an automatic truth. Indeed, if the class has Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Christians within it, it would be unacceptable for the teacher to do otherwise. To claim that a strong and well-liked
teacher would be automatically followed is to deny the adolescent the possibility of individual thought. An English Literature master can hold one interpretation of life based on a study of King Lear, but although he expresses this view to the class, he should not expect the class to do more than see it as a possibility. Although religion is often a more potent and emotional force than literature or history, it is not unreasonable to expect a teacher to be able to give his point of view without having to claim that he is right, or use his authoritative position to claim such a measure. Once again it comes down to the careful training and selection of teachers. The alternative is to stifle discussion by the teacher refusing to disclose his own thinking, or to abandon the implicit approach, which as stated earlier, is an essential ingredient of education in so far that it gives young people the opportunity to discuss in an open and frank way the ultimate questions which inevitably occur.

Despite the apparent need for the Implicit style it has been mainly abandoned as a formal approach to the subject. In any class it must remain at an informal level unless the teacher has decided that no questions are to be asked. It faded from popularity mainly because it was seen as too woolly
and lacked substance. The Explicit approach gave hard examinable facts which is, in effect, an easier or more comfortable way to teach. The solution can be found in common sense. It would be difficult if not impossible to discuss the works of Shakespeare without reading his texts and watching his plays. Part of the problem in the current history curriculum is the tension between the need to view the overall flow of historical trends and the dates and facts of history. Both are essential features of the same subject, and one cannot be studied without the other. For discussion in an Implicit Religious Education lesson to have any substance, it must have the support of the Explicit type lesson. It is of no earthly use to discuss the various religious views of death in a vacuum; it is first essential to have an objective style lesson on what Hindus, Jews, Christians and others actually believe. If the Implicit style is taught without the benefit of the Explicit style lessons then there will be the inevitable charge of 'woolliness.'

Again, it is the intention of this thesis, to show that the Implicit Approach is only a 50% component of the subject; the other half component must be the Explicit Approach in order to give both substance and sense to the exploratory discussions.
How the Implicit Approach could be taught

If a class has had the benefit of Explicit teaching, then the open Implicit discussion may be wide ranging and exploratory because the class will have received the necessary data reference and knowledge. Without the Explicit background then it is a return to the days of the games master, on a wet afternoon, giving an RE lesson on what amounts to 'his view of life'. In his book, *Problems and Possibilities for Religious Education*, (14) Edwin Cox outlines four sensible sections for the Implicit approach. First, 'the cultivation of the sensitivities ... leading to a realisation that they raise questions such as, "Why is anything here?"'. (15) Secondly, a consideration as to how such questions have been answered or viewed in the past. This, of course, demands the background of the Explicit approach mentioned earlier. 'Thirdly, the syllabus would deal with the manner in which answers to the questions have lead individuals to formulate ideals and aspirations, and to hold certain things as valuable and worth seeking, and to choose their actions and their life-styles in the light of these ideals... Finally study would be undertaken of how all this response to experience, apprehension of
reality, and formation of value systems and life-styles have been formalised and perpetuated in religions.'(16)

The four sections need not be dealt with in this order but they do represent the essential ingredients of such an approach. If done in a professional manner, and with the support of the Explicit approach, the criticism of 'woolliness' so often levelled against the Implicit style can be eradicated. It will also give a sense of structure to the inevitable discussion which follows from the Explicit approach, as well as those questions young people need to ask and which educationalists must not ignore if they are being true to their work.
PART 2

CHAPTER 9

THE EXPLICIT APPROACH.

The Aims of the Explicit Approach.

The Explicit Approach deals with the data of religion. For example, N.Smart's well known six dimensions (Doctrinal, Mythological, Ethical, Ritual, Experiential, Social) have a particular appeal to those who feel that the subject must be justified on academic grounds alone: 'if education is making pupils informedly intelligent about worthwhile topics, then Religious Education can be included in a school's programmes if it is informing pupils about religion, making them discriminating about any form of it they may encounter...'.(1) The alternative term frequently used for this approach is 'phenomenological' and was first used by P.D.Chantepie de la Saussaye, but the main thrust of the thinking behind this expression came from Edmund
Husserl at the turn of the century. He believed that the best methodology was to look at religions in a dispassionate and objective manner, studying their externals in whatever form they came, both belief and practice. Examining truth claims was not seen as part of this type of study. It is the type of approach mainly adopted by books concerned with Comparative Religion and has an academic claim to respectability. As noted in Chapter 6 the names of J.W.D. Smith and N. Smart are popularly associated with this development in more recent times.

Smart argued that the more objective/secular approach adopted in tertiary education was also necessary in the secondary sector. He defined five well-known aims:

1) Religious Education must transcend the informative.

2) It should do so not in the direction of evangelising, but in the direction of initiation into understanding the meaning of, and into questions about the truth and worth of, religion.

3) Religious Studies does 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 cultures other than their own. It can thus play a vital role in breaking the limits of European cultural tribalism.

5) Religious Studies should emphasise the descriptive, historical side of religion, but needs thereby to enter into dialogue with the parahistorical claims of religions and anti-religious outlooks. (2)

**Reasons for the Explicit Approach**

Basically the Explicit Approach seeks to educate in the phenomena of religion. Since religion (and its alternative life styles) has had and continues to have a remarkable effect upon life on this planet, it does not seem unreasonable that any person who wishes to be educated should want the study of religion as part of a curriculum. The history of man is inundated with the questions of religion. If there is a vacuum of religious knowledge many aspects of literature will be difficult to explain. In current affairs, be it the Middle-East or Northern Ireland, aspects of religion have to be understood for an educated view of the situation. It can be of little value in education to claim that
because 'we believe in Christianity we can ignore Islam.' An educated person should know what a Moslem, Jew, Hindu and so forth believe in, and how they practise that belief. Because religion is such a major part of our lives it is a phenomenon which cannot be ignored: 'The great living religions of the East are now influencing our European situation. The mass media of communication has made us more aware of them, and the presence of adherents to other faiths in our own country is enriching and changing our national life.' (3)

Problems Associated with the Explicit Approach

This approach seems like so much common sense and yet it has its critics: '...it reinforces the idea that religion is a series of facts to be known, an inculcation of information which may be called Scripture or Religious Knowledge, rather than Religious Education which demands a much fuller view of its function in school and society.'(3) The most frequently heard criticism is that the objective teaching of religion cannot include the passion and feelings of a faith. The Explicit Approach has frequently been disparaged and often discounted because of its very objectivity. Yet, within the
structure of an education system, there must be this sense of objectivity. The role of the teacher is to educate, not to try and influence or preach a system as true against others, as must happen in the Confessionalist approach. The Explicit Approach is the other component to Implicit teaching, which must also remain objective and open. The home influence is of paramount importance. A parent sends a child to school to learn and to be educated, not to be influenced into a particular mode of thinking. An immigrant parent may well want his child to learn about other religions, but not necessarily to be passionately influenced against his own, and this can only be safe-guarded with a high degree of objectivity: 'So humanistic, agnostic or atheistic parents, who have a close relationship with their children, need not concern themselves too greatly about their children becoming overwhelmed by religious forces outside the home.' (5)

A professional schoolteacher should, despite his or her own beliefs, be able to maintain a high degree of objectivity. It is managed in other subjects: 'One art teacher may himself be deeply attached to the works of Degas or Monet but he will be careful to try to interest the children he teaches in Michelangelo and Reubens and many artists
If a teacher feels so strongly that he cannot teach Christianity without preaching it, or teach Islam without denigrating it, then he must surely be in the wrong subject area. Better to teach another subject and run a voluntary religious group for adherents.

The practical problem of skill still remains. Too frequently Religious Education has relied upon the good will of sympathetic Christians who inevitably slip into either a form of Confessionalism or a woolly approach of general discussion. The teacher who uses the Explicit Approach must be educated in his subject: '...that the syllabuses presuppose too much academic knowledge and information on the part of the teachers. They do, and they must, presuppose this kind of knowledge.'(7) There are probably far too few adequately trained teachers in this subject, but this fact must not allow the subject to suffer in its ideals.

A well-trained teacher will counter the frequently heard criticism that a sympathetic account of religion cannot be given. It is true that perhaps an adherent of Islam, for example, may not be totally satisfied that his feelings for his beliefs have been totally conveyed. Of course there will be limitations in any classroom, it would be unrealistic to think
otherwise. However, to avoid teaching an explicit approach simply because it can never, by its very nature, be one hundred per cent satisfactory, is to deny the principle that an educated person must have some knowledge of religion, albeit limited. A well-trained and informed teacher must be capable of at least giving a reasonably sympathetic lesson on the nature of other religions. 'Is it possible for a teacher to convey to his pupils something of the inner meaning of a religion (or a secular philosophy) without himself knowing it as a believer? And if he is a believer what becomes of his neutrality? Ideally, perhaps, a teacher of Religious Education should be so well informed and so sensitive that he is capable of giving an equally full and sympathetic account of any creed which he has to discuss. But is this ideal realistic?' (8) If Physics, Mathematics and other subjects are forever widening their horizons and expectations, it does not seem unreasonable therefore that those involved in teaching religion should be as equally well prepared and informed: '...teachers of Religious Education need to be equipped. Very few have been trained for anything but the theological approach, both in-service and initial courses, in the future, should equip the teacher to understand and be able to communicate to others that
which is universal in religion and that which is particular to various times and places'. (9)

The general ignorance about religion in the modern world is so appalling that school can be the one place that — '...the young person can meet the modern plural and the secular world for the first time in personal terms.' (10)

Examinations

For many years there have been examinations in Religious Education, be it GCE, GCSE, CSE, up to tertiary degree level, and the well-known B.D. The examination at secondary level sent the signal to the pupil that Religious Education was a serious subject, (11) and, as such, examinations have helped influence the subject, especially in its Explicit development. To examine at the Implicit level is impossible unless the paper is simply marked from the point of view of ability to reason and presentation of material, which belongs more properly to the subject of English Language. To ask a question, for example, about personal belief will call forth a variety of responses (especially in a pluralistic society) and the examiner can have no justified criteria on which to base a marking response. In the

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Confessional Approach an examination is possible, but it will only amount to a catechetical test. From the educational point of view it would be 'quite inappropriate to set an examination which gave credit to pupils with an approved set of beliefs and attitudes.' (12)

If the subject is taught from an Explicit Approach any number of questions can be set to test the candidate's knowledge of religion in all its manifest data: 'Religious Education might properly be regarded as concerned with attitudes and beliefs and as such not examinable. Religious Studies, which is the study of religion, has a proper and necessary place in any system of education alongside other areas of human study, and is comparably examinable.' (13)

There are those critics who still protest, that even at the Explicit examination level, there is no true objectivity. Much, of course, will depend on how the examination is set; there is generally sufficient data in any religion for objective questions to be tried. However, such a complaint touches on other subjects, especially English Literature and some aspects of History, to name but two.

Not all examination boards have kept strictly
to an objective approach, and have concealed within an apparent objective question a form of neo-confessionalism. In 1970 J. Elliot looked at various C.S.E syllabuses and found that two had 'explicitly stated confessional aims'. (14) More subtle are the concealed questions which can be seen to question faith and attitudes. Here is an example of some questions:

1) 'Illustrate from the Gospel according to Luke Our Lord's teaching about the Sabbath. What can we learn from this about the way we should keep Sunday in the Twentieth Century?'

2) 'Illustrate from the Gospel of Luke Jesus's teaching about the Sabbath. In what ways do Christians today apply this to the keeping of Sunday in the Twentieth Century?'

3) 'Mention three occasions mentioned in Luke's Gospel in which Jesus came into conflict with the Pharisees over the keeping of the Sabbath. Explain briefly his teaching on each occasion. Can we deduce from this any general principle or principles underlying his understanding of the purpose of the Sabbath?' (15)

The first question lacks an objective
approach, the second is better but the third is more specific. To ask a question in a paper on Islam about the difference between the Shi'ites and the Sunnites is appropriate; it would be unacceptable to ask a question which demanded a personal response as to which sect is more correct in its attitudes.

In Religious Education examinations certain objectives must be met. The major objectives are the learning of knowledge and understanding of a religion, not the acquisition of beliefs and attitudes. The knowledge should be as objective as possible, that is knowledge which is generally agreed by most experts. (16) This is not an impossible task; it is mainly achieved at University level and should be reflected at the secondary and primary levels.

Most subjects are, in their examination mode, influenced by 'outside pressure - the wishes of parents, the needs of employers, entrance qualifications of Further Education.' (17) The university faculties should influence the examinations more. Unfortunately too much power is invested in SACREs which take into account local influence. The result is a lack of national organisation and the subject is fragmented into the whims of countless individuals: '...in practice many teachers in state schools do not feel free to be dogmatic or to proselytize, and there is great
disparity in their shades of conviction. One child may be taught by a hell-fire fundamentalist, another by a near-humanist or avowed atheist'.(18) Although these words were written in 1964, without a format of a national syllabus the same problem can exist to this day. It is unimaginable to expect local schools, in the study of English Literature, to concentrate on Thomas Hardy because the Dorset LEA are proud of the Wessex novels, or Nottingham to concentrate on D.H.Lawrence for the same reasons. History cannot be reduced to local history, the overall picture must be seen. It may be that a particular area may use its local history or author, but not to the detriment of the subject's totality. The wholeness of Religious Education has been subjected to so much local influence that the integrity of the subject is in danger of being lost. The discipline of Religious Education needs its own national core, as with other subjects. This is mainly achieved at tertiary level and should be reflected in the earlier stages of education, and it is best that the tertiary level assists in this area through the medium of examination. It was, after all, the efforts of Oxford, Cambridge and Durham in the 1850s, which set the standards for so many schools in their local examinations.

Only in this way can the subject regain some
of its lost academic respectability. Statistics clearly indicate that more girls than boys sit the subject, (19) and its popularity has fallen compared to many other subjects. This is undoubtedly because there is considerable ignorance as to what the subject is, due to the fact that there is a great fragmentation of the subject because it is subjected to local influences. The Explicit Approach, with a National curriculum, would go a long way in the subject's rehabilitation.

F.H. Hilliard has pointed out (20) that not all teachers feel Religious Education is an examinable subject because first, no examination can test a young person's grasp of something as personal as religion, and secondly, to have tests in the subject makes it a course like any other subject when it is more than an academic subject because it touches on spirituality. The Explicit Approach is not a personal approach, but the Implicit Approach allows such a personal exploration. If the subject is to survive and to be of genuine interest to young people, it must be seen as an academic subject in its own right. The Explicit Approach, by remaining objective, does not preclude interest in the subject; for many pupils it can be quite the reverse. Although it may appear cynical to some, the fact remains that a subject which is examinable (which Explicit
Religious Education is) carries a higher degree of academic respectability, and will have much more appeal to the pupil and the teacher: 'Religious Knowledge receives some official status as a subject studied for GCE, but according to many teachers children are inclined to regard it as a second-class subject because it offers no material advantages and does not involve real tests as other subjects do. In many schools it is not even included in the list of subjects for outside examinations'. (21) Even in a major Public School (22) of twelve hundred boys only a very few sit the subject, and that number seems to be on a downward trend.

Conclusion

If the Explicit Approach is to be successful several factors must be established. First, it must be truly objective and not carry the hidden agenda of veiled neo-confessionalism. It must be seen as a test of verifiable data and an understanding of that data.

Secondly, there must be a National Curriculum with no wider differences than one might expect to find in the history papers presented by different examination boards. It is of little value if the
subject appears like a chameleon dependent on its locality.

Thirdly, 'the teacher will be concerned with man's religious experience and that this is distinctive from any other form of experience. This means that he will be concerned to give even the youngest child an understanding of religion.' (23)

Fourthly, 'teachers of Religious Education need to be equipped. Very few have been trained for anything but the theological approach, both in-service and initial courses, in the future, should equip the teacher to understand and be able to communicate to others that which is universal in religion and that which is particular to various times and places.' (24)

Finally, and to return to the main point of this thesis, the Explicit Approach is bound to provoke searching questions which go beyond the data to the truth claims. As such the Explicit Approach should be used for only fifty per cent of the total subject time. The other half must be used for the pupil to explore in an open search as suggested in the Implicit style. One approach does not preclude the other, on the contrary, each needs the other.
PART 3

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of Part 3 is a brief historical review of the way the aims and objectives of Religious Education have developed into four distinct but confusing areas which continue to this day.

The second chapter examines the nature of the subject in the light of educational theory.

The third chapter reviews the recent 1992 White Paper 'Choice and Diversity', which indicates that the government has taken no heed of these fundamental problems, indeed little has changed since the last century.

The final chapter contains the main thrust of the contention of this thesis, that the subject is undervalued and misunderstood because the objectives of this subject need to be clarified and defined, both by government and schools. In this chapter reference is made to some empirical studies (contained in the appendix) which illustrate that pupils do respond if these definitions are clearly stated, as it then makes the subject more interesting.
and of greater value. If this thesis is correct then there is a need to review the nomenclature of the subject. Furthermore since the subject is educationally justifiable in its own right then there is no need for the legislation which demands opting-out clauses.
A SUMMARY OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education, perhaps more than any other single subject, has been influenced by a multitudinous number of interests.

During the 19th century, and before the 1870 Act, there seems little question that in the Church schools Religious Education was simply an extension of the Church's pulpit. The rise of scientific thought, and especially Darwin's theories, made the Church more conscious of the need to educate in the doctrine of the faith. Christianity was the one accepted faith in England, and there was no embarrassment in teaching and preaching it in schools with a sense of justified authority. Religious Education was intended to make young people into Christians, and to encourage them to attend Church. No educational apologia was required, and there was little disagreement as to the subject's aims and intentions.
It was the age of dominance by the Church of England. Trollope, in his novel Barchester Towers, using his delicate humour, paints a picture of the Established Church as ruling by right. For the Church of England its schools were seen as part of their work to the nation, and as their denominational influence amongst the young. This position was believed justified, not only because the Church of England was the Established Church, but because they had provided the school buildings and staff. Other denominations did not readily agree with this view. The Roman Catholics were at last becoming socially acceptable, and the Non-Conformists were gaining a high degree of political power. The latter group had no objection to the teaching of Christianity, but every objection to the Church of England's denominational approach. The teaching of Religious Education as a means of initiating young people into a specific denomination of the Church is called 'Narrow Confessionalism.'

The age of denominational bitterness had a considerable effect upon Religious Education. The direct result was the Cowper-Temple clause which forbade denominational indoctrination in state schools. The ecclesiastical and political pressures, after 1870, had considerable bearing upon the subject. Religious Education became a pawn in the
tussle between political and ecclesiastical pressure groups. The main concern of the classroom teacher was expounding a broad Christian view, without becoming involved in the accusation of partisan dogma.

The resultant effect on Religious Education, which was to last for many years, was a Bible-based course, with an emphasis upon the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Lord's Prayer. Christian principles were taught so long as there was no danger of denominational accusation. In other words, because of ecclesiastical and political pressure, Religious Education in state schools moved away from denominational Christian preaching (Narrow Confessionalism) towards a broader Christian preaching and teaching, (Broad Confessionalism). Both before and after the turn of the century, the pressure of Christian denominationalism continued to have a major effect on the subject.

The 1914-18 war left its mark on every walk of life at all levels of existence in western culture. The denominational battles over the minutiae of doctrine were put into perspective. The various denominations tended to move together in a common cause. The major result, as far as this study is concerned, was the Cambridgeshire Syllabus (1924), and the spate of co-operative syllabuses which were
produced between the two wars.

This influence of ecclesiastical co-operation upon the subject was important, in that it released a high degree of tension, but changed little the format of the subject. The subject remained Biblically based, Christian in essence, and broadly Confessional by nature. The study of other religions was seen more in the domain of the university field of anthropology, and related disciplines. Since England remained a predominantly Christian country, this was not surprising.

The Second World War confirmed these attitudes. The rise of Nazi power, which was anti-religious, be it Jewish or Christian, brought the various Christian denominations and political sympathies more sharply together. The result was the well-known 1944 Act which made Religious Education compulsory, and ensured its Confessional nature. An enforced toleration (by Nazi treatment of the Jews) meant that Christianity was not mentioned, but certainly implied. The political influence on the subject was still evident in that the moral perspective of the subject was viewed as essential for the welfare of society. The subject was seen as a means by which young people would be given the chance to assimilate Christian virtues, and so grow to be good citizens. The values of Christian culture had
been challenged by Fascism, and these values had to be reinforced. English politics and the Churches were at one in this single aim. As such, during the immediate post-war reconstruction period, Religious Education continued unquestioned in its pursuit of confessionalist-style teaching.

The 1950s, especially the latter part of the decade, introduced a new element into the various pressures which influenced the subject. It was noted nationally that moral standards were not as they should be, especially among the young. Post-war materialism, media information, post-war cynicism have been suggested, amongst a myriad of other possibilities, as reasons for this phenomenon. Religious Education found itself as being partly to blame. It was seen by some as a failure because Religious Instruction had been intended to make better Christian citizens, and had failed. In the school, writing on the lavatory wall was regarded as the failure of the RE specialist. This happened at the macro-level within society as a whole. The question of Moral Education as being separate, or part of Religious Education, was raised with some fervour.

By the 1960s the whole question of Religious Education was being studied in a more objective way. Three influences were now having an
effect. In the theological area fundamental questions were being raised on the public front (epitomised by Robinson's *Honest to God*); educational theory was reviewing itself in a more systematic fashion; and, by the mid-60s, England was experiencing the growth of a pluralistic society. Political and Church interests remained but not with the same dominance. A series of major seminal works, especially those by Loukes and Goldman, posed major questions as to the aims and methodology of the subject. Statistics were engaged to prove the failure of the subject, and Piaget's research was invoked to show that the subject had to be more child-centred.

To accommodate the educational issues, the uncertainty of current theology, and the influx of other religions, a new approach to the subject became more and more popular. This was a more open-ended and open-search approach, and was dubbed the Implicit approach. It veered away from the Confessional style of teaching and allowed young people to examine the questions of faith and moral values in a less dogmatic and pedagogic atmosphere. Not all teachers were equipped to deal with the subject in this fashion, and there was a tendency for the subject to become too subjective, and too woolly, for its academic respectability.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s the
Explicit approach to teaching was becoming predominant. Typical of this teaching was the work of Ninian Smart and one of its products was the 1975 Birmingham Syllabus. This Syllabus was as significant as the Cambridgeshire Syllabus in the 1920s. The Explicit Approach gave the subject a more academic status, and also helped answer the question of how English education coped with the growing Pluralistic society.

The 1980s did not find the Explicit approach entirely satisfactory. From the teaching point of view, the classroom had become as arid as it was when the Bible was taught remorselessly from a child’s first to last year at school and was just as remote.

Also, although we are perhaps too close to the events to make a sound objective evaluation, politics was again making its influence felt. In the explicit approach Comparative Religions flourished, but the resultant criticism was that Christianity was being squeezed out to the detriment of the majority. Concurrent with this was the Protestant backlash of Islam, which caused a mild, but definite reaction in the West. Just as the West was becoming religiously more tolerant, the followers of Islam appeared to become intolerant.
Although this is stated in a somewhat simplistic fashion, it is not unreasonable to see some of the 1988 Act in this light. The 1988 Act underlined the fact that England was still regarded, by majority and culture, as Christian. In a letter to the author Sir Peter Emery, who took a major interest in the religious clauses, wrote: 'Certainly there was concern about the United Kingdom being a multi-cultural society. Arguments were put up that these amendments would be offensive to certain of the ethnic minorities. However, I believe, on the whole, an argument put forward by myself was widely accepted, ie, "the considerable greatness of the United Kingdom had been based on an Anglo-Saxon Celtic/Christian ethic". We welcomed any person coming to this country from any part of the world, but if they were coming here to live we rather expected them to support what had been the basis of Britain's strength, not undermining it, nor to proselytize amongst children other aspects of religious or ethnic teachings which ran contrary to the general British approach to society. If people felt they had to have their particular ethnic mores and that the British education system did not provide for their specific ethnic demands, then perhaps they would be better in a country that provided this, rather than living in Britain.' (1)

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The Act, subsequently, still reflected the 1944 Act which saw Religious Education as fundamentally Confessional, (see reference (2) for Sir Peter Emery's views on this) and assumed that a Christian will make a good citizen. Moral Education is still seen as intrinsic to Religious Education, and belief (doctrine and all) as secondary.

Ironically, the beginning of this historical survey saw the subject as a clash between Christian denominations; today the clash remains, but it is between the rights and pressures of religions.

The various influences brought to bear on the subject have resulted in four different approaches. The first two are the Broad Confessional and Narrow Confessional, which are basically doctrinal, and more to do with preaching than teaching. They survive to this day because of the dual system, but are rejected as non-educational by the vast majority of professional educationalists.

The other two approaches are the Implicit and Explicit. They reflect what has been suggested throughout this study as the two-tension subject. There are two distinct subjects: the one, examinable, dealing with the data of religion and ways of life world wide; the other, the Implicit, the unexaminable, which gives the pupil the opportunity...
to explore ultimate questions, as well as questions of moral value in a non-pedagogic atmosphere.

Educational, Social, Church, and Political influences have pulled the subject one way and then another. The acceptance of one approach seemed to determine the rejection of another. Few, if any, seem to have noted that both approaches are correct and can run side-by-side as two subjects. The canal system was rejected for the railway network which is now suffering from the motorway craze. This country's transport system would have been one of the most advanced had canals, railways and roads worked together. This 'transport' analogy holds true in Religious Education. Had the Explicit and Implicit approaches worked together Religious Education would not be in the vacuum it is today.

There are two distinct subjects which can work side by side within the same curriculum. The failure to recognise this, or to come to terms with it, has resulted in a subject which has never seemed to have a quantifiable set of aims, and has been open to every conceivable influence.
PART 3

CHAPTER 11

EDUCATIONAL THEORY

The etymology of the word 'education' is significant in that it derives from the Latin 'ducare' (cognate ducere, to lead with the prefix 'e' giving 'out') implying the action of coming from a place, the process of that action, and the direction in which to go. It is a matter, to oversimplify, of discovering where the child is educationally, and of leading/assisting him in a particular direction. The essential nature of 'to lead out' does not imply capturing, preaching, or indoctrinating, and any change within the child must come from within the child as a result of his own experience of the direction, and not by deliberate manipulation. Extreme manipulation can be seen in Huxley's 'Brave New World', where its dangers are manifest. The 'direction' can only be validated by the major
consent of society, which must include the young.

This line of thought seems to be supportive of Piaget's view that: '...the principal goal of education is to create men who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done - men who are creative, inventive and discoverers. The second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify, and do not accept everything they are offered. The great danger is of slogans, collective opinions, ready-made trends of thought.'(1)

Perhaps the best analysis for the purpose of this thesis can be found in Colin Alves' article in New Movements in Religious Education, edited by Smart and Horder.(2) He identifies four important interpretations. First, education is seen by some from the perspective of society, that is to say to see the role of education as preparing the pupil for his place in society. There is little doubt that many employers, and possibly some politicians, would view education from this perspective. If this view is rigidly applied it can lead to a very cynical view of education. Technical subjects could predominate for the workers, communication skills for middle management and so forth, other subjects could be jettisoned as of no value to the demands of a
particular society. The rights of the individual to develop are relegated to the demands of society's needs. If the society is corrupt then education can be reduced to simply the demands of necessary output, at the best it turns human life into a beehive.

When this view is seen from the perspective of Religious Education it would seem that the subject only has use for those wishing to enter religious orders, or training in the diplomatic service, unless, of course, Religious Education is seen as a form of Moral Education. This possibility not only lacks practical viability, but denies the totality of the subject as discussed in Chapter 7.

However, it is worthy of note, that for the few supporters (most would disagree) of this view of education, Religious Education is still important. If taught objectively in the Explicit approach, and discussed in an open way through the Implicit approach, then it can only encourage understanding and thereby tolerance of one's neighbour. This must be of benefit for any right-minded society.

Secondly, there is the view that education is meant to assist the pupil in finding his place in society. This is similar to the first idea, but is more liberal in its approach. It is a viewpoint which believes the experience of the past cannot be ignored, and the social and cultural heritage of
society is important. This approach has sometimes been seen as a form of 'enculturisation'.

In terms of Religious Education this view of education is widely held both in the United Kingdom and abroad. Sir Peter Emery, quoted in Chapter 10, makes it abundantly clear that this is part of his thinking: '...the considerable greatness of the United Kingdom had been based on an Anglo-Saxon Celtic/Christian ethic. We welcomed any person coming to this country from any part of the world, but if they were coming here to live we rather expected them to support what had been the basis of Britain's strength, not undermining it, nor to proselytize amongst children other aspects of religious or ethnic teachings which ran contrary to the general British approach ...'. This is also reflective of much thinking in the past (Spens Report, p.208) and would carry considerable popular support. The fact is that the United Kingdom is now a pluralistic society, and must accept the values of other cultures. To do otherwise makes an hypocrisy of our own past. When the English moved into India they took Christianity, they did not accept, or feel bound to accept, the Hindu culture and religion of that country.

Naturally enough immigrants must accept
English law, but they must not feel obliged to change their religion. Confessionalism in such a situation would indeed be the 'Church Militant' in the worse sense of the word. However, if Religion is taught both from the Explicit and Implicit Approaches it can only benefit immigrants, and those who receive them, since it invites them to consider, evaluate and understand the various heritages, and does not oblige them to accept them. (3)

Thirdly, a view which can be seen as subversive in so far that it emphasises the individual as against society. This approach is sometimes seen as extremist because it views society as irrelevant or extraneous, and indeed sometimes as opposed to the development of the individual.

From the point of view of Religious Education it has been argued that this approach lends itself to the right to help young people facilitate their own natural spiritual development, especially by presenting them with a variety of different spiritual fields from which to select. Confessionalism can play no part here as it narrows down the choice to one selection, or indeed one part of one selection. The Explicit Approach presents a wider view of religions and the Implicit approach allows young people to explore for themselves, with inter-reaction with others in the same quest. The
objectivity demanded by the Explicit Approach, and
the openness of the Implicit Approach allows
individual pupils to make their own assessment. Any
influence outside this must come from the home, or
other experiences freely sought by the individual,
not by education. Education should present and help
understanding, not wittingly influence a pupil away
from or into a specific culture or religion.

Finally, there is the view that education
should help the individual understand society and its
cultural heritage. This approach encompasses the idea
that the pupil takes a critical approach with the
view that they can contribute and help improve
society when they are so able.

In terms of Religious Education 'the
essential factor in this approach is that the pupil
is invited to try to understand the religious
heritage of his society (or of mankind in general)
and, having understood, to assess the significance
and value of this heritage for the future of mankind,
or at least for his own future development as an
individual.'(4)

This general view places the firm emphasis
upon the individual, but cannot ignore the
experiences of the past and of other people. The
danger of Confessionalism is that it does just that,
namely ignores other experience and people to
concentrate on its own truth values. The Explicit Approach, in its objectivity allows the acquisition of knowledge and understanding; while its counter approach, the Implicit style, allows personal exploration and evaluation.

Whatever view of education is taken, be it those held by minorities, or by popular opinion, or by educational experts, it seems reasonable to suggest that the two-subject approach (Explicit and Implicit as defined in Chapters 8 and 9) answers many of the problems and demands posed by the protagonists in the educational debate. The proper teaching of religion does not have to change its stance, (anymore than any other mainline subject) according to the prevailing view of education as viewed from the above four important perspectives.

Aims and Objectives.

The two-subject approach answers most of the serious aims and objectives of the subject, with the exception of those who believe that Religious Education is meant to preach, convert or influence into one way of thinking.

What is meant by Aims and Objectives has been the subject of considerable debate. R.S.Peters in Authority, Responsibility and Education, argued
that in discussing the aims of any subject on a school timetable does not mean discussing the objectives to be attained, but the principles of procedure in its teaching. This seems a reasonable approach, but in order to understand the variety of ideas proposed, relating to Religious Education, the following pages will list recent or pertinent thoughts in this area.

i) Aims should be realistic and attainable ...acceptable to the community...seem worthwhile to the teacher and pupils ... should above all be justifiable on educational grounds and no other.(5)

ii) ‘To deserve that name (Religious Education) it must contribute to the religious development of the pupils and to their growth in understanding the religious heritage of mankind.’(6)

iii) ‘The study of religions then in principle is plural and dimensional; and it is non-finite in going beyond the traditional religions to the ideologies and systems which resemble and challenge the religions.’(7)

iv) ‘... to help in seeing religious questions as matters of fundamental human concern: we might call that the search for meaning; to help students’ search
for a faith by which to live and to develop a personal and intellectual integrity in dealing with the profoundest aspects of their own experience now and in adult life.'(8)

v) 'Religious Education focuses specific attention on empowering people in their quest for a transcendent and ultimate ground of being. It leads people to consciousness of what is found, relationship with it, and expression of that relationship. Any educational endeavour that attempts to do this is and should be called Religious Education.'(9)

vi) '... yet religion remains a fundamental facet of human life. And as such it is our duty to put it before children for them to feel their way into just as we do with aesthetic experience.'(10)

vii) '... no boy or girl can be counted as properly educated unless he or she has been made aware of the fact of the existence of a religious interpretation of life.'(11)

viii) 'The Birmingham syllabus insists that religions are not to be studies with the idea that one is superior to the rest, but objectively and for their own sake.'(12)
ix) 'The aim of Religious Education is to provide children with knowledge and skills which will enable them as they grow into maturity not only to see how varied are the manifestations of religious experience but also how their experience constrains them to consider the implications of a personal commitment.' (13)

x) 'The teenagers with whom we are concerned need, perhaps above all else, to find a faith to live by. They will not find precisely the same faith and some will not find any. Education can and should play some part in the search. It can assure them that there is something to search for and it can show them where to look and what other men have found.' (14)

xi) 'It should be clear that the aim of Religious Education in county schools is to deepen understanding and insight, not to proselytize.' (15)

xii) 'The aim of Religious Education in a county school is to enable a boy or girl to have a proper understanding of what is meant by a religious approach to life, and for most children in this country the centre of this understanding will be the Christian approach. It is not the purpose of Religious Education in the county school to bring about a commitment to the Christian faith, but rather
to help children to understand what the Christian faith means in the context of other beliefs sincerely held by men and women of integrity and goodwill who do not find it possible to accept a Christian commitment as the basis of their lives. One of the results of Religious Education should be to create in boys and girls a more sensitive understanding of their own beliefs and of the different beliefs by which others govern their lives; such a sensitive understanding is not the prerogative of Christians.’(16)

xiii) ‘In other words, religion comprises a distinct form of knowledge, understanding of which is an essential part of liberal education.’(17)

xiv) ‘... and that is to help pupils to understand the nature of our present secular, pluralistic society, to help them to think rationally about the state and place of religion in it, to enable them to choose objectively religious statements that are made in a pluralistic society, and to work out for themselves, and to be able cogently to defend, their own religious position or their rejection of the possibility of having one... to enable pupils to understand what religion has contributed to our culture ... to help pupils understand what people
believe and how it influences their lives ... the third aim will be helping the pupils to understand that a rational attitude to life includes making up one's mind on certain fundamental or ultimate questions of the nature of life and of human personality ... fourthly there is the aim of helping the pupils to decide for themselves what their working hypotheses or acts of faith are going to be; that is, deciding their own religious stance.' (18)

The above selection of aims and objectives tends to fall into two categories. First, there is the demand that children should be aware of religion(s); they should have some knowledge of the phenomena and some understanding and be able to look at the subject critically. It also follows that in the absence of religion there should be a chance to study alternative life styles (see iii and xiv). They should have the opportunity to be aware, as far as is humanly possible within a limited educational structure, of the religious and non-religious beliefs which motivate people on this planet.

Secondly, the above aims and objectives make it clear that the individual should be given the opportunity to explore for himself where he stands. The opportunity to have a rational attitude (xiv) not only towards major life questions but in the
exploration of faith or non-faith. The individual who rejects faith must at least have an opportunity to know why such a decision is important.

The two-subject approach enables such processes to be activated, and while the Explicit remains objective and the Implicit is open in its approach, then both are acceptable on educational grounds. (i) The two subjects are different and yet related. The Explicit approach will naturally prompt searching personal questions, and the Implicit approach cannot be discussed in a vacuum; that vacuum fills with the quality of the Explicit teaching.

The Viability of the Two-Subject Approach

Although many students of the subject have noted the importance of the two subjects, and have seen their inter-dependence, very few have postulated that they should be seen as two different items on the timetable which should not be prey to the opting-out clauses.

A two-subject approach is not unique to Religious Education. English Language and English Literature are different, frequently taught apart, and different examinations are set. Language is seen as the development of the accurate means of oral and written communication and understanding. It is taught
for its own sake and as a tool of survival. Literature uses the aptitudes gained in Language as a study of other people's written efforts. They are different in their approaches yet inter-dependent. The analogy with Religious Education cannot be pressed too far because each subject is unique to itself. Nevertheless, the academic approach of the Explicit style can be seen to give the experience and knowledge that the individual can use in an Implicit discussion period. The two subjects may operate hand in hand but without confusion if the pupils are aware of the distinctions. It is the lack of distinction which has caused Religious Education to have the reputation of being ill-defined and lacking coherence and shape.

Students of the subject have sometimes focused on this problem, but avoided 'grasping the thistle' because of the sensitivities over the educationally unacceptable area of Confessionalism. 'In thinking of the aims of Religious Education it must be remembered that there are two levels at which the teacher may approach his task. He may either see his work as teaching facts about religion in general and about the details of particular creeds, or as helping pupils to adopt for themselves a religious view of life.'(19) These words were written in 1966
and some raised the question as to whether the second part was going beyond the teacher's commission. So long as the pupils 'adopt for themselves' and are not preached to as in Confessionalism, and so long as the approach is open-ended then it must be educationally acceptable for the pupil to be allowed to explore this area of his life. Nor should there be the alternative of 'two levels of approach' or one style of activity as opposed to the other; the two-subject hypothesis encompasses both valid areas and makes the distinction clear for the teacher and the taught. The same writer also saw the inter-dependence of the two subjects: 'Giving pupils information for which they may find their own answer to ultimate questions will, however, include telling them what answers have been given to these questions.' (20)

The main problem here, as many experienced teachers have found, is that by rolling the two aspects into one period confuses the distinction. An academic approach to the subject of the phenomena of religion can too easily generate (or degenerate into) an implicit discussion approach, and the academic aspect is lost and the subject is seen merely as a time for discussion. If the subjects are clearly separated, then the academic aspect is not lost, and a proper time for personal exploration is given in another period. To do it within the same period is to
confuse the issue; it would not be a matter of separation but of rupture and loss of proper distinction.

The 1971 Schools Council WorkingH Paper 36 started to edge towards this concept but could not let go of the Confessionalist school of thought:

'We incline to the view that Religious Education must include both the personal search for meaning and the objective study of the phenomena of religion. It should be both a dialogue with experience and a dialogue with living religions, so that one can interpret and reinforce the other. Within this wider context 'Confessional' teaching should sometimes be heard, both as part of the evidence in the study of a given religion (for example, Protestant Christianity) and as part of the dialogue between the pupils and the world in which they live.' (21)

The concept is too wide for clear lines of definition and acceptability by the wider community. There will be those in a pluralistic society who will object, probably rightly, to any form of Confessionalist exposure to their young people. Yet this point of view by the Schools Council clearly saw the need for objective teaching and personal search;
to make it workable and clear to the wider community the two subjects must be seen as distinctive.

The Schools Council, like many others, felt that the two subjects were interdependent: 'Can younger children approach the work with the dispassion that phenomenological study needs? Will they, if they are mentally alert, rather be deciding that they agree or disagree with the religious people whose behaviour they are considering...'(22) This can and must happen, but it will only be successful if the two approaches are clearly distinguished by name and period slots on the timetable.

The danger of misunderstanding is immense, and the cause for this has been the apparent failure of Explicit and Implicit teaching when taught without the aid of the other, or confused within the one period. Many have felt that the 1970s and 1980s phenomenological approach has not worked (23) and 'that the Implicit religion approach was abandoned too soon and might usefully be revived. Maybe a mixture of Implicit and Explicit study is needed...'(24) The danger highlighted here is that too often Explicit and Implicit have been seen as alternative approaches, and not as two essential approaches. To mix them, as suggested, can only cause confusion.

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'But the .... two interpretations of the term 'Religious Education' - the quest for meaning and purpose and the quest for understanding of religions (the implicit religion approach and the explicit religion approach) - are both right and proper activities in schools. In fact, it can be shown that they belong together, like two foci of an ellipse or two overlapping circles.' (25)

These words were written in 1975, yet no major seminal work has appeared to argue for this apparent common-sense case. The reason is possibly that 'the overlapping circles' are still seen as too 'overlapping'. If the two subjects are clearly differentiated both in nomenclature and in timetable allotment some definition can be given to the subject.
PART 3

CHAPTER 12

‘CHOICE AND DIVERSITY’

The Moral Dimension

In July 1992 the White Paper Choice and Diversity, ‘A new framework for schools’, was presented to Parliament by the Secretaries of State for England and Wales. It was a reinforcement and development of many aspects of the 1988 Education Act discussed in Chapter 5.

In terms of its references to Religious Education it clearly indicates that the government has little knowledge of the aims and objectives of the subject, for while demoting the subject by placing it outside the core subjects, it treats it as the moral police officer for the future. In section 1.27 while not referring directly to the subject it states:

‘Regular attendance at school and taking advantage of a good education within a strong moral, spiritual and cultural context, are not only essential to becoming well qualified and to growing
up well balanced, they are also one of the best deterrents against criminality.'

Again, in section 1.29, with direct reference to the subject:

'The government believes that Religious Education in schools is important and central to that ethos. The moral dimension of a school must be constantly reviewed and refreshed in order to promote the spiritual, cultural, mental and physical development of boys and girls as part of preparing them for adult life.'

The moral dimension is referred to again in the introductory section 1.31 where it quite rightly refers to the need for 'children to grow up understanding what is right and wrong...' and in the next section (1.32) states:

'There are many opportunities for pupils to develop in this way, particularly through the act of collective worship; through the teaching of the National Curriculum together with Religious Education; and most all through the general style and atmosphere of the school itself.'

Most people would agree with these general statements, and all normal parents want their
children to grow up with a sound moral perspective on life.

Nevertheless, as stated in Part 2 of this thesis, it is clear that Religious Education is not just Moral Education. The moral dimension will be part of the subject, whether it is seen through the Explicit or Implicit approaches, but the problem is that the White Paper puts such a heavy emphasis on the role of Religious Education as the conveyor of moral teaching, that the subject is in danger of being seen only as justified through its moral component.

In Chapter 8 of the White Paper, which deals specifically with 'Spiritual and Moral Development', sections 8.2 and 8.5 place the stress on 'Religious Education and collective worship playing a major part in promoting the spiritual and moral dimensions in schools.'

It is undeniably true that for religious people their religious ethic should be important, but no amount of religion at school will substitute for a home background which has contrary opinions or lifestyle. The danger emerges once again that the hapless Religious Education department will be seen as the moral guidance officer for the school, that graffiti on the toilet walls is the fault more of this particular subject than any other.
More disconcerting still is that the important aspects of the Explicit and Implicit Approaches are not mentioned in governmental documents because they are self-evidently sub-servient to the moral dimension. This is indicated by the way in sections 8.2 and 8.5 Religious Education and collective worship are glibly placed side by side as if they are one and the same thing.

In a pluralistic society the values of moral education may differ, but most especially if the moral dimension is always linked to religion. The place of women in a society is just one example of such a problem where different religions place different values on this section in society. In section 8.3 it states that 'every attempt should be made to ensure that these values are endorsed by parents and the local community.' The nature of these 'values' cannot always be easily defined by community or school. The Explicit Approach may instruct in different values held by different religions and ways of life, and the Implicit Approach may allow discussion, but neither should become the moral guidance department, nor would this be feasible. It would be easier to have a discussion on the laws of the land. All subjects and teachers are bound to have a moral perspective, but to plant the
responsibility with such emphasis on the shoulders of Religious Education is to overburden the subject, and to render secondary its other more important educational roles.

**Spiritual Perspectives**

Chapter 8 of the White paper has the title 'Spiritual and Moral Development', and immediately raises the difficult question of what precisely is intended by the use of the word 'spiritual'. As in the problems relating to definition of words in Criminal Law Acts, the generally agreed principle is not necessarily the precise English meaning of the word, but the intention of those who used it in the formulating of the Act in question. To use the word spiritual can imply a metaphysical concept, it can imply a relationship with God or other spiritual beings, or it can simply mean to ask questions which go beyond the material things of our human existence.

In the White Paper spiritual is linked with 'moral and cultural, as well as mental and physical development' (8.3) and elsewhere simply with moral (8.5). To simply ask questions which go beyond our human material existence would be addressed in the Implicit approach of Religious Education, but it is clear that this is not the intention of the Act,
which fails to recognise any precise structure to the subject.

To use the word spiritual in the theological sense of an awareness of a supernatural being would cause serious conflict in a pluralistic society, which has principled atheists and a variety of world faiths, whose interpretations of a supernatural being differ widely. It would be an improper use of legislation and education to dictate the development of everyone's spiritual development in this fashion.

In an effort to discover the true intention of the use of this word the author sought an interview with the local MP, Mr. Michael Mates, (12.02.1993) on this issue. It was abundantly clear that the Government was using the word in the widest umbrella fashion, in order to avoid the criticism that it was specifying just Christianity. The word 'spiritual', rightly or wrongly, was perceived as an all enfolding word which would have meaning to all members of society. It was also clear that the word was chosen for paradoxical reasons, because on the one hand of its vagueness, and on the other because of its significance. Mr. Michael Mates indicated that pupils should have an awareness of the unique and individual importance of human nature. Many pages of theological books have been devoted to
the meaning of this word, and to legislate on its meaning would be impossible. It is apparent that its brief usage in the White Paper has no more significance than the use of the word moral and religious as a programme towards good citizenship.

The Law and Religious Education

Section 8.5 states that the 'Government has no plans to change the law as to the content and nature of Religious Education ... it believes, however, that there is a need to give further impetus to the development of Religious Education in schools.' This means that the Government is content not to examine what is happening in and to the subject, that it may retain its Confessional Approach so long as the moral dimension is given prominence. Yet the law allows pupils to opt out of both Religious Education and collective worship. Technically it could be the case that whole sections of a school need not attend, and they would, according to the views of this paper, have little education in the moral dimension. It will be argued in the next chapter that if the subject were to be taught objectively through the Implicit and Explicit Approaches, there would not be any need for opting-
out clauses. If the Government were to take the Cowper-Temple clause to its natural conclusion and outlaw Confessional teaching then there would be no need for the opting-out clauses. Furthermore, to teach morality through Confessionalism would be highly objectionable to many members of society. If the Government is to 'give further impetus' to this subject it needs to examine its aims and objectives and then change the laws to rule out the opting-out clauses which demotes the subject to a voluntary area of education.

The Localised Subject

Although the White Paper appears to place important emphasis on the subject it only does so because of the moral dimension mentioned earlier. All subjects have a National Curriculum, but Religious Education is left to the vagaries of SACREs. The dangers of this have been discussed earlier in the thesis, but it is worth noting that the new White Paper tends to confuse the situation more by revamping the nature of the SACREs according to the growth of Grant Maintained schools:

'Therefore, at the point when 75% of either the primary or the secondary pupils in an area are
attending GM schools, or where the Secretary of State has agreed to a request by an LEA that it should be relieved of its duty to secure sufficient school places in respect of either the primary or secondary phase, the Government proposes that the constitution of agreed syllabus conferences and SACREs should be amended.' (8.10)

In the meantime GM schools may choose a syllabus not used by other LEA schools (8.8) to give them 'maximum autonomy' and that Narrow Confessionalism can exist according to a school's original Trust Deed. (8.7) In other words the Religious Education syllabus is a complete mixed bag of choices, and its academic content would be determined by the whims and fancies of the locality.

Conclusion

The main problem with the White Paper is the fundamental problem with the subject since it became a point of contention in the last century, namely that the subject should not be Confessional, that the moral dimension is just a component, and that there are two viable subjects which need to be separated and clearly defined in their aims and objectives.
Survival of the Subject

The historical survey of Part 1, along with the historical overview in Chapter 10 Part 3, illustrate that four distinct approaches to the teaching of Religious Education have developed:

1) Narrow Confessionalism, whereby young people are initiated into a specific denomination of the Church. This was outlawed by the Cowper-Temple clause (Chapter 1) in the last century, but still survives because of the dual system and ignorance of this law by many parents and schools.

2) Broad Confessionalism is similar to the above, but the intention is to initiate or encourage young people to accept a religion in its broadest
terms.

3) Implicit, the term suggested for this is Open Forum, and it is an objective approach to the ultimate questions young people frequently feel compelled to ask. It is non-examinable and is best described as a nurturing experience.

4) The Explicit, sometimes called the phenomenological, for which the suggested title is 'Philosophy and Religion', which examines the data of world religions and ways of life in an objective fashion. It is therefore, examinable and essential for any educated person who wishes to know about the world and its inhabitants.

These four distinct approaches (though Narrow and Broad Confessionalism can be seen as having much in common) have been confused by the moral perspective (Chapter 7) in so far that the moral element has been treated as dominant. This is especially true of Governments since 1870, not only in 1944, but more specifically in 1988, and confirmed by the 1992 White Paper, 'Choice and Diversity', (Chapter 12). It would seem that politicians are looking to the subject as a utilitarian means of producing upright citizens (Chapter 11). Even though this aspect of the subject has been highlighted by
the Thatcher/Major Governments as of supreme importance, the opting-out clauses demote the subject to that of a voluntary nature (Chapter 12). There would have been no need for such clauses if the lessons of the last century (e.g. the Cowper-Temple clause) were taken to their natural conclusion and Broad Confessionalism had also been outlawed.

This could not have been done too early in our history otherwise the subject might well have been totally lost. So, for example, in New Zealand the 1877 Education Act outlawed the subject for doctrinal reasons, both in the Narrow and Broad concept of Confessionalism, and the subject is no longer taught to the detriment of a sound education within their state system. (see Reference 1 for a note on Confessional schools.)

As argued in Chapters 6 and 11 Confessionalism in the Broad or Narrow sense is not educationally acceptable, and indeed can be divisive in our society, Ireland being such an obvious example. It still exists because of the dual system and other factors, but should really be named Catechetical or Initiation classes. Later, in this final chapter, it will be argued that if the Confessional style of teaching is outlawed there is no need for the opting-out clauses.
Confessionalism once outlawed, leaves the two educationally viable options of the Explicit and Implicit approaches. Both are essential on educational grounds (chapters 8, 9, and 11) but must not be confused; they are linked by subject material, but must be viewed and treated separately. This will be discussed later in this chapter under the heading of 'Nomenclature'.

One of the main contentions of this thesis is that all that needs to happen is for the two approaches to be recognised and clearly stated at all levels.

First it must be stated by Governmental legislation, by taking the Cowper-Temple clause to its natural conclusion; by avoiding the mistake of seeing the subject as only Moral Education; by changing the nomenclature to underline the two nature aspect of the subject (see later paragraph on nomenclature); and by elevating the Explicit side of the subject to the core level with a national syllabus and not one dictated by local SACREs.

Secondly, to train teachers who are capable of conducting the Implicit Approach with its sensitive teaching methods, and also to ensure there are teachers qualified in the massive 'content' knowledge involved by a study of Philosophy and
Religion.

Finally, and most essentially, the pupils must have these definitions made clear. They must be able to see they are not being taken through some form of Confessionalism, obvious or veiled, and that there is a distinct difference between the Implicit and the Explicit. The values of these differences will be immediately apparent.

If pupils have this carefully explained it has two immediate effects. First it changes their perception of the subject in that they start to recognise its value, and secondly, it makes the subject much more interesting.

The author of this thesis taught for ten years in a variety of state schools using these guidelines as his approach. At the time of writing he was employed in Eton, the well known Public School, and was permitted to carry out a series of experiments to prove the point. The pupils had the subject matter and methodology clearly outlined, as suggested above. There was a significant, indeed a dramatic change both in attitude and performance and this has been carefully noted in the Appendix 1. The main reason for this change by the pupils was the fact that the aims and objectives of the course were clearly stated prior to the lessons/lectures.
The author was denied access to the local LEA schools where he volunteered to teach using these approaches. (In one particular County there was definitely a resistance to any research into the value of this clarification as the author's overtures to the Religious Education Advisor for schools were dismissed after the first enquiry.)

To facilitate the survival of this important subject the nomenclature must be changed, the timetable must reflect the change, and the opting-out clauses removed in order to rectify the way the subject has always been undervalued.

Nomenclature

As noted in the historical survey of Part 1 the subject has been known by many titles, thus reflecting the lack of proper definition and various stages through which the subject has passed. 'Scripture' truly reflected the days of Confessionalism since it referred directly to the study of the Christian Bible. 'Religious Instruction', as commonly used in the post-1944 Act period also tended to reflect this approach. Religious Education, the most widely used term in recent years, has a very broad function. For some it
reflects Explicit or/and Implicit, and for others it is still used to cover the Confessional Approach. As a result of the confusion which has arisen it is perhaps better that the term is dropped altogether. It is a term which has come to mean such a variety of possibilities that in meaning 'anything' it can mean, for some people, nothing at all. 'Religious Studies' has inclined towards the Explicit approach but not consistently, and, by its title, excludes all but religion.

The Explicit approach, as noted in Chapter 9, should cover the phenomena of religion, all religions as far as possible, and the alternative thought systems. It is therefore suggested that a more appropriate title could be the 'Study of Religion and Philosophy', or shortened to simply 'Religion and Philosophy'. This title is already in use in some schools, (eg Manchester Grammar) and is suggestive of the academic approach with which the Explicit style is associated.

The title of the other subject (Implicit) must somehow imply the opportunity for personal search in an open and rational way. Acland suggested various titles such as 'Life Discussion', but it is more effective to call it precisely what it is, namely 'Open Forum'.
Timetabling

It still remains law that the subject be studied, but because of past confusion in many schools it is dropped or submerged into virtual dismissal by being lost in some form of 'General Studies'. The Times Educational Supplement gave a major update (14th September, 1990) on the National Curriculum covering all subjects except Religious Education. The major nature of the subject, both in its wide ranging content and importance, demands at least two periods a week. In reality it should have more but, realistically, two must be treated as the norm.

Given this basic legal requirement it would seem best that 'Religion and Philosophy' occupies one period and 'Open Forum' another. In classes which are more academically inclined, those preparing for examinations in the subject, the 'Open Forum' could be timetabled for every fifth or sixth period or even by request. The important feature is that the two are not confused any more, and that they remain distinct and well defined.
Opting-Out Clauses

The current legislation still allows both staff and pupils to opt-out from the subject. This was originally meant as a defence against the Confessionalist Approach. Not only have the opting-out clauses had a detrimental effect upon pupils who must 'go elsewhere', but it has had a tendency to devalue the subject. It is as if the subject is important only to those who believe and as such, merely for brave or ardent volunteers.

If 'Religion and Philosophy' is taught properly in an objective fashion there is no reason for pupils to exclude themselves anymore than they should from the study of History or Geography. Religion and Philosophy deals with the data of religion and man’s thinking, it deals with the facts of life which no educated person, believer or otherwise, can ignore.

'... to encounter knowledge and think about it, are defensible on open grounds, provided that the second is a fact attained. It is educative, even for a future president of a humanist society, to understand what men mean when they speak of God .... an atheist would be better for having done it, provided it were done honestly and openly, with the
same vigour as he works from facts and theory in Science.' (2)

To teach in this objective way as in 'Religion and Philosophy', and the open approach of 'Open Forum', avoids those pitfalls when the teacher is faced by fundamentalists and those 'little sceptics who will be revolted by the notion that a real Jonah was once swallowed by a real whale.' (3) The two-subject approach may provoke and stimulate thought, but it does not set out to shake or challenge deeply held faith or convert non-faith.

Even ardent Humanists could have no objection so long as the two subjects remain objective and open (4), and those of other faiths must need to know what others feel and believe. If the bias were such that a person of one faith does not want to hear of another then the same must apply to learning about the history of other countries or even their geography. Education demands that eyes are opened and not blinkered, that horizons of knowledge and understanding are widened and not reduced.

'We suggest, however, that there is something wrong with an aspect of the curriculum when it is expected at the outset that some parents and teachers will wish to opt out on the grounds of conscience.' (5) The two-subject approach is
fundamentally educational in aim, and as such should not be subject to legislative opting-out clauses.

**Conclusion**

If the two-subject approach is applied with professional integrity, then it must go some way towards helping to produce autonomous and rational adults who are capable of making reasonable choices in the matter of religion and emotions. The two-subject approach can be workable under the current educational system, it answers the problems usually associated with the opting-out clauses, it allows for personal exploration and quest, it covers a wide range of projected aims and objectives, but above all it is based on educational foundations. Therefore it is necessary to:

A) outlaw all forms of Confessionalism

B) eliminate the opting-out clauses

C) recognise the existence of Open Forum and Religion and Philosophy.

D) state the aims clearly at all levels,

The subject will then survive with its proper educational values and status.
This appendix deals with the various experiments in Explicit and Implicit courses held at Eton College. The lessons were clearly defined both in terms of content, and in the explanation of the differences between the aims and objectives of the Implicit and Explicit courses.

How the courses were received by the pupils is recorded through the results of group discussions, questionnaires, and by pupils' reactions in the written word including essays and examinations.

The experimental nature of these syllabuses consists not so much in their content, but in the precise underlining as to what is being taught. It is believed that the taught must have defined exactly what is happening in their education. That they must understand the difference between the Explicit (Religion and Philosophy, the title used by Manchester Grammar School) and Implicit (Open Forum).

The Independent system is largely free from educational legislative restraints and local
syllabuses, and this theory was tested within this sector where the only permission necessary was the Head Master or Head of Department. There is also some positive reasons for testing this theory within the independent sector. The boarding nature of these schools gives more time for the type of discussion which provides an effective preparation for the questionnaires and an analysis of the pupils' true views. An evening in a master's study can be a better venue for a frank exchange of views. It is more relaxed, there is more time and less restraints on the pupil/teacher authority/relationship area. Discussion in the classroom can all too frequently be limited if not clinical, and open to either 1) trying to please the teacher or 2) deliberately taking the opposite point of view. Also, in many independent schools, because there is so much unstructured or non-timetabled time, much of the discussion could be held with considerable ease and groups of pupils brought together as and when necessary.

Note on Methodology

In trying to establish the viability of the two-subject approach in the classroom it was decided to keep the methods as simple as possible. It was considered that a 'low key' approach to some very
simple issues would elicit truthful answers.

At both senior (14-18) and junior (11-13) level an attempt was made to discover what pupils 'felt' about the subject as they experienced its teaching, especially with the senior boys. It was considered essential not to reveal too much, in other words not to ask too many leading questions, and so allow the pupils to express opinions which were honest reflections and not to please the teacher or be objectionable. It was important in the early discussions that questions were posed in an atmosphere of 'let's talk about' rather than 'I have a theory which we are going to put to the test'.

Many of the questions arose from these preliminary discussions. Nevertheless, it ought to be noted that the author's views were fairly well known. A limited piloting of the questionnaire was carried out by discussion with three separate groups not involved in the course, and one question was added and three changed because of this exercise. The design of the questionnaire was basic because it was felt that in this way each pupil would have control over his own responses and would not be influenced by others.

Such were the self-evident patterns of responses of the pupils that it did not seem
necessary to apply any form of significance tests, the changes were either obvious or relatively trivial. The pupils were well aware that the two identical questionnaires would represent a definite intervention, and the well known Hawthorne effect was considered. This would have been more carefully taken into account if the group had been small and less individually minded.

As it was a new course, the 'intervention' was set before some 250 intelligent and beligerently individualistic Etonians. Experience of those who teach in this school, and visiting speakers, testifies to the fact that the vast majority are generally unashamedly honest in their opinions, even when they have changed or are in the process of changing.

Preliminary Discussions

Preliminary discussions took place in a period stretching over one year in differing circumstances. In the chosen Public School (Eton) there are twenty five boarding Houses with 50+/- boys in each residence. Considerable discussion took place in these Houses both in formal and informal situations. For example some discussion took place in the House's formal meeting, and at other times over coffee where
the issues were raised as 'curiosity'. On some occasions the subject was raised in a master's study or over the dinner table. In Eton there are tutorial groups of 3-7 pupils who meet their tutor twice a week for education over and beyond the normal curriculum. This proved an excellent medium for such investigative discussions, either under the guise of preparing an essay or a debate, and for discussion/conversational purposes.

From these preliminary discussions it became clear that three attitudes were easily indentifiable.

1) There was a major question over the value of RE, namely that it appeared of little academic value for their future, and only those with academic limitations would need to sit it as an external examination, thus throwing doubt on its value. There was also considerable doubt regarding its objective value since many regarded its content to be a question of mere subjective opinion.

2) It was seen as a totally 'boring' subject especially since it seemed that the same content was taught over and over again. Of all subjects its interest rating was the lowest, and any interest in the subject depended on either the enthusiasm or eccentricity of the teacher.

3) After some discussion based on the first
two attitudes, it emerged that few understood the 'purposes' of the subject. It was the considered opinion of the vast majority that English helps us to communicate, Sciences to understand why, Mathematics to calculate, but RE was a mixture of ancient history and literature intended to inculcate attitudes which were to be resisted at all costs.

Further Investigation

The senior group consisted of some 250+/- pupils aged 16-17 years. The questionnaire’s design was assisted by a commercial fact finding firm and given to the boys during a forty minute period. The questions were kept to a minimum, and although significant choice was given to enable some shades of opinion it was considered best that the fewer the range of possibilities the better. None of the papers were spoilt, and the questionnaire was repeated a few months later after a course had been studied. This time gap was designed so that the memory of the syllabus would have a clearer perspective, and the result as a consequence indicated a significant change in attitudes. Personal responses to the courses were also received by letter and in essays.
The Syllabuses

The course was conducted through the use of pamphlets (lesson notes for pupils and teachers) or selected texts with guidance notes, plus teachers and invited guest speakers. The groups were told of the clear distinction between Open Forum (implicit) and Religion and Philosophy (explicit). The lesson analysis later will indicate how the lessons were conducted, and how the pupils responded.
EXPERIMENT 1 in EXPLICIT TEACHING.

Introduction

This particular course was based on a study of Religions and Philosophy and was given to a group of pupils aged from 16.1 to 17.2 with 250+/- within the year group; classes were divided into numbers of 10-15. It was conducted during the Lenten Term of 1991.

A random group was selected in order to discover what they had been taught in RE in their junior schools. Also, a questionnaire was answered before the course, and repeated a few months following the completion of the course by all (250+/-) within the year group in order to note any change of attitudes as a result of the course.

The Aims

One of the main aims of this and the other experiments was to clarify for the pupils exactly what was being taught, and why. For many pupils there
was the underlying suspicion that in Religious Education they were being indoctrinated however subtle the means. If they were not being indoctrinated there was the other uncertainty as to whether they were being taught a specific body of knowledge which was open for subjective discussion and interpretation. An extension of the age-old problem of the PE Master being timetabled for a spare period of Religious Education and starting the lesson with 'this is what I feel about life, let's see if I'm right!'

The aim of this course was to make the subject more enjoyable, more useful from the pupils' perceptions, and this was most efficiently done by simply clarifying what was about to be taught and why. In some of these experiments these aims were clearly stated to the pupils, in others nothing was said in the anticipation that the course content would be clear enough.

In Experiment 1 the teaching of world religions and philosophies, the pupils were told that the course was designed to increase their knowledge of world religions and ways of life and would be taught in a purely explicit way.
What they had been taught 'hitherto'.

Before looking at the results of this investigation it was important to note that the Independent system has the Common Entrance examination which is a form of Public School entrance selection. It is an examination based on the individual's knowledge of the Bible. Most pupils in a Public School arrive from Preparatory schools, but not all. Some maintained school pupils enter at 13 years because of their achievement in specific subjects such as music, art and so forth. Within this random group there was one primary school entrant and he is marked with a # for his particular responses.

From 5-12 years of age the following features emerged:

100% had been taught the main Bible stories
70% had concentrated on the Gospels
80% had been taught the OT as fundamental history
10% had been taught about famous Christians #
90% said the lessons had been taken seriously

245
10% said it was a general chat about politics
10% found it interesting
90% found it tedious (#)

Since starting in the senior school they had continued to study a Biblically based course and all had found it intolerably boring. The pupil from the maintained sector had less knowledge about Biblical content but found the Bible teaching just as tedious. The main area of concern was the repetition of the course material, sometimes described as 'overkill'. On discovering that much of the Old Testament was legend/myth there was a degree of initial shock, bemused understanding, and an annoyance by some that they had not been trusted with this view when younger since many suspected this to be the case.

One further point of interest emerged with this random group. Before they were told about the proposed course they were asked to suggest a better RE course and without any 'teacher prompting' the following features surfaced:

(1) all of them wanted to hear about other world religions;
(2) 80% wanted discussion on major life issues;
(3) and finally, if the Christian
scriptures were to be studied then the approach had to be based on scholarship and not the 'preaching' approach.

The Course.

In this syllabus which was based on the Explicit approach (Philosophy and Religion), a course was organised based on a brief survey of world religions and ways of life.

The whole year group (250+/-) was instructed to attend a lecture given by either an expert in the chosen field or one of its proponents. The lectures were designed along the lines of straightforward explicit teaching. There was to be no subtle confessionalism, and all the lecturers adhered strictly to this request. Naturally enough the proponents were seen to be actively engaged in their area of belief, but they all managed a sound objective approach. The lectures were followed by discussion periods with a teacher, and a text book was used (B.W.Sherrett & D.J.Hawkin, (1972) Gods and Men: A Survey of World Religions. Glasgow: Blackie.) and essays set. Despite the fact that most pupils had some knowledge of Judaism (through the teaching of Christianity) preparatory work was done since Judaism
was the first lecture. The lectures lasted for 30/40 minutes and in some cases there was time left for questions. Discussion periods tended to reflect either the content of the previous lecture or the text book which was used in preparation for the next session.

In the following account of the course the questions asked by the pupils have been included since they help reflect the level of interest and depth of understanding - or misunderstanding.

Account of the Course

Tuesday. Lecture 1 by Rabbi Jonathan Romaine. Subject of Judaism. He dealt with the history of the Jewish people, covering the well-known OT background, pondering on the events of the Greek Roman period up to AD 70 and the Dispersion throughout Europe. The history of the persecution up to the modern day. No time for questions.

Friday. Reading and Discussion School.

Tuesday. Lecture 2 by Rabbi Jonathan Romaine on Judaism. Their sacred scriptures, festivals, moral codes. Questions asked by pupils:

1) Do Jews still wander (USSR etc)?
2) Is there a belief of life after death?
3) How would you recognise the Messiah?
4) How serious are fears of anti-Semitism?
5) Does God help you?
6) Is the state of Israel a theocracy?
7) Is Israel dangerous for world peace?
8) Are segregated schools productive?
9) Do Jews accept sex before marriage?
10) Do Jews give gifts?
11) Is there anti-Christian feeling?
12) Is there a militant minority?
13) Do you convert?
14) Why are Jews so often resented?

Friday. Reading and Discussion School.

Tuesday. Lecture 3 by the Rev. J. W. Witheridge on the history of Islam. No time for questions.

Friday. Reading and Discussion School.

Tuesday. Lecture 4 by Dr Zaki Badawi on Islam. Their beliefs, festivals etc. Questions asked were:

1) Why is the Jihad so important?
2) Will Islam continue to spread in the future?
3) Why so much conflict between Jews and Islam?
4) Difference between Sunnis and Sh’ites.
5) How do you convert to Islam?

Friday. Reading and Discussion School.

(Half Term)

Friday. Discussion School.

Tuesday. Lecture 5 on Buddhism by Mr John Denevo. Its background, practice and way of life. There was just a few minutes left for questions:

1) Is Buddhism a religion since it seems atheistic?
2) What rituals are the most important?
3) Is it possible to be a Christian Buddhist?

Friday. Lecture 6 by Mr C M Jones on Atheism. Background to modern atheism through the Renaissance, Reformation and Expansion of Europe. He covered areas such as Deism, Materialism, Hume, Hegel and other thinkers, and finished with modern agnosticism. There was no time for questions.
Tuesday. Reading and Discussion School.

Friday. Lecture 7 on Marxism by Mr D A Evans.  
An outline of Marx's life, his ideas about the economic forces behind history. There was no time for questions.

Tuesday. Lecture 8 on Hinduism by Swami Bhavyanandana.

A very brief historical background, stressing the diversity of the faith. The understanding of harmony, the nature of Godhood and man the individual. There was time for questions:

1) What about the state of the untouchables?
2) Can a Hindu be reborn a Christian?
3) Any knowledge of a previous life?
4) How tolerant is Hinduism?
5) How do Hindus perceive the figures of Christ and Mohammed?
6) If Hinduism is so tolerant why so many wars?
The Written Work

The pupils were asked to write essays on four of the lectures, doing their own research in the school library and from information gained in class. Because the course was stressed as objective and 'academic' the essays were slanted in this direction, but showed signs of wider reading and interest.

A survey of the essays indicated that the pupils had fully understood the nature of the explicit style of teaching. Well over 90% of the essays were factual in content, and the remaining 10% were largely factual and only tended to 'tail off' into opinions about the validity of some religious claims. Two major areas of such concern for the pupils were the Hindu theory of the transmigration of souls, and why the Jewish people had been so persecuted through the ages. This tendency to move into the Open Forum (implicit) area was also reflected in class discussion. Most of the discussion, as with the essays, tended to be centred on factual knowledge, but, from time to time, the need for Open Forum discussion emerged. This was comparable to the needs of the pupils in similar subjects such as History and English Literature. Following a series of lessons on the First World War one Master (who had also taught this Religion and
Philosophy course) commented on the fact that his class, since experiencing the Religious Education course, wanted to discuss the nature of man in so far that they were curious as to how mankind could inflict such mortal wounds upon 'himself'. Again, in the study of Shakespeare's King Lear, an Open Forum discussion on the nature of suffering was both necessary for an understanding of the text as well as essential for the pupils as they tried to grasp the nature of man. This particular explicit course in Experiment 1 did occasionally meander into Open Forum discussion, but no further than would be reasonably anticipated in similar subject areas.

The pupils had freedom of choice with their essays. The vast majority (85%) concentrated on historical development of the various religions and philosophies, the remaining 15% examined beliefs and practices.

The * mark indicates those essays where the pupils were prone to wander from factual learning into subjective opinion:

40% - Historical development of Islam.
15% - Belief of Islam.
4% - Historical development of Judaism.
2% - Persecution of the Jewish people. *
5% - Buddhist belief.
10% - Historical development of Buddhism.
10% - Historical development of Hinduism.
6% - Hindu Belief.
2% - Atheism.
4% - Marxism.
2% - Afterlife Belief in Judaism, Islam, Christianity.

Conclusions on the Course.

Prior to the start of the course the year group filled out a questionnaire on RE. A few months following the completion of the course the same questionnaire was distributed in order to see if there had been any change in attitudes.
The Questionnaire

(245 pupils)

The Questions - Prior/Post

1. I think RE is a waste of time - 140/23
   can be interesting - 7/122
   is useful - 54/34
   is good for my education - 44/66

2. RE is an academic subject
   in its own right - 168/216
   teaches us to be Christians - 40/7
   teaches us to be good - 4/1
   explores important issues - 33/21

3. Religion should be learnt at school
   - 2/198
   only at home - 106/17
   school and home - 137/30
4. I believe in the Existence of God
   - 192/193
   I do not - 5/5
   I do not know - 48/47

5. The Study of other religions is important
   yes - 242/242
   no - 3/3
   don’t know - 0/0

6. We should study secular ideologies
   yes - 179/201
   no - 32/13
   don’t know - 34/31

7. Must you be religious to study religion?
   yes - 6/3
   no - 239/242
   don’t know - 0/0

8. A truly educated person should know something about world religions.
   yes - 245/245
   no - 0/0
   don’t know - 0/0

256
9. Young people should be given a chance/time to discuss major issues such as death, life, existence of God, ethical problems etc

yes - 239/241
no - 0/0
don’t know - 6/4

Certain significant shifts in opinion became clear as a result of this approach.

**Question 1:** The major shifts of emphasis in this question was the movement away from RE being a waste of time, and also that the subject was interesting. Following discussion with the groups it was clear that the outside speakers helped, their personal vitality and knowledge captured the pupils’ interests. The pupils were also thrilled to learn something about other ways of life and felt that they had achieved something useful. This question seemed to indicate in a very clear way that the major aim of making the subject more interesting and useful had been achieved.

**Question 2:** Being a course on religions and philosophies it was clear to the pupils that RE in this instance was not confessionalist, though seven still believed it was on the grounds that the other ways of life and religion offered an invidious
comparison! As would be expected from a purely explicit approach most pupils saw the subject as mainly academic when taught in this way.

Question 3: In this question a significant change of attitude was revealed in so far that the pupils realised that a considerable expertise was required to teach this subject. In the same discussion a few thought the medium of television could help as much, but this came from a very limited number.

Question 4: There were changes in this question, and the pupils admitted to continuous shifts of opinion on this question!

Question 5: As with the above question no significant change.

Question 6: An insignificant change.

Question 7: An insignificant change.

Question 8: No change.

Question 9: No significant change.

The questionnaire was followed by some discussion when it became abundantly clear that the
objective study of religion and ways of life was seen as a welcome change to the traditional teaching of Christian texts. The course had opened their eyes to other people's beliefs and ways of life, and had given them a feeling that the lessons had broadened their education for life in a useful way. It was generally agreed that they felt a greater tolerance which had been brought about by more knowledge, and by listening to proponents of the respective religions and ways of life. The majority did not feel that they had been more attracted to a particular faith or had given it more sympathy by the personality of the speaker, though a few did, especially in the case of the Rabbi. Although questions had been asked about conversion no one felt that they had changed their views regarding their own beliefs or non-beliefs. Several expressed the opinion that they took an immediate interest in the subject because it was objective, and because there was no hidden agenda which many felt was the case in previous lessons, namely a thinly veiled form of confessionalism. They had also welcomed the introduction when the nature of the course was outlined, not so much because of its content, but the fact it was going to be an objective and academic study.
EXPERIMENT 2 IN EXPLICIT TEACHING

Introduction

This particular course was set to pupils in their third term of their first year, their ages ranging from 13.5 to 14.8 years. They were given one forty minute period a week with the expectancy of doing some reading in their spare time and written exercises for homework. Seventy six pupils went through the course divided into four classes of 19+/— each.

The text book used was James and Audrey Bentley, (1988) Christianity UK, Longman and was used because of its objective based view of Christianity. The author had been a master at the school and was well versed in the academic (explicit) approach to the subject.

The Aims

No discussion regarding the nature of Religious Education took place, the pupils were simply told that the course was academic, that as far as possible the intention was to use the textbook as
a base for an objective account of Christianity. They were to 'pretend' that they were totally ignorant of the subject, as if they were from another planet, and so try to understand its origins, growth and life today from a fresh perspective. They were also warned that they would be examined in the subject as in any other academic subject on their timetable.

The major aim was to increase their knowledge and understanding of this religion by a purely objective study.

The Course

Reading homework was set each week, chapter by chapter from the book, the lesson time was taken up with discussion about the content of the reading, and a weekly essay was set (250-600 words) and marked. The essays were largely based on the book plus lesson discussion. The written work was factual in content reflecting the nature of the course.

There were only nine working weeks excluding time for the examination and marking. Chapter One on the Origins of Christianity consumed two weeks; Chapter Two on Christian teaching one week; Chapter Three on Christian History one week; Chapter Four on the Great Christian Themes took one
week; Chapter Five on Christianity and Moral Issues took two weeks; and the final Chapter on the Sacred Texts took two weeks.

It was a very straightforward course and discussion rarely went beyond chapter content and clarification of that content.

Responses

Just prior to the examination the pupils were asked about their feelings towards the work. The general impression was favourable, it had been no more interesting or dull than a History or Geography lesson, but certainly more acceptable than the Religious Education lessons they had experienced hitherto. There was also the general impression that they had learnt something constructive and useful, and that their insights into the Christian faith had been increased. Some of the pupils put their thoughts into writing:

"...it was good using the Bible as a resource book rather than always coming from it for lesson material."

"...gave good overviews of something taken for
granted and never questioned."

"...seeing the origins and working through to today helped put it all into perspective."

"Some of the course was self-evident, but at least we were not trudging through the well known parables and miracles..."

It is not only a matter of knowing how well a class enjoyed a course, but how much they took on board. The examination system, while not being the only method of testing this aspect, does give some idea. All the pupils were examined in this course as part of their school examination.

The examination (Appendix 2) was set in the same way as other disciplines and was purely academic in its approach, and reflected the expectancy of this age range.

The Results

Seventy-six pupils sat the examination and scored an average of 69.7%. The highest mark was 88% and the lowest 52%. Eleven pupils scored over 80%; thirty-two over 70%; twenty three over 60% and ten
over 50%. These marks were comparable with marks established in other disciplines (History's average mark was 68% and English Literature's 72%) during the same examinations and indicated to the team of Religious Education markers an increase in knowledge and therefore probably interest, the main aim of this particular course.
APPENDIX 1 continued

EXPERIMENTS IN IMPLICIT TEACHING

Introduction

This course was a reasonable novelty within the school and since the approach was so new the course for the senior and junior boys would be the same and the same text book was used. The only difference was the expectation that the senior boys (17+ years, Juniors being 13-14 year) would take the discussion to a deeper level. The course was allowed to go ahead by the Head of Department on the understanding that the end of term would see some kind of 'trial' (examination) in the subject area. This seemed at first to contradict the thesis that Implicit teaching, called Open Forum, could not be credited with marks since it would mean passing a value judgement on the pupils' reactions which should be personal to them. It was eventually agreed that termly essays would only carry comments and that the end of term examination would be marked from the English point of view and not on opinions. The pupil's ability to write well and marshal arguments was to be the only criteria for his termly mark. If
he expressed views which were contrary to the marker's point of view or 'held belief' this would not be taken into consideration. Even if the pupil expressed strong opinions which might be considered anti-social or subversive this was not to be taken into account, neither in the mark or in any comment.

The Aims

The aim of this course was to allow the pupils an area in the structure of the school to discuss those 'life issues' they considered important. Such discussion took place in their private lives and boarding facilities, but in Open Forum it is held under the guidance of a teacher. This ensured several important features: i) that some expert and mature guidance was within the discussion, if only to clarify facts. ii) It enabled every pupil to have an opportunity to speak if he so wished, and not to feel cowed by stronger personalities within the group. iii) The teacher was able to keep the discussion on line and avoid it meandering into areas other than what was originally decided by the group. iv) A degree of necessary classroom discipline was maintained, especially since some issues were so sensitive emotions could in some circumstances flare
up out of control.

It soon became clear that Open Forum was a school period without a definite content and in a paradoxical way needed to be unstructured within the necessary structure of a school system. It was equally clear that although all the teachers agreed with the principles behind the course not all felt professionally able to carry out the task. Many needed the authority of 'their subject discipline' as a support for discipline. Nevertheless, the aims were agreed upon and two periods a week were granted to the juniors (250+/−) for one term, and one period a week for seniors (250+/−) for the same term.

The Course.

Both age ranges were treated the same and were dealt with as a single group. The pupils were told all about the nature of Open Forum, namely that this was their period to discuss what they considered to be important. It was clarified that this did not mean that the latest pop song or fashion was to be the point of discussion but matters which were meaningful in terms of their perceptions of life. It was decided that a text book or books would be used if it were considered necessary, but this decision would be taken after the initial discussions with the pupils, and
only if a text book could be found which outlined views rather than preached a particular line of thought or belief. It was also decided that essays would be set for three reasons: i) that this period was not to degenerate into a chat show, and that the essays would underline the fact that the issues and the pupils' views were taken seriously; ii) that if essays were set then the subject status would not suffer, that is to say it would not be seen simply as a fun period where nothing else happened apart from leaning back and expressing a view; iii) the essay would help the pupils clarify their own thinking by obliging them to put their views down in a structured fashion.

The pupils were also warned that the end of term examinations (a tradition of this school) would still be there but that their opinions, beliefs, attitudes, or value judgements were not the subject of scrutiny, only their ability to marshal their own thinking in a precise and clear way, as in any sound English essay.

Account of the Course.

Without any direct guidance from the teaching staff it soon became clear that across the entire
range of 500+- pupils certain issues were held in common. There were, of course, one or two who came up with 'sillies', but the vast majority (at least an estimated 96%) took the opportunity seriously and the following subject areas emerged:

1) The justified war. This was not surprising since this course was held at the time when the Gulf War had started and the media were discussing the issues and the course of the war on an hourly basis.

2) The Sanctity of Life. This was also connected with the above topic, but in addition to this there had been a recent debate in the school over the subject of capital punishment.

3) Punishment. This did not reflect their views about school punishment, but the wider concern of prison. This undoubtedly arose for two reasons; namely that an Old Boy of the school, Ludovic Kennedy, had raised the subject of Craig and Bentley and Hanratty, and Poll Tax avoiders were facing prison.

4) Racism. South Africa was becoming more and more prominent.

Others wanted to discuss pre-marital sex, homosexuality, the legalisation of soft drugs, but
these subjects were very much a minority and it was decided that they would be opened up for discussion if time allowed. Some teachers were surprised that more overt theological issues were not raised, as for example the existence of God. This had been a topical issue a few years earlier, but a survey of the school (1250 pupils) indicated that 93% held some sort of belief in God's existence.

Following a survey of the subject areas a text book was chosen, *Contemporary Issues* by James and Audrey Bentley, (1989) published by Longman Group, Hong Kong. This book reflected a wide range of opinions from around the world and dealt with the following issues:

- Racial Prejudice and Discrimination.
- Rich and Poor World.
- Crime and Punishment.
- War, Peace and Violence.
- The Family and the World Outside.
- Choosing Right from Wrong.

The book was fairly objective, reflected a pluralistic world, covered many but not all topics, gave useful addresses for follow up material, and was easy to read. The pupils were given a copy of the book and were told that they were not expected to
agree or disagree with its material, simply to use it as a resource area and a prompt for their own thinking.

The periods were used for discussion only, and the first topic of war lasted for three weeks. The newspapers were a useful material resource. Following the usual reflection of public opinion most pupils simply wanted to discuss whether 'the Americans and British were right', but with the guidance of teachers and the textbook the whole theory of war came under scrutiny. St Augustine's views and the Islamic concept of the Jihad were reviewed, and the history pupils also reflected upon the Christian Crusades, the First and the Second World War. The essays on this subject were the best of the whole term, and although most pupils (90% estimate) agreed the discussions had not changed their initial views, they felt more informed about the issues involved, and had a more sympathetic understanding of other peoples' views. There was also considerable discussion over the problem that if the war 'were justified' could unjustified means be used to win that war? The scud missile image predominated much of their thinking, and it was not surprising that many essays turned towards the problems involved with Hiroshima, Trident submarines and the whole concept
of nuclear war. There was some heated debate in this particular area which had to be defused at times.

The second topic was the Sanctity of Life which was only touched upon in the text book. It took the medium of the Gulf War to change to this topic. Euthanasia, suicide, capital punishment and abortion soon became the most debated areas. The nature of clinical death was raised, the right to finish one's own life by suicide or euthanasia, and the right to take another life for the state were the critical discussions. The question of the difference between mercy killing, killing (as with a soldier) and murder (for one's own personal benefit) formed the subject area of many essays. The teachers made a concerted effort to keep the problem of capital punishment for the next topic. Many pupils had never formed any opinion on these topics and admitted that this part of the course had changed what had hitherto been vaguely formed opinions into more strongly held beliefs; there was no definite block of opinion, the pupils tended to reflect society as a whole in the nature of their divided opinions. This part of the course had, it was felt, been important in so far that it raised these issues for consideration in an informed way.
The third topic was Punishment and this immediately raised the issue of capital punishment. The nature of why punishment took place (reformative, deterrent etc) faded into the background since the pupils were strongly divided on the right of the state to execute criminals. One group read Albert Pierrepoint's book (the public executioner for many decades), many were fascinated by such famous cases such as Christie and Evans, Craig and Bentley, Hanratty, Ruth Ellison, and the post Second World War tribunals. When it was raised and stated that the British Criminal system had made mistakes with executions in the past, and the dangers of the Birmingham Six and Guildford Four had been reviewed, many pupils became less hard line in their views. There was a definite swing of opinion, even in one class where the master was very strongly for capital punishment. Unlike the topic of nuclear war these discussions were more academic and did not become unduly heated.

The final topic was Racism and only one week of term was left. It was fortunate that this topic had been left to last since there was a self-evident hatred of racists and no single boy was divided from another on this subject. In one class the teacher acted as a devil's advocate on behalf of
apartheid, but had to keep reminding the class that he was only the devil's advocate.

Final Essays.

In keeping with the school tradition the subjects were raised in terms of a quasi-examination. A typical question was: 'Explain the rules of a just war, and say whether such ideals can still apply to a nuclear war.' As stated earlier the marks were given on presentation and no pupil was discriminated against on grounds of value judgements. The essays were well written and the average mark (67%) reflected their English marks.

The senior boys' essays were, as expected, better in terms of depth and presentation, but the various views and counter views hardly differed at all.

Response to the Course

Some discussion took part about the nature of the course, and as a last period exercise prior to
the end of term the pupils were asked to write a letter, signed or unsigned, about their reactions to this type of lesson. All, without exception, enjoyed the course, many contrasting it with the traditional lessons. The following extracts give a reasonable reflection of the 500+/- who went through the course:

'I think that this approach is very good. Not only can personal experience be brought in .... but other day to day issues that affect the world...'

'Last term’s work was very interesting and fun. I enjoy greatly discussing my points on many unanswerable questions. It is also good to hear the ideas of my friends....'

'The course was very different to those we have done in the past and so I suppose it was a pleasant change. I think that maybe we spent too long on certain subjects, and some of the subjects were gruesome and occupied our time because of this...'

'Last term’s work was extremely productive for me, and I found that I enjoyed it much more than I had done Divinity in the past. It was much more challenging and involving than having to learn about St Luke’s Gospel in such detail that you will never
'After the Michaelmas course on St Luke I found the subject of 'issues' a most welcome and refreshing change. The former topic, to put it frankly, was one of the most boring and unrewarding term's work that I have ever had to do, whereas this last term I found relevant and interesting.'

'I thought last term's course the most interesting I have ever had in Divinity, the topics we discussed mattered and have often caused me concern.'

Out of the 500 +/- responses it was clear that all the pupils found this course i) different ii) rewarding because they could contribute iii) interesting because it appeared relevant. In the senior group discussion also indicated that although they could appreciate the need for the academic/explicit teaching of Religion and Philosophy, the Open Forum lessons gave them an opportunity to express themselves using the content of the formal explicit lessons to keep discussion sensible and in proportion.
APPENDIX 2

The Examination Paper as sat

RE EXAMINATION, SUMMER 1991

Saturday 22 June
11.30-1.00

CHRISTIANITY

SECTION 1

Answer all questions by underlining the correct answer on the multiple choice sheet at back of paper.

1. The Apostles' creed developed out of which sort of service?
2. In which year did the Council of Nicaea take place?
3. Roman Catholics claim that the Pope is the successor of which saint?
4. Which body of clergy elects the Pope?
5. Who is the current Pope?
6. In which year did the first Vatican Council decree that, in certain circumstances, the Pope is 'infallible'?
7. Where did Licinius and Constantine declare that Christianity would be tolerated throughout the Roman Empire?
8. Who is said to have been the first British Christian?
9. Where did Columba build a famous monastery?
10. What is St Patrick's breastplate?
11. Who led the group of missionaries sent to England by the Pope in AD 596?
12. Where did the answer to 11 build his cathedral?
13. When did the Eastern Orthodox Church split from the Western Catholic Church?
14. In which part of Europe did Martin Luther live?
15. Where did the influential reformer John Calvin set up a Protestant Church?
16. Who was the reformer of Scotland?
17. Which missionary organisation was founded by St Ignatius Loyola?
18. Where did the World Missionary Conference meet in 1910?
19. Which is the most important Jewish feast?
20. How many men are necessary for the formation of a synagogue?
21. When was the Jerusalem Temple destroyed?
22. What is the meaning of the Greek word from which our word Eucharist is derived?
23. Which Christian feast occurs each year on 6 January?
24. What is the approximate meaning of the word 'Shrove'?
25. What name do Christians give to the Sunday before Easter?
26. How many days after the resurrection did Pentecost happen?
27. From where in an English church is the Bible usually read?
28. What was the name of the modern saint who was put to death at Auschwitz?
29. Where was St Thomas Becket murdered?
30. Whom did Bernadette Soubirous claim to have seen in her vision at Lourdes?

SECTION 2

Answer all questions - six marks each (write a paragraph or two)

1. Explain the three main parts of the Apostles' Creed.
2. Why was Christianity persecuted under the Roman Empire?
3. How and why do Christians remember their saints and martyrs?
4. What does baptism symbolise?
5. Why do Christians make pilgrimages?

SECTION 3

Answer two questions only - 20 marks each (write short essays)

1. Is the Bible still important in today's Church?
2. In what ways is Great Britain still a Christian country?
3. Explain how and why the Reformation happened?
4. What are the sacraments? What is their place in the life of the Church?
5. What is the value of Church seasons, colours and symbols?
ANSWER SHEET FOR SECTION 1. Underline one answer only.
If you wish to change an answer cross out your first answer clearly and underline your subsequent choice.

1. baptism          eucharist          wedding           mass           evensong
2. AD 45            AD 215            AD 325            AD 1435         AD 1958
3. Anthony          Mark              Peter             Athanasius       Francis
4. deacons          cardinals         bishops           priests          canons
5. John Paul11      John IV           John Paul1        Peter XI         Pius 1X
6. AD 55            AD 1453           AD 1780           AD 1870          AD 1961
7. Rome             Philippi          Lyons             Ravenna          Milan
8. Boadicea         Alban             Patrick           Blandina         Ethelbert
9. Galloway         Mull              Iona              Armagh           Dunbarton
10. a chalice        Irish stew        armour            a hymn           his tomb
11. Columba          Augustine         Gregory           Cerularius       Bede
12. Rochester        London            Canterbury        Exeter           Hastings
13. AD 381           AD 1054           AD 1145           AD 1517          AD 1948
14. Holland          Germany           Italy             Spain            France
15. Geneva           Eisleben          Zurich            Wittenberg       Turin
16. Bothwell         St Andrew        Mary Tudor        John Knox        James 1
17. Dominicans       Jesuits          Franciscans       Armenians       Priars
18. Vancouver        Paris            Madrid            Edinburgh        Amsterdam
19. Purim            Easter           Passover          Seder            Sabbath
20. two              eight            ten               fifty            twelve
21. AD 60            AD 70            AD 200            AD 361           AD 1436
22. bread            memorial         priest            people           thanksgiving
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<td>Luwum</td>
<td>Niemoller</td>
<td>Huber</td>
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<td>30. Jesus</td>
<td>St Mary</td>
<td>a ghost</td>
<td>her mother</td>
<td>St Anne</td>
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(13) ibid., p.76.


(21) ibid., p.172.


(25) ibid.,

(26) ibid., p.212.


(30) ibid., p.90.
CHAPTER 2


(11) ibid.,

(12) ibid., p.19. Quoted the TES, March 11th 1944 in which a mass observation report on teachers' view on Religious Education was taken. They took some 1,900 teachers from primary and secondary schools and showed 90% of teachers to be in favour of Religious Education in state schools, and 71% to be opposed to merely denominational instruction.

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(15) ibid., pp.1033-1034.

(16) ibid.,

(17) ibid., p.1036.


(25) ibid., p.1027.

(26) ibid., p.1039.


(28) ibid., p.25.


(33) Education Act, 1944. Fifth Schedule, Section 29,2.


(37) ibid., p.1035.
CHAPTER 3


(3) ibid., p.78.

(4) ibid., p.107.


(8) ibid., p.63.

(9) ibid., p.66.

(10) ibid., p.3.

(11) ibid., p.4.


(14) ibid., p.28.

(15) ibid., p.39.

(16) ibid., p.40.


(20) ibid., p.86.

(21) ibid., pp.84-86.


CHAPTER 4


(4) ibid., p. 72.

(5) ibid., article by Hilliard, p. 100.


(9) ibid., p. 17.


(11) ibid., p. 13.


(19) ibid., p.99.


(23) ibid., pp.227-228.


(28) ibid., p.166.


(31) ibid.,

(32) ibid., p.47.

(33) ibid., p.57.

(34) ibid., p.62.

(36) ibid., p.38.


(41) ibid., p.31.


(44) ibid., pp.644-645.


(48) ibid.,

(49) M C Felderhof (Ed), (1985) Religious Education in a Pluralistic Society London: Hodder and Stoughton, Article by Nipkow, p.29.


CHAPTER 5

(1) Opinion also expressed by Edwin Cox in an interview, 15th May 1990.


(14) ibid., pp.58-59.


(18) ibid., p.49.


(20) The 1988 Education Act, Section 8 (3).


(23) Schedule 1, 1.(2) of the 1988 Act reads: "No such syllabus shall provide for religious education to be given to pupils at such a school by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination; but this provision is not to be taken as prohibiting provision in such a syllabus for the study of such catechisms or formularies."


Chapter 6


(3) ibid., p.19.


(7) ibid., p.3.


(12) ibid., p.33.

(13) ibid., p.49.


(15) ibid., pp.29-30.


(19) ibid., p.33.

(20) ibid., p.37.


(22) British Humanist Society, (1975) *Objective Fair and Balanced* British Humanist Association, p.3.

(23) ibid., p.5.

(24) Association of Christian Teachers, (1990) *Calling or Compromise?* St Albans: Christian Association of Teachers.
CHAPTER 7


(7) The Times, (June 1st 1990) p.7. Article 'Tide Moves in Favour of Private Education.'


(10) ibid.,


(18) ibid., p.61.


(22) N Smart & D Horder (Eds), (1975)*New Movements in Religious Education* London: Temple Smith, Article by P.Gedge, p.50.


CHAPTER 8


(6) ibid., p.52.


(15) ibid.,

(16) ibid.,
CHAPTER 9


(3) ibid., p.10.


(7) ibid., p.105.


(10) ibid., p.69.


(13) ibid., p.1.


(16) ibid., p.43.
(17) ibid., p.45.


(20) ibid., p.151.


(22) Information supplied by Dr.G.A.C.Bettridge, Eton College, Eton.


(24) ibid., p.75.
CHAPTER 10

(1) Letter from Sir Peter Emery to the writer, 22nd May 1990.

(2) ibid., '...I believe that if we wish to stimulate a Christian society then Christian worship at schools needs to be an element of the daily programme for the pupil. Where there are pupils with strong other religious beliefs, whether Jews or Moslems, then, of course, they have the right to contract out of the Christian worship. But I think for the ordinary child it is important to come to grips with and, if possible, understand what Christian prayer and Christian worship is all about.'
CHAPTER 11


(2) Smart N & Horder D (1975) New Movements in

(3) Quoting Hirst in N.Smart and D.Horder, (1975) New
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(4) Smart N & Horder D (1975) New Movements in

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(6) Smart N & Horder D (1975) New Movements in
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(7) Smart N & Horder, D (1975) New Movements in
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Mowbray, p.19.


(10) May P R & Johnston O R (1968) Religion in Our
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(11) Report of Spens Consultative Committee, Board of


(13) Hulmes E (1979) Commitment and Neutrality in
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(14) Crowther Report (1959) quoted in Schools Council
Secondary Schools London: Evans/Methuen, p.16.

(15) British Council of Churches quoted in Schools
Secondary Schools London: Evans/Methuen, p.17.


(20) ibid., p.68.


(24) ibid.,

CHAPTER 13

(1) Note on Confessionalist Schools

Because of the democratic principle and English law it is possible for various faiths to establish their own schools and teach their faith in a Confessionalist style. As argued in Chapter 6 this approach is not truly educational. In addition to this some schools will accept only candidates of a particular faith. This is an unhealthy state of affairs if it means that their young people leave school without knowledge of how other people feel or believe. The chances of inter-reaction in a pluralistic society are essential for understanding and general tolerance. The future of a Belfast type situation frequently depends on the up-and-coming generation. If Belfast had just segregated Roman Catholic and Protestant schools the future would indeed look gloomy.

While the law remains as it is the existence of such schools will continue. The two-subject approach, if it is seen as part of a National Curriculum will help alleviate this problem. Such schools will undoubtedly continue to influence and preach their own brand of faith, but by teaching "Religion and Philosophy" and "Open Forum", will be obliged to educate their pupils to an awareness of other thought forms which they can accept or reject. As Professor Ayer argued, '...it is, indeed, arguable that it is beneficial for the children of Mahommedan, Jewish or agnostic parents to be obliged to learn something about Christianity; but this is an argument that applies better to the stage of secondary education.'(6) It is equally true that Christians should know something about other faiths, and if it is not started at Secondary School it may never happen.


(3) ibid., p.95.


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