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**ANTON MICHAEL MULLER**  
**THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**  
**IN THE INTEGRATED HUMANITIES CURRICULUM**

*Master of Arts - 1991*

An early example of integration is to be found in the attempt to introduce Geography into the curriculum. The most significant writing is that of Halford J. MacKinder who saw in the notion of integration an opportunity for a simplified curriculum and the promotion of right values and curiosity. (MacKinder, 1913). The work was an attempt to provide a general education for a wider range of pupils and stemmed from a genuine concern for the non academic child. Such concern was later addressed in terms of social science but its association with the non academic child was the cause of its downfall.

In order to assess the value of such an approach it is necessary to arrive at an understanding of subjects and the curriculum within the overall aims of education. A study of the philosophical arguments surrounding education suggest that the integration of the curriculum is not logical although the need for wholeness in education is recognised.

If the subjects on the curriculum are to be integrated this necessarily involves a clear understanding of what this means and in particular how this may relate to Religious Education. This latter point requires an understanding of the various approaches to Religious Education which have developed. Only from such an understanding will it be possible to ascertain the particular role of Religious Education within a given scheme of integration.

What is clear is that the possibility for integration is dependent upon a variety of factors. It is clear, for example that the integration of subject content alone is not desirable. An approach is required which carries into the integrated scheme the essence of Religious Education in a way that satisfies the demands of the curriculum and also of those Government Acts relating to the provision of Religious Education in county schools.

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**THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
IN THE INTEGRATED HUMANITIES CURRICULUM**

by

**ANTON MICHAEL MULLER**

**a thesis submitted  
for the degree of**

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**To Gill,  
Elisabeth & Matthew**

**CHAPTER ONE : TRACING THE FACTORS BEHIND THE EMERGENCE OF THE  
INTEGRATED HUMANITIES INDUSTRY**

	Page
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	2
<b>EARLY DAYS</b>	2
the work of MacKinder	2
<b>EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP</b>	5
the emergence of Social Science	6
<b>GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES</b>	8
the Newbolt Report 1926	8
the Hadow Report 1927	10
the Spens Report 1938	10
the Norwood Report 1943	13
<b>THE RISE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE</b>	14
the need for a thinking community : "Citizens for democracy!"	14
an education for the non-academic?	15
the project method :a new synthesis - a new answer?	16
<b>THE FALL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE</b>	17
an unteachable subject?	17
standards & status - the achilles heel of curriculum innovation?	18
<b>WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE R.O.S.L.A. KIDS?</b>	19
Working Paper 11	20
the Goldsmith Curriculum Project	21
IDE and the Fourfold Curriculum	23
<b>SUMMARY</b>	24

CHAPTER TWO :                    **SUBJECTS AND THE CURRICULUM**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>WHAT ARE THE SUBJECTS</b>	<b>27</b>
the arbitrary division of knowledge	27
modes of activity	29
the organization of concepts and skills and logic	31
a framework for free expression?	33
context based learning	34
<b>WHAT IS THE CURRICULUM</b>	<b>36</b>
the purpose of the curriculum	37
the nature of understanding	39
the cognitive and the affective : an approach to wholeness	40
understanding and meaning : the essence of the whole person	42
a vehicle for values:	45
a preparation for society vs autonomy	47
conflicting issues for society and the need for aims	49
<b>PRESENTING THE CURRICULUM</b>	<b>50</b>
the role of the subject	52
the structuring of knowledge	53
the structuring of experience	55
the role of the pupil	57
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>59</b>

**CHAPTER THREE : RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – the subject**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	63
<b>HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</b>	64
the power of the Church	65
from Church to State	66
1944 & the Crisis of War	68
the Sixties : enlightenment or turning point?	70
<b>WHAT IS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b>	73
the problem of identity : the legacy of 1944	73
the changing face of RE and curriculum demand	76
from exclusivism to confessionalism	78
from the curriculum of doom to the meaning of life	83
from collectivism to phenomenology	90
concepts : the power to engender essential meanings?	98
<b>THE ARGUMENT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b>	103
from school to society	103
the demand for autonomy	106
where now for Religious Education?	109
<b>SUMMARY</b>	111

**CHAPTER FOUR :****INTEGRATION**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	113
modes of integration : some definitions	113
<b>SUBJECT INTEGRATION</b>	114
related studies or super subject?	115
avoiding the free-for-all of subject integration	117
<b>WHY INTEGRATE?</b>	118
some practical considerations	118
some educational considerations	119
parochial concerns	121
entering the educational debate	122
<b>APPROACHES TO INTEGRATION</b>	127
integration through the Humanities	127
the integrated studies project Keele	128
Man : a course of study : Bruner	129
mode of integration	130
RE in MACOS	133
the humanities curriculum project	134
mode of integration	135
the possibility for Religious Education	137
<b>TWO SCHOOLS</b>	138
Meopham School	138
mode of integration	139
RE at Meopham	143
-----	
Biddick School	145
mode of integration	145
RE at Biddick	149
<b>SUMMARY</b>	150

**CHAPTER FIVE : THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE  
INTEGRATED HUMANITIES CURRICULUM**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	153
<b>SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS : PROS &amp; CONS</b>	153
pros	153
cons	155
<b>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE INTEGRATED HUMANITIES CURRICULUM</b>	156
an approach through skills and concepts	156
an approach through confessionalism?	158
<b>STUDY OF AN ENGLISH CATHEDRAL THROUGH THE WHOLE CURRICULUM</b>	163
aims	163
an encounter through activity and discovery	166
the Cathedral through Mathematics	169
the Cathedral through Chemistry	170
the Cathedral through Physics	170
the Cathedral through Geography	171
the Cathedral through History	171
so, what is the role of religious education?	172
<b>CONCLUDING REMARKS</b>	173

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**CHAPTER ONE**

**TRACING THE FACTORS BEHIND THE EMERGENCE OF THE  
INTEGRATED HUMANITIES INDUSTRY**



## **INTRODUCTION**

Michael Williams (Williams, 1984) indicates that the discussion concerning integrated courses has been subject to what he called the pendulum phenomenon. Williams recognises that there are times when integration is exceedingly popular with criticism being levelled against the single subject curriculum and times when the single subject approach is strengthened with integration suffering some disdain.

The aim of this section is to trace the roots of the arguments for the Integrated Humanities industry. It will be seen that these are as longstanding as they are wide ranging, beginning as early as the end of the last century.

## **EARLY DAYS**

### **the work of MacKinder**

An early argument for integration and particularly integrated humanities seems to emerge with the attempt to introduce the subject Geography into the curriculum.

In 1887 Halford J MacKinder wrote:

"One of the greatest of all gaps lies between natural sciences and the study of humanity"

(MacKinder, 1887)

MacKinder's main concern was the introduction of Geography into the curriculum as is evident from his writings in 1913, which indicated an earlier attempt to achieve this combination. The combination had

apparently existed for some time as part of the requirements of the entrance to the army. The syllabuses of History and Geography were "mutilated and merely the torsos were put together". The setting of the exam was shared between the two subject teachers producing a hybrid two totally unrelated halves. MacKinder stressed that the opportunity was at hand to develop a real combination in terms of syllabus and examination.

In urging for this combination MacKinder argued that there need be no question of vested interests in connection with the two subjects. He stressed that there was no notion of attacking the teaching of History. MacKinder drew attention to the difficulty already experienced in the establishment of the modern teaching of Geography. The main opposition to the teaching of Geography had apparently arisen from geologists fearing that the geographers were making inroads upon their classes.

The argument is based round the fear of losing subject identity and it will be seen that this is an objection that has continued to be raised by subject specialists almost continually ever since.

The course that MacKinder envisaged was intended for the upper half of the elementary education and the lower tiers of secondary education:

"In those stages of education let us have one subject but let that subject be taught by a teacher who has learnt both Geography and History, and learnt them separately."

(MacKinder, 1913, p5)

What was envisaged in MacKinder's thesis was the integration of a literary subject and a scientific subject thus bridging the gap between the sciences and the humanities.

In terms of History and Geography MacKinder indicated that each subject would be illustrative of the other. The idea is that events of the present spring out of the past and have consequences for the future. In order to understand these events clearly, one needs to understand the geographical surroundings and the part that these have to play in determining the course of History. History is brought to bear upon Geography, whilst Geography may be used to illuminate History. (p7).

The approach could be achieved by selecting:

"the really great facts of the past and the present and teaching them not dry as dust but as dramas of life and scenery".

(MacKinder, 1913, p7).

MacKinder supported his case for the unifying of Geography and History by suggesting that the approach would simplify the curriculum. The aim of the approach was to produce a "kind of humane teaching". This was to be understood as a general education appropriate for the majority of pupils.

The implication of MacKinder's argument is that the single subject approach is only really appropriate to those pupils wishing to specialize at university level. For the majority of pupils what is important is that they have been instilled with a will and a desire to learn:

"... they are going out into the world and ought to be sent out curious in regard to that world."

(MacKinder, 1913, p6).

Behind much of MacKinder's thinking lay the desire for engendering the right sort of citizenship. Being curious of one's world is to be contrasted with simple acceptance.

It was MacKinder's concern that education should equip the community with a sense of perspective and proportion which would enable it to "appreciate its leaders and throw up the right leaders". (p8) It is the task of education, therefore, to produce citizens who are trained sufficiently to distinguish the clap-trap from reality and so trained be intolerant of the wrong kind of leader.

It is not clear which was MacKinder's main concern. His initial argument for integration may be understood as an attempt to establish a place for Geography in the curriculum. It is clear however that the thinking moves away from such parochial concerns and the argument for integration becomes, instead, the means by which the pupil develops into a free thinking and independent citizen.

MacKinder concluded his paper thus:

"... what you have to teach is not History and not Geography, but to give an outlook on to this great richly vital, concrete world into which your students are going to live their busy lives. Let no examiner sunder your teachings into separate subjects, which exist only in books and not in the real world.

(MacKinder, 1913, p9)

#### **EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP**

Not many years later the Hadow Report of 1927 was to call for an approach which moved away from what it described as an "Education of Submission". The report complained that schools were lagging behind the needs of society and that not enough was being done to help young people understand their own complex world. It seemed, rather, that the

young in state schools were being falsely indoctrinated into accepting their lot.

The government was seen to be guilty of using education as a means of keeping the lower classes servile and incapable of independent thought. E.J.R. Eaglesham (1965), describes the introduction of elementary education as an attempt to gentle the masses, an "education for followership" to instil the ideas of "respect for the property of their betters" whereas the aim of public school education was not education for followership but "education for leadership".

According to Johnson, (1970, in Lawton, 1978, p116) Victorian obsession with the education of the poor is best understood as a concern about power and authority.

The rise in totalitarianism in Europe was an alarming development which could have disastrous consequences in a country where its populace were already conditioned to be servile and accepting. The situation in Europe was seen as a threat to democracy in Britain which led British educationalists to place their emphasis upon the teaching of the right democratic values.

### **the emergence of Social Science**

By 1935 a group, founded by Sir Ernest Simon and Mrs Eva Hubback in 1934, called the Association for World Citizenship had published a paper entitled "Education for World Citizenship". The association's concern was for:

"the study of and training in Citizenship, by which is meant training in the moral qualities necessary for the citizens of a democracy, the encouragement of clear thinking in everyday affairs and the acquisition of that knowledge of the modern world usually given by means of courses in History, Geography, citizenship and public affairs."

(Lawton, 1978, p117)

It stands today as the first well-reasoned case for the teaching of Social Sciences in schools. As will become apparent, Social Science is often understood in terms of integration and at this stage it consisted of the subject matter of History, Geography, Citizenship and Public Affairs. The traditional approach to the teaching of History and Geography were deemed by the association as insufficient. The main concern of this paper was for the proper training of children about to enter, and interact with, a complex political world.

F.C. Happold writes about "a real training for participating citizenship" (Happold, 1935, p68). The point of education is not to learn Geography, History or English, but to learn how to live. Happold related in his paper his experience of the introduction of Social Studies to replace Geography, History and English. The course is integrated in order:

"to give the boy a knowledge and understanding of his own age, considered not in isolation but in relation to its origins".

(Happold, 1935, p68)

Happold argued that subjects, as separate sections of the curriculum, existed only as a result of the method by which they had been introduced. Each had "crept in" as a separate subject and as such had remained. The suggestion here is that there is no educational justification for a single subject curriculum, it is, rather, an accident of history.

The flavour of Happold's writings seem to emerge from the background of a troubled Europe. He writes of the need to instil in the pupil something of the institutions through which his own and other countries' men are governed.

The pupil should be conversant in social, economic and political problems. Happold saw these as essential for the establishment of "right citizenship" (p69). It is the process of acquiring that knowledge which will equip the pupil with a sound mental and emotional training. This process, one may assume, was the integrated approach to learning.

#### **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES**

In searching for factors which may lead to the emergence of integration one logically searches the various government reports on education. The reports presented here outline the state of education at various points, from the 1920's onwards, identifying particular problem areas with some suggestion as to how to deal with them. Generally speaking it has been other parties who sought to address the problems in education in terms of integration. The reports stand as important documents which highlight the plight of education.

#### **the Newbolt Report 1926**

The Newbolt Report (Board of Education, 1926) makes the following statement:

"We are aware that we are opposing ourselves to those for whom the idea of a liberal education is inseparable from a knowledge of Classics... We are convinced... that we must look elsewhere for our present purpose. The time is past for holding... that the Classics alone can furnish a liberal education. We do not believe that those who have studied the Classics... must necessarily fail to win from their native English a full measure of culture and humane training... English we are convinced, must form the essential basis of liberal education for all English people, and in the earlier stages of education it should be the principle functions of all schools of whatever type to provide this basis."

(Newbolt Report, 1926, paras 12, 13)

Anthony Adams, (1976), has suggested that the beginnings of the development of the Humanities can be traced from these words. Adams argues that up until this time the term "the Humanities" was synonymous with the term "the Classics". It was Classics that had provided an integrated education of a particular kind. It is now English that is hailed as the centre, or axis, of the modern humanities curriculum.

This was certainly the point made by Happold who wrote:

"The English subjects master is the old Classical form master in a new dress. English, instead of the language of Greece and Rome, becomes the basic study of the curriculum. The English subjects master takes his boys in the English subjects for some ten periods a week in the same way as the old Classical master took his boys in Latin and Greek language, Literature and History... not only is this English subjects synthesis an obvious reform of one section of the curriculum, it is also a return to a more excellent and more human form of education."

(Happold, 1951, p22)

Happold stressed in the preface to his book that what he was describing was the outcome of thirty years experiment in schools. Happold's work is based largely on that of George Sampson who had in 1921 wrote:

"Although a common school is impractical, a common basis of education is not. The one common basis of common culture is the common tongue."

(Sampson, 1921 p61)

It is worth noting that Sampson was later part of the Newbolt Committee of 1926, mentioned above.

Much of Happold's work is based upon his activities as Headmaster of Bishop Wordsworth School, Salisbury, and is detailed in his paper Heritage and Environment. Happold was concerned with the integration of English, History, Geography and to some extent Religious Education as a means of teaching the essential English skills.

### **the Hadow Report 1927**

The Hadow Report of 1927 (Board of Education, 1927) with reference to the new modern schools envisaged the emergence of imaginative curricula freed from the influence of the external examinations. It called for courses that recognised the needs of the less able. The report stated:

"It should be the aim of schools to provide such an education by means of a curriculum containing large opportunities for practical work and closely related to living interests."

(Board of Education, 1927, p108)

### **the Spens Report 1938**

The Spens Report, (Board of Education, 1938) restated the views of the Hadow Committee of 1931 when it called for a curriculum based on activity and experience rather than on "knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored" (p152/3). It emphasised the need for "originated activity rather than didacticism" (p155). It urged for flexibility in the public examination systems to allow for courses designed to bring out modes of creative activity by contrast to the arid techniques and excess of details of existing courses.

The report expressed some concern for the failure of schools to meet the needs of the ever widening range of ability in both grammar and technical schools. It seems to the authors of the report that too much emphasis was being placed on education as a preparation for university or some other form of higher education. This was, as has already been shown, the point which MacKinder was stressing when he urged for a more general and simplified curriculum.

The report made the following criticisms:

"... education which corresponds neither to the circumstances of the pupil nor to the needs of modern civilisation... we think too much of education in terms of information and too little in terms of feeling and taste; the curriculum is too diffuse in some directions and too narrow in others, too rigid and too much dictated by examination requirements... there is a strong tendency to adjust the pupil to the curriculum rather than to the needs and abilities of the pupil, and in particular that the needs of the less academic pupil receive inadequate attention."

(Board of Education, 1938, p144/5)

The report made its own suggestions as to how these problems could be met. It may be argued that educationalists have responded to these suggestions in terms of integration viewing it, perhaps too readily, as a kind of educational panacea.

"There is a need for courses which will bring out the essential characters of those modes of creative activity and illustrate the part they play in the business of mankind... we contemplate a flexibility in the public examinations which would permit these, possibly unexaminable, courses to be taken.

(Board of Education, 1938, p156)

The Report itself does not advocate the integration of the curriculum (p159) but it does talk about the schools as a place where the pupils share a common life which is itself subject to a constitution. This constitution is described as that to which all are in their several ways consenting and co-operating parties. Purposes are pursued which,

though not coincident, are nevertheless correlated (p146).

To such an end the "project method", a method which may adopt an integrated model, is regarded as having a very useful role. The authors of this report seem hesitant to develop this point, allegiance would seem to remain with the traditional subject method which is understood as representing a tradition of practical, aesthetic and intellectual activity. As such:

"... they should be pursued actively and not merely assimilated by memory..."

(Board of Education, 1938,p159)

The Spens Report did not suggest an abandonment of the traditional approach but rather to find a satisfactory way to modify it. It accepted that the integration of the curriculum has its uses in terms of economy and the complementary elucidation of different points of view, but it is concerned that the distinctive character of each subject should not be lost. However, the authors do suggest that each school should adopt a unifying principle in its curriculum and this should be found in the teaching of English and the English subjects. This was precisely the point made by Happold, as shown above. In summary, the Spens Report reiterated the concern that the school timetable should not be filled up with periods of formal instruction. It stated that the examinations should follow the curriculum and not determine it. A curriculum which adopts the concerns of this report, perhaps best summarised as an attempt to bring school studies into closer contact with the practical affairs of life, will also adopt the concerns about "education for citizenship", the demands of which would most probably be met.

### the Norwood Report 1943

The Norwood Report, (Board of Education, 1943) by contrast, was quite tolerant of working relationships between subjects. It condemned the competitiveness which existed between subjects in these terms:

"In the first place, subjects have tended to become preserves belonging to specialist teachers; barriers have been erected between them, and teachers have felt unqualified or not free to trespass upon the dominion of other teachers. The specific values of each subject have been pressed to the neglect of values common to several or all. The school course has come to resemble the "hundred yards" course, each subject following a track marked off from the others by a tape. In the meantime, we feel, the child is apt to be forgotten.

In the second place a certain sameness in the curricula of schools seems to have resulted from the double necessity of finding a place for the many subjects competing for time in the curriculum and the need for those subjects to do so in a way and to such a standard as will ensure success in the school certificate examination. Under these necessities the curriculum has settled down into an uneasy equilibrium, the demands of the specialists and subjects and examinations being nicely adjusted and compensated.

While acknowledging that specialism has certain strengths... the common ground of subjects, "the seed bed learning should not be neglected".

(Board of Education, 1943, p61)

The Report was not wholly in support of integrating the Curriculum. Rather, if anything was to be integrated it was to be the personality of the child by bringing about for that child the realisation of his purpose as a human being.

The Report, like others before it, was concerned that the attention paid to the weighing of subjects in relation to each other was regarded as more important than the needs of the pupil:

"We deplore the exaggerated importance which has been given to subjects. They seem to have built round themselves vested rights and interests of their own... we feel that specialist claims have created specialist minds which have tended to see education as divided into compartments or departments preoccupied with specific ends... ends common to several subjects... have tended to receive less than their due attention.

(Norwood Report. 1943, p62)

### **THE RISE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE**

**the needs for a thinking community: "Citizens for democracy!"**

Charmion Cannon (1964) has surveyed the progress and development of education between the 1930's and the 1950's with particular reference to the rise and fall of Social Science. Cannon observes that there seems to have been two main motivations behind the desire for more social relevance in the curriculum. firstly the desire to educate "citizens for democracy" and secondly, although not to the same extent the desire to equip young people to cope with the complex environment that they will soon enter.

As indicated above it was the crisis of war that most influenced the literature of the 1930's onwards. Cannon writes:

"Public discussion was preoccupied with the challenge to democracy... education was expected to save the nation by producing the right values and attitudes".

(Cannon, 1964, p18)

Cannon cites two reports published shortly after the end of the second world war which indicate the concern that Cannon describes:

"Totalitarianism has convinced us of the need to make future citizens love democracy ideals of freedom, justice, kindness, self-sacrifice and truth must be brought out over and over again."

(The Council for Curriculum Reform, 1945, p177)

"Young citizens must not only be loyal to democracy, but must be educated for world citizenship by the cultivation of an international outlook; for we have reached a crisis that may bring civilization down."

(Ministry of Education, 1949 in Cannon, 1964, p19)

### **an education for the non academic?**

The second concern that Cannon draws attention to is concerned with the problems of adolescence, particularly in relation to the young school leaver. This problem was given some urgency by the establishment of "education for all" under the Education Act on 1944. Cannon writes:

"... the raising of the school leaving age, and the increasing focus on further education... presented educationalists with the problem of retraining the involvement in their schooling, of non-academic adolescents looking forward to the adult world."

(Cannon, 1964, p20)

There are at least two points that emerged clearly from this period. Firstly, there seems to be the feeling that the content of traditional subjects should be selected with a greater eye to its relevance, and that subject barriers should be broken down to produce a new synthesis. The Ministry of Education pamphlet "Citizens Growing Up", saw the combination of History and Geography "as the answer to the how and why of the local corporate life and of the national life which is the subject matter of citizenship".

This approach, was very much part of a "progressive movement" which arose in the 1930's. The second point had already been raised in the government reports of this time, (Hadow 1931, Spens 1938) and was manifested in terms of pressure to find teaching methods in which children learned through experience, not as passive recipients of facts.

The movement saw the traditional subject barriers as artificial and urged a freer approach to subjects. It was observed that this could in part be achieved through the project method which was already gaining ground by the late 1940's.

**the project method: a new synthesis - a new answer?**

The project method seems to have been hailed as the new broom destined to sweep away the cobwebs of an aged and creaking educational institution represented by the traditional subject based curriculum. The project method seemed to represent a clear scientific approach which was vital to the brave new world into which society was entering.

the approach constituted:

"the collection and collation of facts, the consultation of sources of knowledge, the interpretation of evidence, the establishment of principles, the analysis and synthesis involved, the realization that the requirements of an investigation demands at some stage the mastery of a technique before further progress can be made."

(Cannon, 1964, p21)

It is this method which had come to be identified with Social Studies, understood at an early stage to be:

"... a synthesis: a broad highway to a working knowledge of life in its widest sense. The quality of social studies differs from the isolated subject teaching... in being Discovery... of those aspects of life related to the experience of children.

(Nicholson, 1949, p5)

This certainly represents a development since Spens which saw the project method as an integrated approach within a specific area rather than the approach and method of that area itself.

## **THE FALL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE**

### **an unteachable subject?**

Despite the popularity that Social Studies and the methods associated with it enjoyed, Cannon observes that by the mid-fifties "the enthusiasm had failed and was replaced by disillusionment".

Cannon suggests two reasons in particular for this decline in popularity. Firstly, the "amorphous nature" of Social Studies made it unteachable, inaccessible and overwhelming by its sheer mass. Hemming's objectives (Hemming, 1949) for Social Studies illustrate Cannon's point only too well, No.6 reads as follows:

"To foster the development of spontaneity, self reliance, flexibility of mind, clear thinking, tolerance, initiative, articulateness, adventurousness of outlook, courage in the face of new problems, enjoyment of creative activity, sound standards of action and appreciation, world mindedness, a sense of purpose and a philosophy of life."

(Hemming, 1949, p25)

This problem represents little more than the birth pangs which any new course must expect to face. Cannon's observation suggests a far more

serious and intractable problem in the form of social and economic pressure which ultimately led to an increasing concern for standards.

**standards and status: the achilles heel of curriculum innovation?**

Social Studies courses and methods were very much associated with the non academic child and so tended to be dropped or discouraged in the attempt by secondary schools to close the status gap dividing them from Grammar Schools. Charity James refers to this decline of the Social Studies, as "the murder of a beautiful hypothesis" (James 1968) and the murderer was the school examination system:

"When the movement was at its height the schools which offered it were not permitted to present their pupils for public examinations (on the grounds that this would distort the pupils' schooling). Social Studies was something special for the non-examination pupil".

(James, 1968, p133)

Charity James was not so much concerned with the rise and fall of Social Studies as she was with the implications behind it. She argued that the factors which have produced such courses and methods indicated that there were two kinds of children to be educated... the academic and the non-academic. This is the basis of the Norwood Report (1943) and is equally apparent in the Crowther Report (1958) whilst it dominates the Newsom Report (1963). The attitude is perhaps best summed up in the teachers' plaintiff cry "what do we do with the ROSLA kids?" The answer comes in terms of social studies courses (of which integrated studies should be assumed to be part) with no exam (therefore no status) for the non-academic child.

The young lives at stake as far as James was concerned were the ones regarded as being outside the normal scope of education; the non-

academic children. James' comment perhaps highlights a third reason for the decline of Social Science, which is linked to the problem of status, and that is the demand for specialist courses.

Charmion Cannon (1946) had already pointed out that development in education did not seem to learn from the past and in summing up her section on the failure of Social Studies, claims:

"a subject... identified with the non-academic child had little chance of success in the English education system."

(Cannon, 1964, p30)

James appeared a little more cynical than this when she pointed out that the study of society is not required by those whom a divisive society through a divisive education destines to be its leaders: "it is required only by those doomed to be led" (James, 1968, p135).

#### **WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THE R.O.S.L.A. KIDS?**

With the further raising of the school leaving age (intended for 1968 but put off until 1972) much literature was produced to prepare teachers for this event; in particular the Schools Council Working Paper No.2, "The Raising of the School Leaving Age" much of which was restated in Working Paper 11, "Society and the Young School Leaver". This looked particularly at the role of integrated programmes for those pupils in their last two years at school. Charity James warned that as with Social Studies courses of the past:

"We may expect a similar disenchantment today... if teachers fail to realise that the Schools Council's proposals of the Humanities programme for the Raising of the School Leaving Age exhibit identical failings."

(James, 1968, p139)

The 1944 Education Act included in it the raising of the school leaving

age from fourteen to fifteen. This presented teachers with the problem of how to cater effectively for the needs of a group of basically non-academic school children. It was inevitable that the same problems should arise with the raising of the leaving age from fifteen to sixteen in the early seventies (1970-1971).

### **working paper 11**

Working Paper 11 (Schools Council, 1966,) was written as part of the Schools Council's attempt to prepare teachers for the raising of the school leaving age, particularly in the area of Humanities. It envisaged an integrated approach to course work as the most suitable approach for "those in the last year or two of school who do not take O-level examinations." (para 30. It is on just such a point that Charity James criticised the report. The report is here recommending a course designed for the non-academic child and therefore a course holding no status. The report recommended that:

"... the school be equipped with modern aids and has members of staff in departments of English, RE, History and Geography who would be prepared to co-operate in a new scheme..."

(Schools Council, 1966, para 3)

The main objective of the working party was concerned with the attitudes, experiences, skill and knowledge are important in adult life, to society as well as to the individual. The authors paid much attention to the need to find what was likely to be of interest to the young school leaver. The situation at the time found the pupil:

"... at best apathetic, at worst resentful of the History, Geography and Religious Education which appear on his timetable and yet seem to have nothing to do with the adult life he is soon to join."

(Schools Council, 1966, para 12)

The cause of this attitude is seen to lie with the traditional belief

that there is a body of content for each subject which every young leaver should know (para 13). The authors are also wary of those integrated courses where the relation in studies is somewhat contrived. For example Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn might constitute the literature studies in conjunction with the study of the History and Geography of the USA.

The aims of the working paper are given on p39:

"The ultimate goal is an integrated syllabus in the humanities, not in order to create a new subject of doubtful parentage but to lay all the old subjects and many of the newer disciplines under tribute and answer the real questions in which the pupils can be interested."

(Schools Council, 1966, p39)

The paper stressed values and attitudes and the ability to learn, rather than an exact body of knowledge to be learnt. This is reminiscent of the process approach mentioned above and particularly the approach envisaged by MacKinder fifty years previously. The authors of the working paper regarded subject material as of little concern to the young school leaver, rather they should enter the world with a measure of intellectual extension so that they might comprehend the complexity and totality of man's civilisation and environment. There seems little difference between the working paper proposals and the earlier education for citizenship proposals indicated above.

#### **the Goldsmith Curriculum Project**

The raising of the school leaving age is the main focus of attention for Charity James in her book "Young Lives at Stake". It is this development in education that brought about many of the ideas produced by the University of London, Goldsmith's Curriculum Laboratory.

Between 1965 and 1968 the Department of Education and Science (DES) invited Goldsmith's College to undertake a full-time pilot course for experienced teachers to consider the needs of the young school leaver. In the preface to her book Charity James wrote:

"... education of all adolescents should have a high priority in educational change... no less than the education of statutory leavers".

(James, 1968, p7)

James was concerned that, at the time, there was no model of secondary schooling that was remotely in line with growing understanding of what human living might become or that was relevant to the continuing change. Education was tied to the traditions of the past:

"... the creative teacher contributes fully to the making of tomorrow's culture not by enslaving himself to the current demands of today's culture but by being open to the needs and potential of the young."

(James, 1968, p8)

James recognised the dangers of a society that is not person centred, particularly when that society is understood within the context of a society that can achieve genocide or can totally manipulate and use communities. As seemed to be the case during the period of the war-time crisis it is tempting to read into this the proposal for an educational programme in response to what is clearly seen as the emergence of a threatening element within society.

James' remarks reiterated those already made by Mackinder, as shown above in her paper, that teachers make education fully human. Teachers must seek to draw out the strengths and talents of all young people, to enable them to acquire the intellectual, practical and social skills that they need. James is basically advocating an approach that has already recurred many times through this text, a process approach in

which children learn how to learn.

The resources that the young people need in order to live at ease with an ever changing world are to be found within themselves. The time to respond to the young peoples' need is now:

"... on the one hand, not failed O Level or failed B.A., but failed humanity... we must not miss the moment. Young lives are at stake."

(James, 1986, p9)

### **IDE and the fourfold curriculum**

Having identified the problem, which is perhaps still "what do we do with the ROSLA kids?", the purpose of the book is to map out the work of Interdisciplinary Enquiry (IDE) and the Fourfold Curriculum as a new approach to education which will cater for all pupils.

David Warwick describes IDE as the most extreme form of interdisciplinary work in the secondary school; (Warwick, 1973, p2) a carrying over into that sector of the primary school integrated day.

The "fourfold curriculum" advocated by James and her team aimed to provide "comprehensive education for diverse children without divisiveness" (James, 1968, p132).

The approach did not set itself up in opposition to the single subject approach, rather the barriers between subjects merely fade away as the "work necessarily becomes interdisciplinary" (p128).

James was in fact critical of the movement towards the integration of

subject matter which she regarded as clumsy and "anti-intellectual" (p142). In this context, integration is understood in terms of the fourfold curriculum in which four interrelated cells contribute to the total emotional and intellectual development of the pupil.

Integration in this context includes not only the sharing of discipline areas but the integration of the pupil himself with the environment:

The four cells are:

1. Interdisciplinary Studies: IDE (Interdisciplinary Enquiry) and IDM (Interdisciplinary Making)
2. Autonomous Studies (interdisciplinary studies)
3. Remedial Education or "Clinic" (this is understood as education related to special needs)
4. Special-Interest Studies or 'Orbital Studies'

(James, 1968, p127)

It was envisaged that IDE/M would take up nearly fifty per cent of the school timetable and it is this that would provide the synthesising element in the curriculum. As Warwick had observed the result of the approach which James advocated is something very similar to the primary school integrated day transferred to the secondary school curriculum. James emphasised the phrase "Centres of Interest", advocating an approach which places the child, not the subject, as the core of the curriculum.

## **SUMMARY**

The concept of integration as an approach to learning is to be identified with the attempt to introduce Geography onto the Curriculum. MacKinder's claim was that this approach would simplify the curriculum and make it accessible to the majority of pupils rather than the minority of those wishing to specialize. The aim was to create

thinking citizens who would enter the world curious about it. This was taken up by the Hadow Report which expressed concern about a curriculum which it saw as "education for submission". A different approach to learning is required to teach "right values" and free thinking.

The Association for World Citizenship (1934) founded against a background of increasing totalitarianism in Europe advocated the teaching of Social Studies to instil a sense of right citizenship. As expressed by Happold, Social Studies was seen as a synthesis of History, Geography and English. This synthesis is outlined by the Newbolt Report of 1926 in terms of the synthesis of English subjects.

Government Reports from the thirties do not necessarily advocate the integration of the curriculum but the conditions they described have been approached by others in terms of integration.

The raising of the school leaving age created the problem of dealing with the non-academic school leaver and produced a variety of responses. Most notably the establishment of the Schools Council which paid particular attention to the creation of integrated courses particularly within the Humanities but also the Sciences as well.

Other responses include the work of the Goldsmith Curriculum Laboratory in terms of IDE which aimed for the integration of subject disciplines but also the integration of pupils within their environment. The concern was to provide a curriculum model for all children envisaged as "a diverse education without divisiveness".

**CHAPTER TWO**

**SUBJECTS AND THE CURRICULUM,**

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is the aim of this chapter to establish what is meant by the notion of a "subject". What will become evident fairly quickly is that it is no straightforward task to explain what is meant by the term "subject". Subjects called by the same name at different times and in different places do not necessarily refer to the same thing. It is necessary to discern what makes up a subject and what is required to warrant its place on the curriculum.

## **WHAT ARE SUBJECTS?**

### **arbitrary divisions of knowledge**

Many will agree that most of the subjects on the school curriculum exist for no other reason than historical accident. If no sound educational justification can be found for the existence of a given subject then one might rationally question the continued existence of that subject on the curriculum.

Ivor Goodson presents three hypotheses:

"Firstly, subjects are not monolithic entities but shifting amalgamations of sub-groups and traditions. These groups within the subject influence and change boundaries and priorities. Secondly, that in the process of establishing a school subject base, subject groups tend to move from promoting pedagogic and utilitarian traditions towards the academic tradition. The need for the subject to be viewed as a scholarly discipline will impinge on both the promotional rhetoric and the process of subject definition, most crucially during the passage to subject and discipline establishment. Thirdly, that, in the cases studied, much of the curriculum debate can be interpreted in terms of conflict between subjects over status, resources and territory."

(Goodson, 1983, p3)

The first hypothesis is rather as Niblett expressed when he suggested that the same label on the bottle does not necessarily denote the same contents. It is tempting to suggest, therefore, that subjects are not governed by contents. (Niblett, 1954, p103)

Phenix talks about a set of intelligible standards, the characteristic activity of an identifiable organised tradition of men of knowledge. (Phenix, 1964, p10). It is interesting to note that the notion of activity is stressed here, rather than a body of content, which is perceived as the essence of the subject.

Hirst describes subjects as logically cohesive disciplines; a discipline is something created by a community of scholars which is then transcribed for school use. This suggests that the subject is not an end in itself but a convenient way to regard educational activity. This educational activity will be seen to involve learning to think in ways distinctive of particular subjects. (Hirst, 1974, p117)

The simplest answer to the question at this stage is that it is not possible to define what a subject is other than a code of practice. A subject is perhaps the means by which learning is organized and presented. It may be correct to understand the subject as a process or methodology given the three hypotheses and the simple definitions above.

Subjects may be understood as the means by which the curriculum is broken down and conveyed to the pupil. Hirst and Peters define subjects as a breakdown of the curriculum into a number of limited tasks of manageable proportions. It would seem that there is little to

be said beyond this:

"Whatever their character may be, subjects...must be seen as units constructed simply for educational purposes. They have no ultimate value outside this context."

(Hirst & Peters, 1970, p69)

It would be erroneous however to assume that the break down into subjects indicates a specific group of objectives. As will be examined later, Hirst and Peters suggest that under the headings English, Geography or Religious Education, for example, several types of understanding may be sought at once.

This is precisely the point made by John Dewey, (1933) who like Whitehead before him, suggested that subjects are the means by which the curriculum is broken down and related to the pupil. To attribute special rights to the subject itself however would be erroneous:

"It is desirable to expel the notion that some subjects are inherently intellectual and hence possessed of an almost magical power to train the faculty of thought. Thinking is specific, not a machine-like ready-made apparatus to be turned indifferently at will upon all subjects."

(Dewey, 1933, P46).

The suggestion is that the subject carries no value by itself but serves only to contribute to the whole.

### **modes of activity?**

Dewey argued that the growth of the mind was accomplished through the assimilation of the logical organization of subject matter just as the body depends on food for its growth. He regarded all subjects as intellectual, not in terms of their fixed structure but in terms of their function, in other words their power to stimulate and direct "significant inquiry and reflection". This would seem to reinforce the

view presented by Niblett and certainly that of Whitehead that the subject is essentially part of a methodology, a means to an end and not an end in itself. A problem only occurs when that end is limited, as already indicated, to an examination syllabus.

It might be argued that a possible understanding of what is meant by subjects is discernible here. Subjects are modes of activity in which the function is the important element. The alternative is to view subjects as labels indicating some nebulous area of content.

Dewey recognised three main areas of activity which he used as a way to group subjects:

Firstly, the acquisition of "skill in performance" typified by school arts, reading, writing, figuring and music. Second, the "acquisition of knowledge", understood as informational studies which includes such subjects as geography and history.

Thirdly, the "development of abstract thinking" understood as disciplinary studies and incorporating such subjects as arithmetic and formal grammar.

Any one subject may possess all of these aspects, but each group has its own pitfalls. Skill studies may become purely mechanical, informational studies may fail to develop wisdom whilst disciplinary studies are all too often conceived as something abstract and remote divorced from the everyday world. In particular, skill studies may all too easily be reduced to such things as neatness, accuracy, promptness and uniformity with these things conceived as ends-in-themselves. The result is a somewhat artificial form of education:

"...sheer imitation, dictation of steps to be taken, mechanical drill, may give results most quickly, and yet strengthen traits which are fatal to reflective power."

(Dewey, 1933, p62)

Similarly, informational studies may too easily become the acquisition and storing up of knowledge in which the pupil is merely the recipient of useless facts.

Hirst and Peters argue that experience and knowledge is differentiated into a number of distinct forms; subjects may represent a convenient way of conveying these forms. To organise the curriculum in terms of these forms, however, is not considered to be the most suitable approach. Such an approach:

"...would do scant justice to the complex interrelations between the modes..."

(Hirst & Peters, 1970, p69)

### **the organization of concepts, skills and logic**

It is interesting to note the issues raised by the Spens Report of 1938. In particular it reiterated the committee's earlier statement that subjects should not be conceived as knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored. This is not to say that intellectual learning does not include the amassing and retention of information. The process of education demands just such an activity but, unless it is understood, it remains an undigested burden. Knowledge is only that which is comprehended.

Subjects, in Dewey's understanding, are part of a process in which learning means "learning to think". There is a necessary connection between the process of thinking and the intellectual product, a connection which is all too often overlooked.

On the one hand there is a school of thought which says that the mind is naturally illogical in its processes and as such needs logic impressed upon it in the form of ready made material and ready made logical formulations.

"...it is assumed that by some magic its logical character will be transferred into the minds of the pupils."

(Dewey, 1933, p80)

White has identified this as support for "knowledge for its own sake" (White, 1982, p9). The idea is developed a little more rationally by Hirst (1965, p126) and Peters (1966, p164) in terms of the transcendental argument which claims that knowledge is intrinsically worthwhile. White's objection is that it is not clear why knowledge has to be sought for its own sake (p10) and that there is nothing to show that knowledge possession is good in itself. (p11)

Such an approach places knowledge at the centre of the aim of education with little account given to the place of the pupil. If the pupil has not been part of the "process" whereby the logical formulations have been reached the suggestion here is that it is unlikely that the pupil will have learned anything of any real value.

Dewey illustrated the point further:

Suppose the subject is Geography. The first thing is to give it definition, marking it off from every other subject. Then the various abstract terms, upon which depends the scientific development of the science, are stated and defined one by one - pole, equator, ecliptic zone - from the simpler units to the more complex that are formed out of them; then the more concrete elements are taken in similar series... continent, island, coast, promontory, cape... and so on. In acquiring this material the pupil's mind is supposed not only to gain important information, but, by accommodating itself to ready-made logical definitions, generalizations, and classifications, gradually also to acquire logical habits."

(Dewey, 1933, p80)

It is probably not far from the truth to suggest that every subject taught in schools operates along similar lines. In these terms the logical is identified exclusively with certain formal properties of subject matter. The key words in this scheme of things are discipline, restraint, conscious effort and the necessity of tasks. Under this arrangement subjects themselves become the logical factor in education; they become ends in themselves to which the mind is forced to conform.

**a framework for free expression?**

On the other hand Dewey recognized a second school of thought which basically advocated an opposite approach but also maintained that the mind is naturally averse to logical form. Dewey described this as an approach which merely gives free play to impulses and desires without any regard to intellectual growth. This could perhaps be the outcome if too much emphasis were given to emotional perception to the exclusion of all else.

The approach emphasizes freedom, self expression, interest, natural unfolding and so on and has little time for organized subject matter. It is interesting that Dewey regarded this approach as erroneous.

White suggests that children learn best "when left maximally free to follow their own interests" (White 1982, p31).

Understanding what is meant by logic is also bound up with an understanding of meaning and values. Subjects may be understood as a means for conveying meaning and values. A clear illustration is to be found when one considers children's drawings. The young child is not concerned with perspective because the interest is not in the pictorial

representation, rather the concern is for the values of the things represented.

"The house is drawn with transparent walls, because the rooms, chairs, beds, people inside are the important things in the house meaning; smoke always comes out of the chimney - otherwise why have a chimney at all? At Christmas time, the stockings may be drawn almost as large as the house... it is the scale of values in use that furnishes the scale for their qualities. The drawings are diagrammatic reminders of these values, not impartial records of physical and sensory qualities."

(Dewey, 1933, pp143/144)

From this it is possible to argue that the content of the subject is merely the vehicle for handling concepts and values. The subject demands of the pupil the acquisition of certain skills which are appropriate to it to convey those meanings and values. The question which will have to be examined later is whether those skills, concepts and values are unique to any given subject.

### **a context for learning?**

A question arises when in addition to meaning and values the notion of context is taken into account. Values, Dewey argued, are context based with context deriving from objects and actions. Association with context implies use, for example the putting on of a hat for going outside. In the course of time words which were context-based become capable of supplying the context. It can be seen that things gain meaning by their use. Dewey refers to this as "means consequence", the operations by which things become understood. Dewey's argument is that it is the role of the curriculum, through the subjects that represent it, to bring about means-consequence. Understanding is stimulated and challenged when confronted with a consequence for which a means has to be found by inquiry or reflection. The question is whether consequence

is bound up with given subjects; the logical answer is "no they are not" which then throws open the question as to the nature and purpose of subjects.

Unfortunately, as Dewey noted, many schools fall short of this objective. Rather than establish contexts for learning subjects all too often consist of routine and externally dictated activity which fails to promote understanding. At best, school subjects do little more than provide a kind of "mechanical dexterity" in applying set rules and manipulating symbols. Dewey observed:

It is assumed, too frequently, that subject matter is understood when it has been stored in memory and can be reproduced upon demand. The net outcome... is that nothing is really known except in so far as it is understood."

(Dewey, 1933, p148)

Every subject aims at providing its own specialized set of concepts that are "keys to understanding the phenomena that are classified in each field" [area of study]. Dewey maintained that these concepts consist of meanings and principles that are closely connected to the extent that any one implies some other. This is perhaps similar to Whitehead's notion of the seamless cloak of knowledge. A problem occurs when facts are separated from meaning. In this situation facts become a dead weight of "undigested mechanical, largely verbal, so called information". Ideas (concepts) become so remote from objects and acts of experience that they are empty. The subject all too easily becomes overloaded with statements of facts and laws in the hope that at some later time the mind will find some use for them.

The least that can be said thus far is that subjects represent the means by which the curriculum is related and conveyed to the pupils. It is, therefore necessary to understand the purpose of the curriculum and indeed of education.

### **WHAT IS THE CURRICULUM**

In the context of the classroom it is probably fair to say that the subject-based curriculum is the "traditional" curriculum with which most secondary teachers are familiar. Such a curriculum implies specialist teachers, and a strong desire to preserve the discipline and their standards.

It is the aim of this section to show that the curriculum enshrines far more than the subjects which are taken as representative of it. In attempting to identify what is meant by the curriculum it will be seen to be clear that the aim of the curriculum and the aim of education are one and the same. Subjects in this context are transitory vehicles which have emerged and evolved at various times as the overall nature and aims of education and the curriculum have been interpreted. The importance of subjects will then be seen to depend on the extent to which they convey the aims of education.

White, for example states:

"what the content of the curriculum should be cannot be divorced from what the aims of education should be."

(White, 1982, p161)

### **the purpose of the curriculum**

Whitehead argued that the purpose of the curriculum was to produce:

"...men who possess both culture and expert knowledge in some special direction. Their expert knowledge will give them ground to start from, and their culture will lead them as deeply as philosophy and as high as art."

(Whitehead, 1932, p1)

Whitehead's understanding of culture may be regarded as activity of thought and receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling. The key word here is activity. As indicated above it denotes something more than simply the "stored knowledge" criticized by the Spens report. A good example may be found in music. It is possible to look at a score or read about a particular piece and to talk quite expertly about it. Such knowledge, however, can only remain incomplete whilst the piece remains unheard or unplayed.

Learning is a continual process in which the mind responds to stimuli. There can be no sense of preparing the mind by filling it with data and theory for use at some later point, although this certainly seems to be the case with the majority of examination and many university courses:

"Education is the patient process of the mastery of details minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day."

(Whitehead, 1932, p10)

It was the aim of education, in Whitehead's view, to bring about a condition which he described as "Style". This is to be understood as the most austere of all mental qualities and that which marks the arrival of the educated person:

"...style in art, style in literature, science, practical execution, style in its finest sense is the ultimate morality of the mind. Style is the fashioning of power, the restraining of power. Style is always the product of specialist study, the peculiar contribution of specialism to culture."

(Whitehead, 1932, p19)

Style enables the person to think as an individual, able to call upon an abundance of information and to think in a variety of ways. The above statement also suggests that style is the key to self-control, bearing and confidence.

Dewey's understanding of the curriculum and of education is similar, he referred to the importance of "appreciation". He saw danger in what he described as a "fact heavy" curriculum and suggested that purely empirical thinking can only lead to false beliefs and an inability to accept the novel. The final result is mental inertia and dogmatism; a state of mind which fails to take account of the notion of "appreciation".

"The final test...is the extent to which pupils secure vital appreciation of the subject matter dealt with. Otherwise problems and questions which are only true instigators of reflective activity, will be more or less externally imposed and only half-heartedly felt and dealt with."

(Dewey, 1933, p279)

Likewise, White (1982) suggests that the pupil needs to develop a particular kind of understanding, to do with possible "ends-in-themselves", which entail more than simply the pursuit or the possession of knowledge. White writes:

"a pupil who finishes up without any appreciation of, e.g. the pursuit of physical science or the history of art as a possible end-in-itself, has been seriously deprived."

(White, 1982, p123)

It is this which in White's view contributes to the overall development of the individual in terms of his personal well being.

### **the nature of understanding**

Understanding has to be seen as more than "mere logical analysis", it is the utilizing of ideas into that stream of sense perceptions, feelings, hopes and desires that make up life. Despite sounding like sentimental gush it is possible to discern in Whitehead's thinking an understanding of education that is most profound. At one point he described education as:

"The acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge".

(Whitehead, 1932, p6)

Knowledge of the past, or rather, past knowledge, is merely a tool to equip the understanding of the present. Whitehead warned that much damage may be done by approaches that deprecate the present by placing too much stress on what had been said and done before. Warwick (1973), restates this same point:

"an attempt is being made to prepare for the world of tomorrow through the inculcation of thought forms of yesterday".

(Warwick, 1973, p8)

In other words, the things of the past are brought to bear on the things of the present, which was precisely the point which MacKinder made. (MacKinder, 1913, p7).

The issue here is greater than simply the question as to the nature and purpose of subjects, it has implications for the curriculum as a whole. The intention here is not to dispute the value of specialization in particular subject areas, rather the argument is that the educative value of the curriculum is not to be found in a mere knowledge of facts or a mere attainment of the skill it imparts:

"We chase far too readily a will-o'-the-wisp called certain minimum knowledge which every boy and girl should possess when he leaves school".

(Niblett, 1954, p99)

There is perhaps a lesson here for the modern writers of curriculum, that a person's education is not what is possessed at the age of sixteen, or eighteen, but what is possessed twenty or thirty years later. Such an understanding raises questions about the direction currently being taken by the planners of the National Curriculum who seem at face value to be riding "rough shod" over fifty years of sensitive curriculum development. Too much modern education practice not only puts excessive emphasis on learning everything at the beginning of life, a procedure often described as "front loading", but appears to define education in terms of a minimum knowledge that every person should know.

#### **the cognitive and the affective : the importance of wholeness**

There is a danger of producing intellectual mutants through an approach which denies a vital part of our humanness. D. W. Harding (1953) criticises the belief that:

"... the relation between the highly differentiated cognitive surface of the mind... and the much less manageable aspects of the personality... could be clearly distinguished... and dealt with separately."

(in Niblett, 1954, p98)

Such a view, which states that intelligence may be distinguished from the emotional and cognitive aspects of the mind is dealing in the realms of fiction:

"It may indeed be that the heartless intellectual is not even as deeply intelligent as he imagines. For capacities for some very important kinds of knowing may be lacking in him."

(Niblett, 1954, p98)

To digress momentarily into the realms of fiction the 1960s science fiction character "Spock" embodies just such a separation, the creator of this character later wrote:

"Vejur was everything that Spock had ever dreamed of becoming. And yet Vejur was barren! It would never feel pain or joy or challenge. It was so completely and magnificently logical that its accumulation of knowledge was totally useless... logic without need is sterile... how important it was for a living thing to have needs."

(Roddenberry, 1979, p192)

Although presented here with tongue in cheek it is worth noting that the emergence of this popular science fiction story was set against a background of increasing scientific development and represented a moral and ethical voice in the context of Man's scientific future. The notion is that Man can only hope to survive if he takes care to carry with him into the future all aspects and qualities of his human nature. This necessarily involves concern for spiritual, ethical and moral issues. An approach which advocates the storing up of hard facts, regimented mental discipline separated from emotional needs, is portrayed clearly as a recipe for disaster.

Niblett highlights the danger of a one sided approach with particular reference to the sixth form science specialist. success is by the way of a prescribed route by "forced marches", his confidence is in the things he can understand and master, the arts and literature are avoided as areas of uncertainty. The world of values is a grey area whilst mathematics is black and white, consisting of things manageable and predictable. The things that would enrich him as a person are shunned under the pretence that they are unnecessary to him. Under this approach:

"... science, instead of being a discipline, becomes an end, itself degenerated to a technique, a know-how of getting through examinations... a technical process... and not the beginnings of a philosophy".

(Niblett, 1954, p109)

### **understanding and meaning : the essence of the whole person?**

Philip Phenix argues that human beings are creatures who have the power to experience meanings - general education is, therefore, a process of engendering essential meanings.

Phenix recognises six fundamental patterns of meaning, related to distinctive modes of understanding. These are referred to as the six realms of meaning and may be represented by the subjects on the curriculum.

The six realms of meaning are:

- 1 **SYMBOLICS**
- 2 **EMPIRICS**
- 3 **ESTHETICS**
- 4 **ETHICS**
- 5 **SYNOPTICS**
- 6 **SYNOPTICS**

(Phenix, 1964)

These six realms:

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

(Phenix, 1964, p8)

The first of Phenix's Realms of Meaning, Symbolics, comprises ordinary language, mathematics and non-discursive symbolic forms. Ordinary language is concerned with formal conventions "created in the laboratory of culture". For example. "et" in French, "and" in English do the same job. Mathematics is the language of complete abstraction, it is not concerned primarily, with the real world but with the formal world of pure symbolic form. The Greeks had a particularly significant understanding of Mathematics; the notions of which influenced world thinking until well beyond the medieval period. Mathematics was understood as the language of God, whilst spirituality was in fact unseen reality. It is not clear that Phenix's thinking does justice to this notion although one might easily argue that it never meant to, or indeed has to.

Non-discursive symbolic forms constitute a third type of symbolism, used to express feelings and insights. This is the language of poetry, drama and myth and does not necessarily have to make any sort of consecutive sense.

Empirics is to do with Empirical thinking. This may be understood as thinking which is based on observable and measurable facts. This is typified by the natural sciences, physical sciences, life sciences, psychology and the social sciences. In this realm knowledge is attained through experience, through the evidence of the senses; the sciences "provide factual descriptions, generalisations, and theoretical formulations and explanations, which are based upon experimentation in the world of matter, life, mind and society".(p6)

Esthetics includes music, the visual arts, the arts of movement, and aspects of literature and constitutes the third realm. Phenix distinguishes esthetics from aesthetics which is understood as concerning the philosophy of Art.

"Meanings in this realm are concerned with the contemplative perception of particular significant things as unique objectifications of ideated subjectivities".

(Phenix, 1964, p7)

Ethics takes into account the varied special areas of moral and ethical concern. The tendency is to allow this area to be handled within the teaching of religion.

Synoetics, the fifth realm, is the term that Phenix uses for personal knowledge. It refers to meanings in which a person has direct insight into other beings or oneself. The term involves the notion of "I-Thou" relation found in the writing of Martin Buber and is most likely to find a place amongst the objectives of history, literature and moral education.

Synoptics means seeing things together, as a whole. In this sixth realm meanings have an integrative function, they provide a single vision or a synopsis of meanings. The realm comprises the disciplines of history, religion and philosophy.

"Historical understanding is personal insight expressed in ordinary language, informed by scientific knowledge, transformed by esthetic imagination and infused by moral consciousness."

(Phenix, 1964, p240)

It might be argued that the realm described as Synoptics relates most closely to the nature of learning. It is this realm which realises the aim of education in terms of the whole person.

The six realms are to be understood as representing the foundations for all the meanings that enter into human experience. They cover "the pure and archetypal kinds of meaning that determine the quality of every humanly significant experience"; they are part of our humanness. The curriculum is not concerned merely with intellectual development. Similarly, the term "meaning" should not be restricted solely to the processes of logical thinking but to the life of feeling, conscience, inspiration and other processes besides. The classification of meanings in education is to facilitate learning and it is regarded as desirable to organise the scholarly disciplines along the lines of general similarity of logical structure. It is in this way that the basic ways of knowing can be described.

"We are not born with aesthetic understanding, mathematical understanding, philosophical understanding, and so on: they are cultural products into which we have deliberately to be induced".

(White, 1982, p69)

As has been reiterated through this text, knowledge is just one characteristic. The implication of an educated person is one which:

"...includes a morally virtuous life and civic dimension... is disposed to act in certain ways".

(White, 1982, p121).

### **a vehicle for values?**

Few would deny that part of one's character is the ability to reason. The ability to reason is, to some extent, the hallmark of the individual and is closely linked to intellect:

"Reason is never without intelligence, but it is infinitely more than intelligence... it relates all the various meanings of truth to one another, by asserting each one".

(Jaspers, 1950)

It then has to be asked whether a given subject engenders in the pupil the ability to reason. It could be argued that reason is constant whilst the content of education in terms of general intelligence represented through subjects varies according to the outlook of society. The place of subjects on the curriculum will have largely been determined by a series of value judgements. Niblett suggests that general intelligence is affected by what society, at various times, values as intelligent. It might be said that value judgements are the hallmark of any given society and that the curriculum is therefore less to do with the pupil and more to do with the values of society.

"What kind of conceptual equipment one acquires as one grows up depends upon what the particular society in which one lives happens to agree about. Whatever conceptual schemes one teaches a child cannot but involve the imposition of standards which are in the last analysis arbitrary. Education... can only at best be a subtle indoctrination of a particular set of values."

(White, 1982, p26)

In this sense subjects are merely the vehicles for conveying a particular society's values and are therefore somewhat transient as each society may throw up a different set of values. For example it would be easier to learn to be a fervent imperialist in the England of 1900 than of 1950. It is possible, therefore, to move away from the notion of teaching, for example, mathematics for sake of mathematics rather it may and should be taught as a need in society perhaps as part of a study of society.

A more radical view is to argue that education should strive to liberate the pupil from any arbitrary standards, leaving the individual free to work out for himself what constitutes value.

### **preparation for society vs autonomy**

If, however, education is to be governed largely by value judgements then it would seem that the popular view of the aim of education as the preparation for society is the most appropriate one.

If this is the case subjects must now be understood as part and parcel of this preparation for living in society. The subjects on the curriculum constitute education not just in terms of intellect but as necessary for character building:

"in the form of acquired habit, skill, and factual information to support himself within the society of which he is a member".

(Niblett, 1954, p103)

The curriculum should be understood as a powerful tool for changing behaviour and, as such, decisions about it should not be taken lightly. The curriculum accelerates the behavioural changes that happen naturally as part of the process of biological maturation. In addition to this the curriculum promotes behavioural change which would not have otherwise occurred and directs that change through the process of learning.

If education has more to do with the good of society than of something intrinsically worthwhile in itself there seems no logical reason why education should be separated from the wider society:

"It is indeed a preparation for life within that society, forming its future workers and citizens. Since teachers have no special expertise in determining what the educational demands of industry should be or what citizenship should consist in, control of aims should pass out of their hands."

(White, 1982, p2)

This begs the question whether education really has anything to do with reason or whether it still represents the main means of controlling the

thought processes of the masses.

Education should not aim only at promoting instrumental, goods, for example, jobs, increased industrial production, and so on. A society which pursues only economic ends without paying attention to any ultimate ends which these means might bring about, is irrational. So too, is an educational system. The aim of education:

"ought to help people to discover activities whose ends are not outside themselves; and it happens to be of the nature of all intellectual enquiry that in and for itself provides just such an activity. The critical ability which ought to be the fruit of education serves nothing directly except for itself, no one except those who exercise it".

(MacIntyre, 1964 in White 1982, p14)

Preparation for society may too easily degenerate into what White describes as economic aims. This is likely to conflict with positive pupil-centred aims insofar as it demands only what is necessary to a particular kind of job or range of jobs. It favours pupils bowing to the authority of their teachers and rote learning techniques; the aim is to get pupils to do things without question. There is no room for autonomy or reflectiveness.

By contrast the independent sector is concerned with preparation for society in a way which Charity James (James 1968) has already identified as education for leadership via the non-curricular activities or hidden curriculum of the school. (cp also White 1980, pp104, 146).

Whatever one's views of education however, it is clear that the aims must include some form of preparation for society.

### **conflicting issues and the need for aims**

Values and the needs of society have already been seen to exert an influence upon the curriculum. Problems emerge when decisions about the curriculum are founded on non-educational grounds. Niblett refers to value judgements, (Niblett, 1954, p95) seventeen years later Whitfield observes that curriculum decisions may be based on equipment resources.

"The detailed analysis of the likely contributions of the various fields of study to the overall development of the educated person seem to play a small part."

(Whitfield, 1971, p ix)

Whitfield argues that the curriculum has to serve three masters, Principle, Society and Public Knowledge. Principle deals with the autonomy and individuality of the person whilst society emphasises citizenship, the role of the person as a member of society. Public Knowledge is concerned with heritage and culture and enables meaningful questioning to take place. To deny children the knowledge of mankind's previous discoveries is effectively to take them back to the stone age. These three masters are conveyed through the established subjects, the "stock in trade" of the school.

With such a variety of factors exerting their influence upon the curriculum there is some necessity for the school to have thought out clearly its own aims to enable it, as White argues to "structure out its curricula" (White 1982). The problem lies in deciding who should be given the task of stating what the aims of education should be.

A "child centred" view would argue that aims must not be imposed externally upon the child which leads White to suggest that:

"If aims are not to be imposed on children, a fortiori aims are not to be imposed by those outside the school, whether local authorities, central government, the Schools Council, or any other body. Teachers holding this view are likely to resist current pressures to remove the autonomy of the schools in matters of aims and curricula".

(White 1982, p8)

This has implications for those who support the imposition of a core curriculum which has been on the political agenda since the Great Debate of 1976 and now forms the basis of the moves towards a National Curriculum.

This is not the place to discuss the fallacies of such moves although White makes a pertinent remark when he writes:

"We need not the core but the whole fruit... there is above all, no timeless, eternally viable school curriculum. As society in general changes - as more or less of the task of educating is undertaken by institutions other than the school so the role of content of the curriculum should shrink or expand."

(White 1982, p154/6)

"How far can one begin to translate these terminal objectives for school systems? How far can we set about deciding what pupils ought minimally to know and what kinds of dispositions they should have acquired, by the age of sixteen".

"what use is it to have even a valid and attractive set of aims unless one knows how to translate them into reality".

(White 1982, p129/p140).

## **PRESENTING THE CURRICULUM**

Whitehead advocated two approaches to teaching based on his understanding of the aims of education:

Firstly,

"Do not teach too many subjects...."

and secondly,

"What you teach, teach thoroughly...."

(Whitehead, 1932, p2)

Whitehead suggested that the main ideas introduced to a child should not only be few and important, but that the emphasis should be on "discovery"; expressed by White as "knowledge for its own sake" which he approaches with some caution, (White 1982, p126). Such an emphasis, by its very nature, encourages the child towards activity. The child in Whitehead's view should understand how the ideas to which he is introduced unlock the stream of events that pour through his life. Such understanding is more likely to be seen to relate to the present in terms of the here and now.

It is perhaps not immediately apparent how such an interpretation of the curriculum is to be put into effect. There seems to be little satisfactory argument to suggest that the break down of the curriculum into the traditional subjects is not the correct approach to take. The important point that Whitehead seems to be suggesting here is that the approach to the curriculum should at least be invested with "life". This is achieved, as indicated above, by paying attention to "emotional perception" which may be understood as providing some of the essence of life rather than simply memorizing static pieces of information.

Again, this is not to dispute the need for specialist training. It is, rather, to stress that concern should be for a general culture to foster an activity of mind out of which special interests might arise.

The subjects pursued for the sake of a general education are special subjects specially studied, one of the ways of encouraging general mental activity is to foster a special devotion. You may not divide the seamless coat of learning. What education has to impart is an intimate sense for the power of ideas, for the beauty of ideas and for the structure of ideas, together with a particular body of knowledge which has peculiar reference to the life of the being possessing it."

(Whitehead, 1932, p18)

### **the role of the subject**

Niblett has suggested that the subjects on the curriculum relate to certain areas of the development of the person. A discipline, therefore, is something which enhances the whole being. Subjects are the means to an end, they are not ends in themselves which tends to be the case when the curriculum is geared towards external examinations. The argument that this thesis has thus far been following is that subjects can only be understood as means and beyond this carry no other value.

"Mastery not only applies to cognition and motor activity but in the affective domain of feeling, emotion and imagination. It is here that teachers can potentially do more serious damage by encouraging pupils to utilize their inner expressiveness and then fail to link it to corresponding points within the subject discipline due to their own lack of subject mastery".

(Whitfield, 1971, p13)

In conjunction with the overall aim of education it is the role of subjects to engender the development of cognitive and affective skill. Stress upon one at the expense of the other is to drive a wedge into the education of the whole person:

"Initiation into the disciplines of knowledge, our vehicle for becoming fully human, is the worthwhile activity for the curriculum of general education".

(Whitfield, 1971, p12)

A survey of the work of Phenix, Peters and Hirst suggests that the curriculum is thus made up of analyses of the nature of knowledge and inherent human abilities. The various subject disciplines are not merely encyclopaedias of fact the rather, form the framework within which facts and experience are intelligible. they represent a way of obtaining meaning from an array of sense data.

...the disciplines are concerned with particular domains of experience, they have a history and a heritage of literature; they have developed their own distinctive public criteria, conceptual frameworks and modes of investigation which utilize a specialized language or symbol; they generate a communicating community of men who have been initiated into the domain of experience and they all embody some expression of human imagination."

(Whitfield, 1971, p15)

The approach may be likened to the assembling of a jig-saw where many systematic methods will result in the same interlocked and structured achievement. Similarly in curriculum terms, the independent modes of understanding and experience must be built from the necessary interlocking elements in the curriculum. In education, as with the jig-saw, a variety of approaches, represented by curriculum units/subjects, may be deployed. One unit may contain more than one objective, as with, for example, Geography, or the relation may be one to one, as with Arithmetic.

### **the structuring of knowledge**

Faced with a curriculum that is overcrowded with subjects competing for inclusion, the task becomes one of rationalisation. this can only be undertaken within the context of clear and orderly classification. The Forms of Knowledge, proposed by Hirst, (Hirst 1970), represent just such a classification. Hirst's work may be described as an attempt to

pick out a number of ways at looking at the world. Hirst differentiated, for example, between thinking mathematically and thinking scientifically and arrived at seven forms each with its own network of concepts and each with its own way of establishing truth:

**1 Formal logic and mathematics;**

This involves concepts of a general abstract kind.

**2 The physical sciences;**

These consist of truths that stand or fall by the tests of the observation of the senses, i.e. what is seen, heard, felt, touched or smelt.

**3 Awareness and understanding of our own and other people's minds;**

This involves such concepts as believing, deciding, intending, wanting, acting, hoping and enjoying. These are regarded as essential to interpersonal experience and knowledge.

**4 Moral judgement and awareness;**

This form is understood through such concepts as ought, wrong and duty. Hirst sees no other way of understanding this area. Actions and states can only be understood in such terms, the objectivity of morals and its irreducibility of other forms give it clear independent status.

**5 Aesthetic experience;**

This area makes use of symbolic expression which is not limited simply to the linguistic.

**6 Religious belief;**

This area also makes use of concepts which are irreducible in character.

**7 Philosophical understanding;**

This is made up of a series of "second-order" concepts and forms objective tests irreducible to those of the first order kind. Second-order concepts deal with questions of a reflective sort which arise out

of such activities as science, painting pictures, worshipping, and making moral judgements. (Hirst, Peters, 1970, pp2, 63-64)

Although it may be clear that the domain of human knowledge is composed of a number of logically distinct forms of knowledge, it is with deliberate intent that knowledge:

"is organized into a large variety of fields which often form the units employed in teaching.

(Hirst, 1974, p116)

The curriculum, therefore comprises the teaching of those subjects which are indisputably logically cohesive disciplines.

The crux of Hirst's work is stated in this, his aim:

"What we want is that pupils shall begin, however embryonically, to think historically, scientifically or mathematically; to think in a way distinctive of the particular subject involved."

(Hirst, 1974, p117)

### **the structuring of experience**

On this remark hangs the first clear statement about subjects. Subjects may be understood clearly as ways of structuring experience. History requires that the pupil thinks historically, Mathematics requires the pupil to think mathematically, and so on. This quite clearly contradicts what has been said above and argues for the case for education for its own sake and not necessarily for any extrinsic reason.

There are, however, problems with this as it is not clear what is actually involved in thinking historically. It is certainly not clear how one would go about finding out or establishing the criteria for such thinking. The only way of distinguishing between the various forms of thought is to examine the terms and expressions which each

form of thought employs. The character of scientific thought for example may be discerned by examination of scientific laws and theories. Thinking religiously may also be regarded as something of a problem given the guidelines to which the teaching of Religious Education has to conform. The problem of how Religious Education is to be defined will be examined in the next chapter.

The point of establishing such a framework by which to classify the curriculum is not to say that thought processes can be stereotyped. (It has already been stated that it would be erroneous to assume that the break down into subjects indicates a specific group of objectives). Rather, the argument is stating that thinking in a particular way necessitates coming to terms with the rules that govern the propositions involved. The chess-game provides a good analogy insofar as it:

"involves making moves in accordance with the rules of chess, though it involves no one particular order of moves, so thinking historically involves thinking in accordance with historical criteria though it involves no particular sequences of thought."

(Hirst, 1974, p118)

The suggestion here is that subjects represent areas where skills and concepts are learned within a given context; one pays as one goes as it were (not unlike, one may presume, the means-consequence idea raised by Dewey above). The content is established facilitating the learning of a variety of skills and concepts:

"Learning a concept is like learning to play tennis, not like learning to state the rules and principles that govern play. Learning to think... is not learning the formal definitions of terms and a series of true propositions."

(Hirst, 1974, p125)

White applies a similar idea to moral understanding which he suggests may be misconstrued in Hirst's dealings with this. It is possible for moral understanding to be seen as constituting one of the six or seven forms of understanding which a liberal education is to develop.

There are two sorts of moral aim; the promotion of moral understanding for its own sake, and the formation of moral character. The second of these includes the building up of moral dispositions: it is not simply an intellectual matter.

A liberally educated man in the Hirst context is not necessarily a morally good man. His interest in morality may stop at the theory of it. The task for the educator is to work out how one relates the aim of promoting moral understanding in the theoretical way to the aim of developing morally virtuous dispositions. In White's view the establishing of moral dispositions is at the heart of the aim of education, it cannot be separated from an analysis of it.

### **the role of the pupil**

As yet, little has been said about the pupil. What can be said thus far is that the important task facing all school subjects is the development of a more human comprehension in children. The difference between Whitehead, Dewey and Niblett are obvious but all suggest that this cannot be achieved purely through the content of subject matter:

"Provided that one has teachers of quality, the particular subjects chosen for inclusion in the curriculum matter less than is sometimes supposed. It is possible to teach the same fundamentals through a wide variety of subjects though no doubt some subjects lend themselves much more easily than others to particular aspects of the whole task."

(Niblett, 1954, p99)

This once again reduces the subject to simply a mode of organization; the actual process of education stems from the relationship between teacher and pupil. In this sense the pupil is part of the aims of education.

White discusses this in the context of pupil centred education which may be understood as twofold task. It is partly a matter of understanding and partly to do with shaping dispositions to behave in certain ways. The onus is on the pupil:

"to see himself as an animal with such and such an array of desires and to appreciate the way in which these desires may take different forms owing to cultural influence and new desires of all kinds be built up out of them. In introducing him to this enormous range of human desires his education is expansionary. In another way it is restrictive. He is not to choose his way of life from this smorgasbord ad lib. He must know, too about the permanence of his natural desires - his wanting to be loved, to be secure etc. - and about the need to hold all his desires together in an integrated unity, structured around these permanent dispositions and incorporating the autonomous balances he strikes between conflicting demands of all kinds."

(White, 1982, p58)

Such is the importance of involving the pupil in this way that to keep education at the level of theoretical knowledge is to do the pupil no more than a disservice. What he also needs is to acquire the various dispositions or self-regarding virtues which enable him to fit all this together into a unified whole:

"the pupil-centred aim requires that the pupil himself is interactive with the aim, sees it accepts it for what it is..."

(White, 1982, p62)

The aims of education and the role of the pupil are neatly summarised by White who writes:

"The central aim of education... ought to be that the pupil becomes a morally autonomous person. The realisation of this aim depends on certain capabilities, understanding and dispositions in the pupil himself... it requires other things too. It will only be achievable in a society living above the level of bare subsistence, with adequate material provision, health and educational services, good working conditions and leisure opportunities for all. There may in other words be economic and other necessary conditions, over and above the intellectual and other achievements of the pupil.

(White, 1982, p140)

### **SUMMARY**

The aim of this section has been to map out what is understood educationally by the word subject. It is clear that subjects are not simply units of time divided up through the week with the titles Religious Education, Biology or Mathematics and so on.

Subjects are understood as a means of conveying the aims of education. Collectively subjects make up the curriculum which is understood as a whole made up of many parts. These parts denote ways of thinking, forms of logic, modes of enquiry, realms of meaning. Subjects are to do with culture and knowledge, inextricably related to life. Subjects denote activity of thought through the means of discovery and enquiry.

Subjects may be understood in terms of skills, attitudes, concepts, meanings, values and feelings. In other words, all those aspects which make up life.

Subjects are the means by which humans comprehension is engendered in children. It is through the subjects that children gain a sense of life's importance. In particular, life as part of society the values

of which are seen to be transmitted through the school subjects. In this sense subjects may be understood as the means by which the curriculum is related and conveyed to the pupil. The curriculum represents a formal organization of the various aspects of life living. Although the basis of education is to be understood as the process of engendering essential meanings. these processes relate not only to logical thinking but also to the life of feelings, conscience, inspiration and other processes besides. These processes are categorised in the work of Phenix, Hirst and Peters in, albeit, different ways but the understanding of subjects is very much the same. The categories indicate that different parts of the curriculum relate to certain areas of the development of the person. Although the work of Hirst, Peters and Phenix is considered by some to be incomplete (Pring, 1970, White, 1982) they at least raise and address the important issues. In particular it may be seen that the development of the individual is understood in terms of the cognitive and the affective which are developed within the framework of the subject disciplines. It is in this way that facts and experiences are made intelligible and meaning is obtained from an array of sense data.

Subjects represent a convenient way of conveying forms or realms of meaning or knowledge. The understanding of the place of subjects hinges on Hirst's remark about enabling pupils to think of subjects historically, scientifically and so forth; to think in a way distinctive of the particular subject involved. In this way subjects may be understood clearly as ways of structuring experience. Through the breakdown of the curriculum into subjects the child is shown how the ideas to which he is introduced unlock the stream of events that

pour through his life. With such an overview it is possible to suggest that subjects are not governed by contents.

Hirst talks of subjects as logically cohesive disciplines, whilst Phenix talks about a set of intelligible standards, the subject is not an end in itself but a convenient way to regard educational activity. All subjects may be regarded as intellectual activities, not in terms of their fixed structure but in terms of their function, in other words their power to stimulate and direct significant inquiry and reflection.

Subjects like History or Physics or Mathematics are based on the use of certain logical principles in terms of which the explanation and theories distinctive of the subject are validated. Each subject displays its own logical principles which should emerge in the teachings of that particular subject. The emerging pattern of the jig-saw does not denote a set way of assembling the jig-saw. In the same way it would be erroneous to talk in terms of one particular logical sequence for any given subject whilst it would be nonsense to seek a logical sequence within a given group of subjects.

In conclusion it is perhaps fair to say that the role of the subject can only be discussed in conjunction with an understanding of the curriculum. As Hirst suggests subjects must be seen as units constructed simply for educational purposes and as White suggests, part of the process of engendering morally autonomous human beings. As such they have no ultimate value outside this context.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION : the subject**

## INTRODUCTION

More than any other subject on the curriculum Religious Education can call upon its historical basis for some justification of its existence. Like all subjects it is clear that Religious Education has been influenced throughout the course of its history by a great variety of non educational factors. These range from the full power of Church and State politics down to the most basic issues of economics.

A subject may not be justified in terms of its historical standing. In chapter two an attempt has been made to establish the criteria which any subject ought to meet in terms of a general education.

The aim of this section is to trace the emergence and development of Religious Education, to examine the factors that have shaped its development and to discern the extent to which Religious Education has met and continues to meet the demands of the curriculum in terms of the development of the whole person; the aim of education.

The following may serve as a useful check list with which to measure the educational value of Religious Education. It is expected that the subject will engage in such educational activity as to engender the ability to think in ways distinctive of the subject.

This thinking may vary as the subject itself responds to those influences highlighted by Whitfield in terms of three masters, "Principle", "Society" and "Public Knowledge", (Whitfield, 1971, p10). In this sense it will be possible to discern the extent to which Religious Education is part of the overall notion of a "vehicle for

values"; i.e., the influence of society. The notion of principle meets the demand of the curriculum in terms of Style, appreciation and Understanding, resulting in White's concept of the morally autonomous person. Understanding has been described as the "utilizing of ideas into that stream of sense perception, feelings, hopes and desires that make up life" (Whitehead, 1932, p6, cited above)

It will be expected therefore to find within the context of Religious Education a balance between the cognitive and the affective; the capacity for objective critical thought and the ability to reason.

In terms of public knowledge it will be clear that Religious Education provides the context for the meaningful study of heritage and culture; part of the essential foundation in the building up of the person.

All subjects make use of content and it is this which facilitates the learning of a variety of skills and concepts. It is necessary to discern the skills and concepts which Religious Education contributes to the curriculum.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Given the solid foundation which Religious Education education enjoys in historical terms it is perhaps surprising to find that the subject exists as a nebulous grey area on most timetables as it ekes out a meagre existence despised by both the staff and pupils while suffering from an identity crisis that might easily be labelled as an acute form of paranoid schizophrenia!

### **the power of the Church**

From the seventh to the seventeenth centuries education was under ecclesiastical control. School teachers were either clerks of the Church or clergy. During the mediaeval period the Church was certainly the most important agency. The Church perhaps represented the only glimmer of light in the intellectual gloom of the Dark Ages, typified by the Benedictine monastic tradition in its quest for excellence in things spiritual and intellectual.

"The monasteries were the only centres of Education and Art. Their schools trained the diplomats and servants of Europe; their scriptoria kept alive a knowledge of classical literature."

(Richards, 1968, p19)

The teaching of the Latin to the fortunate few who were able to find places in the monastic houses enabled them to understand the Bible and the Liturgy; such knowledge was the source of considerable wealth and power and most certainly led to the corruption and decadence that infested the later years of many monastic houses prior to the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIIIth.

This act of dissolution in one sense, however, served to strengthen the position of Religious Education with the development of Protestantism as the new driving force. The transitional stages between Henry VIII and Elizabeth I represent merely a momentary bumpy passage! It was necessary to educate people in the ways of Protestantism, education was understood, therefore, in religious terms. Religious terms, it should be added, that promulgated and promoted the views of the state, a purpose which has to some extent continued to play a part in general education.

Whatever the underlying motives, the drive for education remained under the auspices of the Church and from it came the initiative for a general education that would cater for all children.

The impetus for this development came towards the end of the seventeenth century from voluntary church groups, in particular, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, (SPCK). The belief at this time was that education was for all children and that provision was the responsibility of the churches. It is only natural to assume therefore that education was conceived largely in religious terms.

The economic, sociological and political developments of the Nineteenth Century produced a greater demand for educational provision, (not least the factory acts of 1802, 1819 & 1833). The demand was met by religious voluntary groups such as the British and Foreign School Society which was based upon Quaker principles in addition to those groups within the Anglican tradition.

### **from Church to State**

Education as a state concern only publicly appeared in 1833, the drive remained with religious groups until 1870 when it was clear that such organisations could not keep up with demands and the financial pressure that it ensued.

In the period leading up to the Education Act of 1870 there developed considerable conflict between those who objected to state intervention and those who felt that education should be entirely secular, controlled by the state. Neither side could exert its own will as

neither side could afford to take on the whole responsibility for education.

The 1870 Act established a compromise which aimed at drawing together these two views but which has ever since been part of the confusion and crisis of identity facing the subject.

The famous "Cowper-Temple" clause stated:

"No religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination may be taught."

(National Society & SPCK, 1967, p11 /cp also 1944 Education Act para 26 p119)

This clause only applied to government maintained schools, but to many churchmen this seemed to advocate little more than a vague Bible/Hymnbook theism which bore no relation to the continuing life of the church. The radicals who desired a totally secular education were equally discontented leading to the formation of a group in 1897 which called itself the "Moral Instruction League". This group drew up a syllabus of ethical and moral teaching to replace the present religious teaching.

An important voice to emerge at this time was that of William Temple. Temple initially supported the secularists regarding church schools as "a practical hindrance" to the progress of education and argued that they should be integrated into a national system of elementary education.

Temple's view was that:

"... the Church was more concerned with the preservation of its property than with the long term interest of providing a better education for the majority of the nation's children."

(in Sadler, 1985, p3)

Perhaps it was because the public elementary schools were secular in their basis that Temple radically changed his view regarding Church schools. Temple came to see such schools as places of special value and importance within a variety of educational provision. Temple was aware that society was becoming increasingly secular in outlook and so felt that it was necessary to affirm the spiritual and liberal values in education. Church schools he hailed as champions of this cause.

Sadler writes:

"Temple believed that education was fundamentally a religious activity which touched the whole of human personality... a religious process because it was a means of reaffirming the divine value of every person... it became a matter of utmost importance... to provide a curriculum which met the intellectual and spiritual nature of man".

(Sadler, 1985, p6)

It is possible that Temple provides one of the earliest examples of an educational view that expressed concern for the development of the whole person.

### **the 1944 Education Act & the crisis of war**

The years leading up to the Education Act of 1944 was the promising establishment of "Agreed Syllabuses". Agreed syllabuses reflected an era of co-operation rather than competition. The first such syllabus was produced in Cambridge and is one of the most notable. Under the Butler Act of 1944 state schools and state controlled church schools were required to follow an agreed syllabus. The Act served to

strengthen the place of religious education **but** also included a conscience clause enabling teachers and parents who did not wish to participate to opt out. The act in effect created a compulsory subject which need not be taught or attended!

The emphasis upon the place of Religious Education has to be considered in its historical context. The backdrop of war torn Europe had a considerable impact on education as a whole. Rising totalitarianism in Europe heightened the awareness of freedom, democracy and all that was precious in the Western Christian tradition. Religious Education from 1944 embodied the preservation and restoration of these values and was seen as the basis of moral education in the post war world.

On the 1944 Education Act, David Day writes:

"The 1944 Act made a vital contribution to the preservation of ONE NATION, it underpinned the democratic values which were the only hope for a nation about to emerge from a conflict in which the confirmation of those values was at the very heart of the struggle."

(Day, 1985, p56)

Once again it is the role of Religious Education to preserve foster and enhance the issues that were of concern to the state.

It is interesting also to note that Religious Education was seen as holding the key to moral issues; the voice of such groups as the secular moral instruction league lost impetus through this period. There is a sense in which Religious Education is bound up with a sense of what it means to be human. Later opinion polls which show continued support for the place of Religious Education from teachers, parents and pupils probably reflect this same interpretation. The situation in Europe was, after all, a crime against humanity, morality and values.

Coupled with this is the "psychological aspect" whereby the nation turns to God in times of crisis. The passage of this Act may represent just such a spirit of emotionalism.

In practice, however, lack of resources and particularly qualified teachers were a serious hindrance whilst the context of the subject, albeit in accordance with an agreed syllabus tended to be a solid course of biblical study and church history, the sociology of early Israel and the geography of Palestine. The format was generally chronological and had little to commend it in educational terms. Wordsworth's maxim is most apt, that one "murders in order to dissect". The forms of Religious Education that developed following 1944 are examined below.

### **the sixties : enlightenment or turning point?**

A subject which was rooted in idealism was little match for the post war developments in terms of the hard nosed new age of science and technology which was the hallmark of the sixties. Religion had been threatened in the past by the advances of science; the church had not really recovered from Galileo when Darwin emerged! The scene of the sixties presented a different problem.

"Religion was neither true nor fake merely irrelevant."

(National Society & SPCK, 1967, p37)

The situation was not helped by stirrings from within represented by such publications as "Honest to God" which appeared, to many traditional churchmen, to challenge the very heart of the Christian tradition.

In addition to new theology, the sixties presented a new morality. If religious education was turned to for moral guidance it was now to be rejected along with an out of date moral code. For many teachers the answer was to accept the agnostic view whilst others simply buried their heads in the sand of biblical fundamentalism.

It seemed clear that Religious Education which could no longer be treated as Christian nurture. W.R. Niblett in his preface pays attention to the larger concept of Christian Education:

"This book sets forth some of the consequences of being a Christian teacher of adolescents in the present intellectual, moral and spiritual climate. It deals with the possible ways in which a number of subjects in the school curriculum can prepare the ground for an education which is Christian".

(Niblett, 1960, p1)

This is not unlike the view held by Temple insofar as the whole process of education may be seen as contributing to the spiritual development of the pupil.

The sixties produced an awareness that contemporary Religious Education was failing to meet the needs of the majority of pupils. It is in this sense that I have called the sixties a new enlightenment representing a turning point for Religious Education. The remaining pages and greater part of this chapter will examine the developments in Religious Education from this period up to the present day.

Thus far, it is perhaps true to say that the place of Religious Education on the curriculum had been governed largely by historical and factors, but such that the development of Religious Education is synonymous with that of education itself. The above summary shows that Religious Education has always been present and that education owes its

place to religion. Religious Education has represented power and wealth; the height of academic achievement; the voice of freedom from the shackles of Roman Catholicism and more recently the defence of the nation itself against the dark forces of evil represented by the situation which existed in second world war Europe.

Despite such accolades there can be no question of Religious Education clutching at these straws of the past for some justification of its existence. It is important that the value of Religious Education is taken beyond the notion that the subject is only taught because it always has been.

One clear pattern that emerges is a move away from the traditional function of Religious Education, that of fostering the Christian faith, towards the open, descriptive, critical and enquiring study of religion.

John Hull describes the British experience of Religious Education as an evolution of legislation from 1870. The effect of this has been on the one hand to create a subject unsure of its identity and unsure of its approach:

"So, in a large British city today, you may find one school justifying its descriptive study of world religions on the grounds of the large ethnic communities in the area, while a few blocks away, the same plurality of cultures will be used by another school to justify an almost evangelistic presentation of Christianity alone."

(Hull, 1984, p27)

On the other hand if one looks at the issues surrounding Religious Education as possibilities rather than problems then it is possible to join with John Hull in his view that Religious Education in Britain

today constitutes one of the most lively encounters between religion and modernity.

### **WHAT IS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION?**

In order to measure the educational merit of Religious Education it is necessary to identify what is meant by this label. It will appear that there is some confusion on how to approach Religion Education in schools and it may be suggested, as in the historical summary above, that the problem is rooted in the vague account given for it by the 1944 Education Act where one observes:

"... an attitude which neither seeks to promote evangelism, or merely impart factual information, but one which seeks to commend religion as a worthwhile thing, to investigate and possibly to embrace if a pupil should freely decide."

(Shone, 1973, p7)

### **the problem of identity**

In addition to the vagueness of the 1944 Education Act the conscience clauses also contribute to the overall problem of identity. The problem raised is not just to do with the purpose of Religious Education but also what Religious Education actually is.

The irony of the Cowper-Temple, Temple-Butler clauses while strengthening the position of Religious Education by making it a statutory requirement on the one hand, seems to have created a subject that may not make use of its inherent subject matter.

On this issue Edwin Cox writes:

"... the escape clauses suggest that there was an underlying intention that the subject should make pupils religious in some way. The clauses imply that the teaching was different from other subjects to which there could be no conscientious objection"

(Cox, 1983, p4)

The important point here is the notion that Religious Education involves something more than just the teaching of a subject. The converse of this is that if Religious Education is taught as an "ordinary subject" then the teaching will fail to do justice to that subject as something akin to its essence will have been neglected.

It may be argued that the importance of a subject is measured by the extent to which it has an effect in terms of useful knowledge, or practical skill, or enlargement of the personality. In the previous chapter it was suggested that a subject ought to have an outcome, described by White as "ends-in-themselves", (White, 1980, p123). The problem is that in the brief of the 1944 Act, there is no indication of what the outcome of Religious Education should be.

In attempting to find a place for Religious Education in the sixties it was Loukes who observed that:

"there was no official statement of precisely what they were meant to achieve, or how they were to achieve it."

(Loukes, 1965, p19)

As existed in the period up to 1870, a dichotomy of view confronts the Religious Education of this period. The 1944 Act served to appease that public opinion which favoured the inclusion of religion whilst the vague presentation prevented a possible block by Religious and Anti-Religious activists. Religious Education seems to have been regarded

as a kind of panacea by public opinion but that same opinion did not stretch to any indication as to the form that Religious Education should take. The Christian faith had been good for the country and now there was a sense of losing some essence of the British culture if it went. At this stage Religious Education appears to do little more than satisfy the demand for required "public knowledge", (Whitfield, 1971, p10).

Linked to this problem of identity is the conglomeration of names under which the study of religion might appear. Schools may refer to the subject as RE, RS, RK, Divinity, Scripture, Life Skills, Education in Stances for Living, or Design for Living.

Religious Education in the past was happy to serve up a solid dish of Biblical Studies and Church History but such a dish hardly satisfies the notion of a subject as understood by Hirst, Phenix and Peters and the whole gamut of the philosophy of education that they represent.

It may be argued that the problem of definition is not one shared by other subjects. Generally speaking subjects are immediately identified by their content which is understood as providing the vehicle for learning. The biologist expects at some point to cut up worms, the chemist will analyse the reaction of one substance with another, the historian will know about 1066 and all that, whilst the Geographer will go on field trips. A rather cynical student badge read:

"It if wriggles it's biology,  
If it smells it's Chemistry,  
And if it doesn't work it's Physics!"

It is unlikely that Bloom would wish to classify learning in this way but the point of the remark is to show that subjects are first of all

recognised by their content and activities. However, it is unlikely that a study of the content of Religious Education in terms of fact and public knowledge will lead to an understanding of what Religion is.

### **the changing face of RE and curriculum demand**

In the struggle for legitimacy there have been a variety of approaches to the teaching of Religious Education each of which may be seen to reflect certain aspects of educational practice. The following represents four of the popular strands of Religious Education.

Firstly, the "confessional" approach which aims to give pupils direct knowledge and insight into a given faith stance which is held to be true and without which the pupil would not be properly educated. (Board of Education, 1938, p208). The approach has been described by some as "intellectual and cultic indoctrination". (Schools Council, 1971, p21) and in which other forms of religion are regarded as worthless. Whilst it is recognised that this is a possible outcome of this approach it is the view of this thesis that such an understanding is unfortunate insofar as it fails to take account of the educational value that may be present.

It does not follow that confessionalism should lead to indoctrination. It may be argued that confessionalism represents an understanding of the 1944 Education Act, that the fundamentals of Christianity be taught, but taught in a way so as not to give bias to any particular form or catechism.

For the purpose of this work the term confessionalism is used as an educational approach to Religious Education as distinct from Exclusivism, used here to denote "cultic indoctrination" and the dogmatic approach to Religious Education.

The second approach is described as the "implicit", or sometimes "existential " approach. It is recognised as a genuine attempt to relate Religious Education to the situations in which its recipients find themselves. In this sense it is essentially a pupil centred, or related, approach which represents an attempt to integrate the study of religion with the rest of life. It is possible to trace its development from the work of Ronald Goldman. The work of Harold Loukes in this field represents an attempt to lose the confessional standpoint although it will be seen that Loukes does not abandon the framework of the Christian Tradition.

The approach is given a little more credibility through the work of Michael Grimmitt and David Hay who provide the opportunity for a non-confessional approach. A stance is offered which takes account of the social and personal issues in an attempt to engender the personal quest for meaning not just in the context of one's own society but by looking critically at other societies. The problem with earlier attempts of this approach lay in a tendency by some teachers to reduce Religious Education to Social Studies. It was not odd to find classes wondering why they were doing "Sex", "Drugs", and "Violence on TV" in Religious Education cynically referred to as the Curriculum of Doom.

The third approach, recognised as the most educational, is the "phenomenological" approach. The main aim is the promotion of

understanding and stands distinct from the confessional approach:

"...in order to enter into an empathic experience of the faith of individuals and groups. It does not seek to promote any one religious viewpoint.."

(Schools Council, 1971, p21)

This approach had been called the "educational approach" but like the others it has the capacity for non-educational treatment. Objectivity is often confused with strictly academic and dispassionate thinking and is linked with an anti-dogmatic approach to Religious Education. It has been shown, above, that the curriculum must take account of subjectivity.

An approach which fails to recognise the subject in terms of the affective or emotional is little more than a fact gathering exercise in which one collects data for cold storage. For the purpose of the work such a view is distinguished as collectivism in which the facts of religion are collated in an atmosphere of "cool detachment". (Schools Council, 1971, p22)

### **from exclusivism to confessionalism**

In 1931 the Hadow Committee wrote:

"The teaching of Religion is the heart of all teaching... the aim has been to give instruction in the Christian Faith as a living story with the power over daily life."

(Board of Education, 1931, p154)

The approach is confessional insofar as it seeks to challenge pupils in terms of the Christian Faith. It is an educational approach insofar as it is committed to the development of the whole person in terms of his spiritual nature.

It seems that in general the approach failed to bring Religious Education to this understanding. John Hull writing in 1975 refers to the syllabuses of this time as concerned almost entirely with the past. The emphasis was on imparting bible knowledge. (Hull, 1975, p100)

A champion of the confessional approach at this time was Edwin Cox who, identified Religious Education as "Scripture". The approach had a clear educational role:

"we no longer look on education as a means of imparting education or the equipping for employment. Rather, it is the developing of latent potential, irrespective of practical consequences... so that he may live the fullest life of which he is capable... a child is more than a growing, communicating, thinking, earning, beauty-appreciating individual. He is capable of what is loosely called spiritual experience... of knowing and loving God."

(Cox, 1954, p91)

It is doubtful however that in practice any hopes that Cox may have had for the development of spiritual experience through such an approach were realised. The question which may be raised is whether the subject has been taught at all if the spiritual element is ignored given that the purpose of Religion is to bring about knowledge of God.

The spirit of confessionalism in the 30's and 40's however was essentially tied to the underpinning of English culture, described above as "cultic indoctrination" and resulting in what Grimmitt describes as "an ideology of Christian absolutism". (Grimmitt, 1987, p39).

The impact of Goldman's research was a decisive factor for change in the approach to Religious Education even though with hindsight it may be possible to see the work as inherently fraught with problems. The

neo-confessional approach which Goldman advocated represented an attempt to make confessional or dogmatic Religious Education more acceptable.

The neo-confessional approach is reflected in the Plowden and the Newsom Reports (Board of Education, 1959 and 1963)

"Children should be taught to know and love God and to practice in the school community the virtues appropriate to their age and environment."

(Plowden Report, p207, para 572)

Goldman based his argument on Piagetian theories of mental development of children (Piaget 1952, Goldman 1964). He maintained that in terms of the development of religious thinking in young children there was too much emphasis on biblical material which was largely unintelligible.

The argument assumes that the majority of children are not capable of abstract thought until adolescence and consequently the high rejection of religious beliefs was due to too early an exposure to biblical and theological material. The young child's conceptual capacity distorts and misunderstands the material which is consequently seen later as irrelevant to real life and dismissed along with Father Christmas and the tooth fairy. Under Goldman's view the RE lesson disappears and is replaced by "Life Themes" which is understood as an across subject approach. Goldman writes:

"The Christian faith is a frame of reference through which everything can be experienced related and interpreted."

(Goldman, 1965, p69)

The whole world of discovery and experience is related to the idea that this world is God's world. In Goldman's scheme of things, the bible is used sparingly and only to illustrate things rising from experiential

work. New syllabuses were based on the needs and interests of the pupils.

The neo-confessional approach is still essentially the old confessionalism aimed at bringing the knowledge of God to the pupils, but aiming to do so in the spirit of what was considered to be sound educational practice. The approach represents an attempt to provide an encounter with real religious experience. This requires a particular contribution from the teacher. Hulmes writes:

"Teachers need to do more than 'teach about' religion: they need to be in a position to share their experiences and their discoveries with children who, for the most part know less about this human activity"

(Hulmes, 1979, p17)

It is Hulmes's view that experience modifies belief and the teacher who has first hand experience of this is in possession of "evidence to which a child needs access" (Hulmes, 1979, p33). The approach may be criticised as failing to take account pupil autonomy and freedom but Hulmes suggests that there may be times when impartiality on the part of the teacher may stand "proxy to cowardice" (Hulmes, 1979, p36). It has been suggested that one expects to do certain things in certain subjects, it has also been suggested that respect for the intrinsic values of a given subject is desirable. This raises an interesting question:

"Somebody who does not see anything beautiful and powerful about mathematics is not likely to ignite others with a sense of intrinsic excitement about the subject. Teachers of RE, perhaps more than most... become involved with some of the issues which are most challenging and disturbing to children. Is it part of the teacher's task to prepare children for this kind of personal experience in and through Religious Education?"

(Hulmes, 1979, p37)

Hulmes finds support for his thinking in the work of Jeffreys who suggests that there is no contradiction between the positive presentation of what the teacher believes to be true and his proper respect for his pupils own thinking. Again, making a comparison with what is expected of other subjects, Jeffreys writes:

"Nobody would say for example 'don't teach music, only teach about music', nothing can really be learnt without experiencing it as well as inspecting it. If teaching about religion means the exclusion of experience, then it is educational nonsense ... such limited teaching does not even equip the pupil to reject what has been taught"

(in Hulmes, 1979, p18

It has been suggested above the confessional approach is merely cultic indoctrination this is to some extent disputed by the Durham Report on Religious Education when it says:

"...it must be recognised that the kind of understanding which is involved in Religious Education... can be achieved only if the pupils study the religious tradition or traditions of their own particular culture. For the great majority of pupils in England and Wales this is the Christian faith"

(National Society & SPCK, 1970, p102, para 212)

The Report suggests that it is the role of the Religious Education teacher to show his pupils the insights provided by Christian faith and experience into a wide range of personal, social, and ethical problems.

The report states:

"The teacher is thus seeking rather to initiate his pupils into knowledge which he encourages them to explore and appreciate, than into a system of belief which he requires them to accept."

National Society & SPCK, 1970, p103, para, 216)

The Report accepts that teachers own views and opinions will show, as in any subject. It is suggested in the report that these personal views have a contribution to make to the overall educational activity. (National Society & SPCK, 1970, p104). The Report is quite clear that it is not the task of the Religious Education teacher to convert his pupils to the Christian faith. Rather the Report state:

"If he is to press for commitment, it is commitment to the religious quest, to that search for meaning, purpose, and value which is open to all men."

(National Society & SPCK, 1970, p104, para 217)

The context for this is the Christian faith. Thus it may be seen that the approach satisfies the requirement for a pupil centred/related education but it is Hudson's view that it fails on religious grounds. Hudson supports the argument that religion is, or, may become, explicit in experience only to those already explicitly religious or to those who are aware of the possibility of a religious interpretation of experience. (Hudson, 1973, p190).

### **from the curriculum of doom to the meaning of life**

Working Paper 36 describes the "implicit religion" approach as:

"an unrestricted personal quest for meaning in life in terms of actual experience, assisted by dialogue between pupil and teacher."

(Schools Council, 1971, p34)

An early example of the approach seems evident in the thinking of William Temple who indicated that a separate subject called Religious Education was unhelpful, rather it was something which could be developed as an underlying principle. This understanding is also evident in the Hadow Report:

"it cannot be confined to a separate period... it will affect the teaching of other subjects and bring home to the pupils... the fundamental truths of religion and their bearing on human life and thought."

(Board of Education, 1927, p189)

Temple's view of Religious Education in curriculum terms is entirely implicit, yet confessional in character. It was Temple's view that the Christian Faith was caught rather than taught. It was part of life and as such the life of the school could not be separated from the life of Church and State:

"Temple believed that in a rounded education, the religious element must find a place in order that children might be brought up to see a vital experience in the development of man. Religious education as a subject should form part of a total provision which Temple believed to be religious in essence."

(Sadler, 1985, p8)

The implicit approach, however, is most closely associated with the work of Harold Loukes. (Loukes, 1961, 1965). His main concern was the non academic majority of secondary school pupils. Loukes firmly believed in the 'learning through experience' approach:

"Unless a subject proceeds from the concrete to the abstract, unless the whole process is set about with sense experience, returning perpetually to questions "what are we talking about?" "What do you see?", and "What do you think about?", then it will not be educative."

(Loukes, 1965, p98)

In an educational sense, the Loukes view expresses the need for Religious Education to satisfy the demand of the curriculum in terms, not just of the cognitive domains, but also of the conative and affective.

Loukes attempted to identify with that pupils felt, aware that many regarded Religious Education as the "boring subject". The research, which covered some five hundred schools, attempted to find examples of

religious education which was not simply boring but where teaching:

".. reached the condition of the young, where the subject truly makes you think for yourself".

(Loukes, 1965, p13)

Loukes discovered that pupils did not want to dispense with the subject but were overloaded with the bible-heavy content which failed to get to grips with what Christianity was about and its effects.

Loukes saw teaching as a process of dialogue about experience, a process that applies to any subject and not just to Religious Education. Not unlike the views held by Temple, Religious Education under this "dialogical method" is a unifying, all embracing subject the content of which is:

"the depth, the realisation of everything, the experience of the whole, the living and the human alongside the categorisation and analysis, the selection and abstraction, that constitutes academic disciplines."

(Loukes, 1965 p148)

All subjects may be understood to have a potential religious dimension but, unlike Temple, Loukes did not advocate losing the subject as a separate period. The bible has a clear use in Loukes' view, but the study of the bible:

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

(Loukes, 1965, p158)

The role of the teacher in the implicit religion approach is to set children thinking and searching for meaning in an atmosphere of sympathetic dialogue.

Loukes' main concern to establish a closer relationship between the content of Religious Education, the experience of adolescents and the world of work into which they were about to enter. The bible serves as a source of reference, contributing to the pupils' understanding of the human situation in terms of:

- a) Personal Relationships
- b) Personal Responsibility
- c) Meaning

The aim was to:

"... tread out a path from realities to Reality".

(Loukes, 1961, p150)

Religious Education was conceived by Loukes as a journey towards the concept of God. In the primary school and lower years God may be discerned from concrete objects, direct personal relationships, hopes and longings:

"There is but the religious dimension to all experience.... nature study, the arts and crafts are religious, or they are nothing. They awaken the young spirit to awe and wonder and delight."

(Loukes, 1965, p149)

The Religious Education of the secondary school Loukes felt should be concerned with the basic questions "What am I all about?"

Loukes argued that whole curriculum was about the latter but few subjects attempted to tackle these "ultimate questions". Loukes therefore saw it as the responsibility of Religious Education to take on board the issues raised by evolution, philosophy of history, ecology and so on. Ignored by the other subjects Loukes saw them as legitimate areas for Religious Education and therefore approached them in relation to the Bible and Christian insight.

Herein lies the problem. The work of Loukes may still be described as a form of confessionalism in that the framework for Loukes is still the Christian Faith albeit in a spirit of open ended enquiry and dialogue.

Dennis Bates observes:

"even Loukes doesn't work... young people are basically not very interested in the God hypothesis. Loukes assumed too great a degree of commitment to the religio-philosophical quest in both pupils and staff"

(Bates, 1984, p80)

Something of a solution lies in the later work of Michael Grimmitt, (Grimmitt, 1987). The teacher in the Loukes approach is still the partisan of the confessional approach. In Grimmitt's understanding, however, the teacher is neutral yet sitting alongside the pupil to enable the pupil to evaluate his own beliefs within the whole arena of faith responses. This contrasts from the head-on approach and is distinct from the purely objective and dispassionate overview of religious phenomenon.

As with Loukes the key issue in Grimmitt's view of Religious Education is to approach the question of what it means to be human. There remains the quest for meaning in life which Grimmitt describes as one the "givens of the human situation":

"one of the most characteristic activities is their involvement in meaning-making and truth questing. To be human is to struggle for meaning, especially for meaning about the human. This human struggle for meaning has produced many alternative views of what it means to be human, but no single definitive answer which can in some way be proved to be true by reference to incontrovertible evidence or empirically verified fact. In other words facts about the human being do not in themselves provide an adequate answer to the question, "What does it mean to be human?" The empirical carpet runs out and we find ourselves choosing between beliefs about the human"

(Grimmitt, 1987, p73)

This understanding appears to do justice to the educational elements that have already been identified in the various approaches to Religious Education. As with the confessional stance the pupil is here challenged to evaluate his own position in response to the fact that it is part of the human condition to hold beliefs and to critically evaluate his own position in terms of those beliefs. The approach also satisfies the demands for openness and objectivity insofar as the pupil is presented with the whole menu of faith responses rather than the single and perhaps hard to swallow dish of the confessional approach.

This understanding is supported by David Hay who writes:

"To understand how somebody else experiences the world, we have to take their inner experiences seriously, and that involves an awareness that we have an inner experience of our own".

(Hay, 1990, p7)

Once again it is the experience of the pupil that is the focus of attention and which was of such concern to Loukes. In this understanding, however, the experience of the pupil is released from the confines of the purely confessional approach.

This view would also seem to be the basis of the FARE Project. The understanding of Religious Education here takes as its premiss the seemingly confessional stance of the Crowther Report:

"The teenagers with whom we are concerned need perhaps before all else, to find a faith to live by. They will not find the same faith and some will not find any. Education can and should play some part in their 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"

(Board of Education, 1958, p15)

It is suggested that this statement contains three elements necessary to an educational view of Religious Education. It takes account of

learning and understanding insofar as it gives regard for what other men have found; it emphasises personal growth and development through its recognition of the need to find the same faith to live by; the suggestion that not all will find the same faith indicates an open anti-indoctrinatory stance commanding a pedagogical style in which the teacher is equally a searcher after truth suggested above in terms of getting alongside the pupil.

The approach which is suggested here is one which on the one hand deals with specific content whilst on the other acknowledges a mode of thinking in terms of the evaluation of belief and values:

"Pupils should be able to participate in Religious thought forms as well knowing certain facts about religion."

(Exeter University, 1990, p7)

Similarly, Hay warns that it is easy to take an interest in religions because of their architecture, ceremonies or art forms, doctrinal beliefs and so forth. This is certainly the case in many of the approaches to Religious Education which claim to be phenomenological. There can be no case for an approach to Religious Education which does not relate clearly to the experience of the child. Hay writes:

"... if we fail to grasp that all of these have grown up as a response to the experience of a sacred dimension to reality, we can have no understanding of the religious believer."

(Hay, 1990, p10)

As with the phenomenological approach a key aim is to foster empathy. This cannot be achieved if the externals of religion are stressed at the expense of its spirituality, as Hay says:

"the content of religious belief cannot be produced by material circumstances."

(Hay, 1990, p13)

### **from collectivism to phenomenology**

The phenomenological approach represents a further attempt to find a sound educational basis for the teaching of Religious Education. As with those approaches already examined above, however, there are versions which simply do not satisfy educational requirements.

The approach is described clearly by the Schools Council in terms of the promotion of understanding:

"It uses the tools of scholarship to enter into an empathic experience of the faith of individuals and groups. It does not seek to promote any one religious viewpoint, but it recognises that the study of religion must transcend the merely informative"

(Schools Council, 1971, p4)

The approach focuses on the explicit phenomena of religion, whether Christian or non-Christian, through an open and sympathetic attitude. Preconceived ideas of truth and meaning are bracketed out in favour of an unbiased investigation.

The aims of education in this approach have been mapped out by Ninian Smart:

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

(Smart, 1968, p105/6)

It is Smart's view that the study of religion should be governed by the same educational principles as any other subject. The aim is not to use classes for the purpose of evangelism or to channel pupils into accepted view points about Religion.

The aim is to create the ability to understand and think about religion in a way that is educationally sound. Teaching which is educationally sound pays attention to the "how" rather than the "that".

Phenomenology, however, is a much mis-used and mis-understood term. A danger lies in the phenomenological approach of failing to go beyond simply "teaching about" religion although Smart makes a point of distinguishing between the historical, (i.e, missing out questions of truth) and the parahistorical, (i.e, involving questions of truth).

Meakin comments:

"... to contain RE to the descriptive would be educationally absurd... if a pupil is to appreciate the importance of a religion to a culture in which it figures he must weigh its claims and debate the questions of truth... i.e, enter into the parahistorical."

(Meakin, 1979, p52)

The confessional approach tackles the question of truth and meaning but in a context which is neither open or neutral. The Phenomenological approach is an attempt to counter this by dealing with questions of truth and meaning in an objective way. The problem facing the Phenomenologist is how to deal with such issues as truth and meaning. this point is raised by the Schools Council:

"If religion cannot be properly understood apart from subjectivity, then any satisfactory concept of objectivity study must somehow include that subjectivity. That is, the objectivity must be about the subjectivity."

(Schools Council, 1971, p22)

Smart recognises the need to define what religion is but accepts that it is not helpful to talk in terms of a common core between the different faiths. However, Smart has isolated six formal characteristics of Religion. (Smart, 1968, p15-18 ).

- 1) A system of doctrines; all religions have a set of principles or beliefs.
- 2) Myths; stories of significance which depict, whether in an historical event or in an imaginative projection, the relation between the transcendent and the human and worldly realms. A myth in this context is not a lie but attempts to explain experience. Myths are to be understood as truths insofar as they disclose in a penetrating and timeless way man's relation to the world and the supernatural.
- 3) A set of social and ethical norms; the Ten Commandments represent a fairly universal system of ethics but in particular Smart refers to such values as love, humility and compassion. The values of a religion are those that determine its basic stance to man's life in the world.
- 4) Ritual; generally in religion, ritual is the means of getting things done. The action performed in the ritual is concerned with man's entire relationship with the god, or gods.
- 5) Experiences; there are such historical illustrations as the conversion of Paul, the Budha under the Bodhi tree and so forth. Experiences, however, are subjective and therefore elusive, although the results of experience may be open to public scrutiny, for example falling in love. Whatever, the important point is that experience is part of the basis of religion.
- 6) A social dimension; every religion is institutionalised, in Christianity this is represented by the various church organizations.

As indicated above, the aim here is not to establish a common core between religions but to establish an objective basis from which to explore the "reality of worship and religious sentiments". (Smart, 1975, p17)

There has been a tendency to view the phenomenological approach as a neutral way of treating religion whilst recognising that each is unique. Grimmitt writes:

"... this has been criticised by some academics and members of different faiths as damaging to religion... it domesticates religion... equating religious understanding as a way of interpreting or categorising experience."

(Grimmitt, 1987, p41)

It is also unhelpful in an educational sense. In a recent address given by Baroness Mary Warnock, Baroness Warnock expressed her view of the neutral teacher:

"There is in my view something daunting in the concept of a wholly neutral teacher, someone apparently without convictions, without personal enthusiasms, and yet this is the attitude teachers of R.E. are often trained to assume, yet all the best teachers are creatures of passion and beliefs, even dotty belief"

(Warnock, 1991, p1)

Understood properly, the phenomenological approach to religion can:

"... enable pupils to comprehend the major world religions' chief doctrines, myths and moral values together with their rituals, the sorts of religious experience which they characteristically evoke in their adherents and the typical sorts of social organisation to which they give rise."

(Meakin, 1988, p92)

The underlying suggestion is that the phenomenological approach provides teachers with an excellent opportunity to promote such society values as tolerance. Teachers have a variety of problems to address in terms of prejudices, bigotries and groundless fears but the right kind of exposure can undermine these irrationalities.

The approach, however, could make matters worse. Resentment leading to rejection of a forced diet of biblical doctrine, which was the criticism of old style confessionalism indicated above, may simply be replaced by something far more deadly:

"Knowledge by itself does not automatically include respect for others... it is therefore important for teachers to communicate their own respect... some ego defensive attitudes and prejudices are actually fuelled by undogmatic, objectivity teaching about religion."

(Day, 1985, p56)

The opinions of the pupils which may have regarded the practice of other faith systems as peculiar may simply be reinforced. The notion that Religious Education should be taught to promote tolerance in a multi-cultural society is to impose upon the subject extrinsic values which are not necessarily part of its educational criteria.

As shown in chapter two there is a danger of allowing a subject to be hijacked by values which are not intrinsic to it and may result in the loss of the educational reasons for teaching that subject in the first place. It has been the aim of this thesis thus far to determine the aim of Religious Education and the extent to which the various approaches to Religious Education have fulfilled that aim.

The correct approach to Religious Education recognises that what is being dealt with is an emotionally charged, value laden area, but it is this which gives Religious Education its content and character:

"far from claiming that the study is objective neutral, or value free, it must be disclosed for what it is - a secular study of religion drawing from a variety of disciplines, including psychology, sociology, phenomenology, history and theology."

(Grimmitt, 1987, p46)

A possible criticism of the phenomenological approach as examined above is that it lacks adequate educational grounds and an insufficient methodology. Grimmitt suggests that to explore religions from the "point of view of those" who are adherents is unrealistic if, at the same time, such exploration does not also meet their own needs and relate to their own experience and interests. This creates something of a catch 22 in that the bracketing out of one's questions and experiences is a key principle of the phenomenological approach; this in turn contradicts any notion of child centred/related learning which

White suggests "requires that the pupil himself internalises the aim; sees it and accepts it for what it is". (White, 1982, p62)

Grimmitt raises a further objection in that:

"any educational process which excludes judgement or criticism as a matter of principle can hardly be said to be extending pupil's capacities for personal decision making or contributing to their personal knowledge".

(Grimmitt, 1987, p210)

It is the aim of this thesis, however, to suggest that the phenomenological approach is the most satisfactory given an adequate understanding of it. That which has been examined so far does not fully satisfy the requirements of a balanced education and places Religious Education in what has been termed above as collectivism.

If the phenomenological approach is to be understood in educational terms it must move from collectivism to phenomenology. Such an understanding seems to be apparent through Grimmitt's suggestion that phenomenology, as it applies to Religious Education, needs to be linked with existentialism. The result is that:

"content studied in Religious Education is not only intended to promote awareness and understanding of religion and religions but also to promote reflection on the part of the pupils on the implications that the adoption of a religious view would have on their own understanding of self and their subsequent development as a person... pupils... should not only be able to describe what it means to be a Christian/Hindu/ Jew/Muslim/Sikh, etc, but that they should also be encouraged to evaluate their understanding of religion in personal terms and evaluate their understanding of self in religious terms (i.e, in terms of the religious beliefs that they have learned about)."

(Grimmitt, 1987, p213)

This is probably closest to a real understanding of Religious Education as an wholly educational exercise. As with the implicit approach offered by Loukes the pupils are again required to be part of the process of Religious Education. As shown above, the Loukes approach

fails because it is confined to a confessional context, Grimmitt's suggestion is one which puts the pupil back into the "arena of faith responses" (Grimmitt, 1987, p87) in which the pupil may critically evaluate his own experience of life.

Having surveyed three of the main approaches it is possible to discern sound education thinking behind each one. It is the proposal of this thesis that the approach to Religious Education would somehow pay attention to aspects of all three and that this final suggestion by Grimmitt achieves this position. It was suggested above that the aim of the confessional approach was that pupils should be capable of knowing and loving God, not that they should do so. The implicit/experiential approaches aim at involving the pupil's own experience in the study but this was initially constrained by its confessional framework. The phenomenological approach represents an attempt to widen the menu but a limited understanding of the approach prevents the pupil from being involved at a subjective level. It is tempting to accuse this understanding of phenomenology as being indirectly exclusivist. In other words, willing to present the menu, but not willing to permit open choices from it, a hangover perhaps of the cultic indoctrination indicated above.

In identifying the existentialist branch of phenomenology , Grimmitt offers a blend of all three approaches.

A good illustration of the various approaches to Religious Education has been suggested by Edwin Cox who draws a distinction between understanding religion and religious understanding. Cox draws a parallel with the motor car, he argues that one might adopt a purely

objective attitude which deals with the language of cylinders, blocks, pistons, and other such areas concerned with physics and mechanics.

The areas of aesthetic appreciation and personal reaction need not enter. The car however conjures up notions of freedom, power, status and pleasure whilst to another it epitomises the pollution of the atmosphere.

Different people bring to bear on a subject different modes of understanding. The suggestion here is that understanding is more than a "cerebral" activity. Understanding:

"...demands relation to our own experience of life and assessment in the light of that experience."

Understanding is:

"...a slippery concept according to what is being understood and there are differences according to structure, feeling and function."

(Cox, 1985, p4)

Whilst it is logical to talk of understanding in terms of structure only, there are many other things that demand a personal involvement and response. It is necessary to speak of different types of understanding.

In terms of Christian belief it is Hirst's suggestion that it is possible to come to some understanding of what this might mean even if the truths of those beliefs are known. Objective judgements are dependent upon a body of agreed concepts:

"It is only because we agree on the meanings of the words employed that we can understand the claim that five million people live in the Greater London area."

(Hirst, 1974, p62)

This complies with an objective form of knowledge and understanding and is the basis of a phenomenological approach to Religious Education. In this sense it is acceptable to teach knowledge of beliefs, attitudes and values as part of Religious Education as this approach embodies the elements within a form of knowledge. The teaching of Religious Education that is concerned with an understanding and knowledge of the Christian or any other religious viewpoint has nothing to do with getting people to believe or practice it.

"In this area, as any other, teaching about something is concerned with the pupils' getting inside what it is they are asked to consider."

(Hirst, 1973, p9)

At the end of the day it is unlikely that a faithful presentation of Religious Education can be anything more than this.

It is, however, Cox's view that the confessional approach is ultimately more favourable. Religious Understanding Cox describes as "more vital" than Understanding Religion. In the phenomenological approach, correctly understood, there exists, in reality, a "liberal alliance".

"True phenomenological study is more than study of religious phenomenon. It is empathic, seeing through other eyes."

(Cox, 1985, p6)

**concepts: the power to engender essential meanings**

Cox's analogy of the car not only illustrates the need for a blend of the views suggested above but also identifies a fourth strand that already serves as an effective approach to Religious Education. It may be argued that Religious Education may be taught from a concept base

rather than content base and in this way tackles the difficult task of fostering in pupils something of the nature of religious experience.

At the heart of such a view lies the belief that:

"Religious Education is not about religion unless it engages the spiritual"

(Hay, 1990, p19)

Spirituality is described by Derek Webster as the "spark" but the problem facing teachers is whether or not they are being led into "a subtle form of confessionalism" (Webster, 1985, p20). This need not be the case if the issue of spirituality is set against the question:

"How are teachers in religious education to help their young people to understand what it is to be a Muslim, a Sikh, A Hindu, a Jew, a Buddhist or a Christian?"

(Webster, 1985, p20)

This of course is the aim of the phenomenological approach but it cannot be entirely successful if questions of truth and meaning are bracketed out as indicated above.

The task at hand is to find a path from a secular understanding to a religious understanding, to tread the path as Loukes intended "from realities to Realities". (Loukes, 1961, p150 cited above). The suggestion is that a concept based approach may achieve this. Webster, for example, uses the notion of hope which may be understood as a sense of "being not yet completely or of becoming something other". (Webster, 1985, p24). The concept works like a two way mirror and provides an insight into the dimensions of religious experience. Thus, concepts provide the opportunity to reflect and to get imaginatively inside the experience of another.

The concept approach may be supported using Hay's analogy of the cube. (Hay, 1990, p14) As a three dimensional image we are presented with what is clearly a cube. We recognise the image because we have experience of cubes. For the desert island tribe, in Hay's analogy, who have never seen cubes, the two dimensional image may now appear as an insect on a hexagonal background. Concepts portray the way in which experience is related to the world but also highlight the need to learn to see things in different ways.

The concept approach when applied to Religious Education offers a basis which eradicates earlier criticisms of it:

"Religious educators are sometimes accused of attempting to indoctrinate their pupils. But when Religious Education is correctly understood it becomes clear that it is the reverse of indoctrination. What it does is to demonstrate that there is more than one perspective on reality. It enlarges rather than diminishes freedom."

(Hay, 1990, p15)

The path one treads to "Reality" is now taken mindful of the different understandings that others may have of it.

The next task is to identify those concepts which address both the secular and religious issues. To some extent this task has already been accomplished by some of the more recent Agreed Syllabuses, particularly Avon and Hampshire (1976 and 1978) and Durham (1982).

The Avon Agreed syllabus broke new ground in Religious Education; its aims and general objectives state that the principle aim should be:

"to enable pupils to understand the nature of religion and what it should mean to take a religion seriously."

(Avon Education Service, 1976, p4)

In addition to the usual study of the lives of founders, sacred books and institutions there is an emphasis on language and ideas. This is related to the interpretation of experience, the study of analogy and parable, myths and legends, the grounds for belief and unbelief. For the thirteen to sixteen year olds a key aim is to:

"understand the nature of religion as a coherent interpretation of human experience and as a way of life based on that interpretation."

(Avon Education Service, 1976, p7)

The Hampshire syllabus follows much the same lines and included in its aims is the following statement:

"Religious Education is concerned with making pupils aware of experience and concepts basic to all religions"

(Hampshire Education Authority, 1978, p8)

The objective is to enable pupils to discover some of the ways in which human beings have approached and answered questions of the meaning and purpose of existence.

It is clear from the aims of these two syllabuses that Religious Education is not based entirely on content in terms of the externals of Religious practice.

The much later Durham Agreed Syllabus pays direct attention to "the exploration of certain basic areas of human experience" and lists ten key concepts. The first six address areas of human experience. These are: Awe and Wonder; Self; Relationship with other persons; Personal qualities; Corporate identity and the Relationship to the natural world. (Durham Education Authority, 1982, p7)



The remaining four concepts are associated with the basic pattern of religion and consist of: The Universality of Religion; Deity; Worship, ritual, sacrifice, symbolism, prayer, religious language and beliefs, faith and commitment. (Durham Education Authority, 1982, p8).

The Religious Education Council suggests that through a concept based approach:

"religious phenomena could be regarded, not as a means of information to be imparted at all costs, but as a quarrying ground for examples by which to practice understanding"

(Religious Education Council, 1977, p24)

syllabuses may then be constructed so as to relate to the different ways in which children think about and see life. This point is supported by Alex Rodger who writes:

"the educational effectiveness of the religious education curriculum is likely to be greater if the curriculum is structured in relation to the central categories (or concepts) which emerge from attending to the nature of subject matter."

(Rodger, 1986, p1)

Rodger maintains that it is helpful to identify the basic categories which underpin all manifold data of religious tradition and experiences and which help to explain and structure them. Rodger distinguishes between first order categories, the concrete phenomena of religion such as doctrines and practices and second order categories, understood as those which give coherence and structure to religion and are latent and explicit.

These second order categories are Worship, Salvation, Interpretation, Identity and Truth. The aim of these five categories is to:

"elucidate what religion is about (and are) offered as recognitions of the varied, specific religious affirmations, practices and longings of diverse believers and believing communities"

(Rodger, 1986, p8)

It is Rodger's view that the recognition of these categories is of equal importance for those approaches in Religious Education normally classed as phenomenological or existential. A concept based approach is not bound by one or the other. For example the concept of salvation maybe examined phenomenologically in terms of the biblical accounts through parables and miracles, the death and resurrection of Jesus, the images of hell through the Upanishads and the Koran and so forth. An existential view may concentrate on the desires to make the world a better place. Rodger suggests this may even be conveyed through those crafts concerned with making and mending; the improvements to life wrought by medicine and through a study of Man's physical and spiritual needs. (Rodger, 1986, p18).

#### **THE ARGUMENT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Having attempted to identify the educational strands of Religious Education it remains now to present something of its contribution to the curriculum on the basis of those approaches.

#### **from school to society**

Alves recognises the need for religion and education to provide a context for each other. (Alves, 1975, p29) Vast areas of social and scientific material need to be considered in order to understand many of the issues raised by Religious Education. Without such a context religion, which is so much part of everyday life, will be divorced from it.

Contemporary problems may best be understood in a religious context. Religious, and of course anti-religious, beliefs may be seen to affect the whole of a society. Religious Education may also be seen to contribute to historical knowledge and understanding. Pupils may examine the impact of Christianity, and indeed other religions on the country.

There is an undeniable link between religion and the arts and so Religious Education may be seen to contribute to aesthetic understanding. All religions address moral concerns but there are radical differences in thinking between countries and even within this country. Through an educational study of religion it is possible to bring pupils to an understanding of differing attitudes towards, for example, War, Capital Punishment, Abortion and Contraception and particularly how these attitudes are related to religious belief.

An educational context for Religious Education might be understood as:

"... a programme of informing and encouraging exploration into whatever truth and meaning may be found in the world's major religions, including Christianity"

(Attfield, 1974, p44)

Having established that Religious Education may be taught without resorting to the "cultic indoctrination" indicated above it may now be argued that the tradition of our national life may form part of the study of Religious Education having been formed largely through its association with the Christian Religion:

"Since education involves a thorough exploration of the environment and the received culture, this source of our national heritage should be studied and appreciated."

(Schools Council, 1971, p15)

Even in the context of open enquiry this is still perhaps open to

objection. Far more plausible is the argument which states that the nature of religion is itself an issue of importance. The study of religion is important because:

"Religions claims to discern the meaning and purpose of life... religion is that insight for which a person gives his life."

(Schools Council, 1971, p16)

This is just the point that Smart makes when he writes:

"Religions represent facts and feelings and for this reason represents also the elements of answers to living questions implicit in life."

(Smart, 1968, p18)

A further argument is based on modern educational theory, particularly on the notion of a liberal education:

"Any liberal education must provide as fully as possible for the natural development of the child. Young children have a deep sense of wonder and awe."

(Schools Council, 1971, p16)

The working paper maintains that if this side of a child's development is ignored that child will be educationally stunted. This argument was in fact made clear by the Spens Report of 1938 which stated:

"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"

(Board of Education, 1938, p208)

Education needs to take account of the deep interest that young people have in the "finer and deeper aspects of human experience" which feature so significantly in religion. The suggestion is that Religious Education achieves this by:

"... making the pupil aware of the questions and the concerns of religion, and giving him experience of the methods of enquiry, the language and thought forms that belong to this form of discourse."

(Schools Council, 1971, p16)

As has been observed in Chapter 2, a key criterion for any subject is the extent to which it fulfils the needs of society and the place of the pupil within it.

There is, however, a far more fundamental basis for the teaching of Religious Education and that is the existence of beliefs:

"There is no such thing as total absence of beliefs. Therefore part of the task of Religious Education must be to help the pupil examine his own existing beliefs so that he can properly understand these, as well as the beliefs of others... Only then can he claim to be educated in the area of religion."

(Alves, 1975, p29)

### **the demand for autonomy**

It has been suggested in this thesis that the overall aim of education is to promote the development of the morally autonomous person. This is to be understood as central to the process of humanisation.

The argument that this thesis has attempted to support is that Religious Education is an indispensable part of this process. John Hicks writes:

"What is the same (in different religions) though taking many different forms in the transformation of human existence from self centredness to Reality."

(John Hicks, 1983)

Religious Education is to be understood as part of an overall process by in and through which pupils may begin to explore what is and what it means to be human.

Grimmitt uses the term "given" to indicate those aspects which form part of the matrix basic to being human.

"It is the necessity of human beings holding beliefs by an act of faith that I am proposing is a human "given", not the necessity of holding beliefs by an act of religious faith... the comprehensive system of meaning which religions provide belong within the arena of faith responses and are religious faith responses to the question 'What does it mean to be human?'"

(Grimmitt, 1987, p91)

Holding beliefs or believing is therefore to be understood as an essential constituent of humanisation. This reiterates the understanding held by William Temple who described Religious Education as the "supreme service" because it was concerned with the spiritual and the intellectual nature of man:

"Education is the means of entrance into the fulness of life, individual and social."

(Sadler, 1985, p5)

Temple was concerned that the spiritual nature of man would be ignored whilst intellectual studies, particularly science, dominated the curriculum. A balanced education paid regard to the intellectual as well as the aesthetic, sympathetic nature of man. The overall effect of a balanced education would alert all the faculties of the "vision of God". It is quite likely that such views are lost in the rejection of implicit/confessional of Religious Education puts this understanding firmly back on what he terms the "empirical carpet". Religious Education can be clearly understood in objective terms.

With Religious Education clearly understood as part of the humanisation process it now seems quite sensible for it to approach the moral issues which form the backdrop to society.

Questions in Religious Education rightly turn to issues of stewardship, sharing world resources, nuclear disarmament and generally questions

dealing with the affairs of life. This is already evident in the useful questioning taking place in GCSE examinations which represent an attempt to create a dialogue between Religious thinking and the modern world.

On the idea that Religious Education necessarily involves Moral Education there is considerable support in the work of Edwin Cox who suggests that morality proceeds from such ultimate questions as "Who am I?", "What is Life?", the approach to which requires a religious sensitivity. (Cox, 1966, p58-60).

An approach to Religious Education that takes account of the morally autonomous person understands religion as:

"... a universe of thought, emotion and activity embodying many different belief systems... including those of secular humanism, Marxism, Existentialism."

(Meakin, 1979, p53)

Moral autonomy requires an understanding of other belief systems to enable the pupil to form his own beliefs and judgements. This implies that the purpose of Religious Education is to bring pupils to some sort of faith. It has already been indicated that the Crowther Report called upon Religious Education to help pupils to find a "faith to live by". (Board of Education, 1958, p15-18).

Respect for moral autonomy implies that the pupils must be presented with the whole field of belief systems from which he may choose, but there is a logistical problem created by the sheer number of belief systems and not enough time on the timetable to consider them all. Meakin suggests that the influence of religious conservatism and the reluctance of those even with nominal adherence to transfer allegiance

whilst those with no beliefs at all are unlikely to adopt a religion outside their own society. (Meakin, 1988, p92).

Finding a faith to live by is perhaps mis-leading and is not necessarily the aim of Religious Education. As with Alves (above) Grimmitt suggests that the aim of Religious Education accepts that there are beliefs and that it is necessary as part of the process of humanisation to learn to live in what he describes as the arena of faith responses:

"The human being has no alternative to holding beliefs other than holding other beliefs; the artist has no alternative to using colours other than using other colours. Unbeliefs, like uncolours do not exist; a beliefless human life is as impossible to contemplate as a colourless painting. The task of making meaning involves the human being in choosing between beliefs; the task of painting a picture involves the artist in choosing between colours. The human being who does not choose between beliefs cannot make meaning in his or her life; the artist who does not choose between colours cannot paint a picture on the canvas."

(Grimmitt, 1987, p90)

**where now for religious education?**

**It is Alex Rodger's proposal (cited above) that:**

"the educational effectiveness of religious education curriculum is likely to be greater if the curriculum is structured in relation to central categories (or concepts) which emerge from attending to the nature of the subject matter"

(Rodger, 1986, p1)

It is the view of this thesis that this statement is more significant now than perhaps five years ago. With the arrival of the National Curriculum and a new approach in terms of Attainment Targets the sombre tone of the FARE report should not be taken lightly when it says:

"Religious Education must participate in the main stream educational debate if it is not to become even more of a Cinderella subject than it is."

(Exeter University, 1990, p27)

Adopting a conceptual approach to Religious Education the report offers six, as yet unrecognised, attainment targets for the subject. In an increasingly overcrowded timetable it is the view of the report that attainment targets in religious education provide the ammunition in the fight for more time.

The attainment targets consist of 1) Awareness of mystery, 2) Questions of meaning, 3) Values and commitments, 4) Religious belief, 5) Religious practice and 6) Religious Language. 1-3 deal with reflection on meaning whilst the rest are concerned with knowledge and understanding of religious belief, practice and language. (Exeter University, 1990, p31. It is encouraging to note that many areas are now producing Attainment Targets for Religious Education, eg, Rochester & Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education; the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley).

This brief foray into the implications of the National Curriculum for Religious Education stands here as a reminder of the need for the subject to be understood clearly in current educational terms. It is suggested that the concept based approach contains a key to the survival of religious education. It is this key which will be shown in the final chapter to provide an understanding of the role of religious education in the integrated humanities curriculum.

**summary**

It has been the aim of this chapter to trace the background and development of Religious Education from its origins to the present day. What is clear is that Religious Education can claim considerable status from its historical past but it cannot expect to justify its continued existence on its past glories.

The search for an educational justification for Religious Education reveals a crisis of identity for the subject as it appears to grapple for a clear understanding which satisfies its own intrinsic values and those of education as a whole.

An attempt has been made in this chapter to show that the approaches to Religious Education represent the search for educational legitimacy. It is possible, therefore, to argue for the confessional strand of Religious Education in educational terms and to suggest that misunderstandings of the approach, and indeed the others, derive from misuses of it.

It is the view of this thesis that an approach through concepts provides an additional strand of Religious Education which satisfies both the requirements of the subject in its own right and the wider concerns of Education. This may be seen to include such extrinsic values as the preparation for society and the autonomy of the pupil. In the final analysis it is suggested that an approach through concepts may also provide the safeguard for the position of Religious Education in the National Curriculum.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**INTEGRATION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

"...it is clear that what distinguishes an integrated curriculum from any other form of curriculum is far from clear and that the arguments on its behalf are elusive."

(Hirst, 1974, p132)

It is the aim of this chapter to isolate what is meant by integration and to analyse the claims of integration as a curriculum form. Having identified the nature and form of integration it will then be possible to judge the validity of the claims that have been made for it. This may be achieved by a study of the educational arguments surrounding integrated approaches and schemes.

From such an understanding it will be possible to discern the role of Religious Education within the overall notion of an integrated scheme.

### **modes of integration : some definitions**

Integration simply means breaking down barriers. It may be argued that the type of barrier down, signals a particular type of integration.

Primary schools have been operating integrating schemes for years but mainly this is understood as the removal of lesson divisions and bells resulting in the "integrated day". Such is the extent of this form of integration that primary education is understood in these terms.

Many schools have experimented with integrating children, through an approach by which classes are non-streamed. In this way teachers may talk about "mixed ability" teaching and in recent years this has been extended to include children with disabilities. Such children are "integrated" with able bodied children.

Not only may children be integrated but so may the teachers! Teachers may combine under a team teaching or planning scheme. Where both teacher and pupil are integrated it is possible to talk in terms of "partners in learning". The barrier of authoritarianism is broken down and teacher and pupil work alongside each other in a spirit of cooperation and democracy with the whole group of first name terms.

In situations where classrooms are seen as the barrier this may lead to open plan structures in which the so called artificial barriers, such walls, are done away with.

The barriers which integration seeks to break down therefore are subjects, lesson divisions, streaming, teacher autonomy, classrooms and to some extent teaching groups. This latter point understands school classes as outdated and looks towards flexible grouping and individual timetabling. This manifests itself in some primary schools as vertical grouping.

On the whole integration is understood either in terms of subjects or in lessons. The concern here is primarily with the integration of subjects.

### **SUBJECT INTEGRATION**

The first task is to understand what is meant by the term subject integration. It would seem that such understanding is as varied as the types of integration listed above.

David Warwick describes subject integration as:

"the desire to pursue broader topics of interest laterally over a widely defined area."

(Warwick, 1973, p10)

### **related studies or super subject?**

The beginnings of such an approach may seem to lie in what Warwick describes as "related studies". Integration at this level is understood as:

"finding out exactly what others are doing, when they are doing it, and the sequence involved. Constant cross-references can then be made to work in progress elsewhere and when it appears appropriate, joint lessons held or exchange of teachers arranged. "Related Studies" as such an arrangement could be called, would appear to be a legitimate first step to any closer liaison."

(Warwick, 1973, p3)

This is not integration in the fullest sense but it will be seen that many of the ideals of integration are fulfilled.

Gerald Haigh offers a definition which gives a more direct understanding of what is meant by subject integration:

"Integration means the introduction into the school curriculum of areas of study which draw on the subject matter of and methods and more than one of the traditional school subjects."

(Haigh, 1970, p20)

The result is a new subject formed by studies grouped around subject organisations. This can lead to the less popular notion of super subject which may often appear in the form of Social Studies, the Expressive Arts, Science and of course Humanities. This view of integration as a new subject is also identified by Adams who observes:

"The object is not to teach the subject specialisms of English, Economics, History, or Geography in a new way, but to teach what is conceived of as a new subject area altogether."

(Adams, 1976, p18)

It is perhaps more helpful to regard integration as a way of organising learning insofar as it aims to engender a "process" of education. Such a view is conceived within an attitude of openness which sees nothing sacred in subjects. The would be integrator seeks to engender in the pupil a process of learning described as "learning how to learn". (MacKinder, 1913, p6, Bruner, 1969, p6). The final, and presumably desired, result is that the pupil becomes the integrator able to select and assimilate from the world of experience around him.

It is in the context of the Humanities that Hume and Watson recognise that a distinct process is to be found within integration. The organisation of integration in this context is not around disciplines therefore but around human issues. The key element is "relevance", not necessarily to a body of knowledge per se, but as to how issues are to be handled. In this sense integration may be understood as:

"a distinct process which draws content, concepts and skills from many subject areas."

(Hume and Watson, 1986)

The result is an issues based humanities curriculum focused upon "child-enquiry". It was to this end that MacKinder was working when he spoke of sending children out curious of the world having learned how to learn. (MacKinder, 1913, p6)

There would seem to be two main strands in particular by which to categorise subject integration. Firstly, there is the integration of content matter and in this sense integration is perhaps best understood as the way material is structured and introduced to the pupils, as a way of handling the mass of educational content. This may range from such approaches as related studies to the notion of a super subject.

In both cases it is the content of the subject matter which remains uppermost.

The second strand identifies integration in terms of concepts, skills and values. In this sense integration is not understood as the dissolution of subjects but the bringing together of the conventional subject disciplines in order to help students to a critical understanding of society and an ability to make balanced judgements with greater emphasis placed upon the personal development of the pupil.

#### **avoiding the free-for-all of subject integration**

The understanding of integration within the Integrated Studies Project adds a further dimension, describing integration as:

"the exploration of any large area, theme or problem which:

(a) requires the help of more than one subject or discipline for its full understanding, and

(b) is best taught by the concerted action of a group of teachers."

(Bolam, 1970, p159)

The teachers are also part of the integration process requiring the same attitude of open-enquiry that is to be engendered in the pupils. Such an attitude is necessary if one is to avoid the "free-for-all" of subject integration in which the approach merely deteriorates into what has been labelled the "mish-mash" of the humanities.

It is the view of this thesis that the successful form of integration is one which does not seek to impose integration on the curriculum as an aim in itself but one which recognises the intrinsic value of the educational forms of knowledge. It is therefore this second strand which is of particular interest.

### **WHY INTEGRATE?**

There are a variety of reasons offered as to why an integrated approach should be adopted. These may be divided between practical and educational considerations.

#### **some practical considerations**

The integration of subjects may provide an answer to the pressure on schools to allow more time for existing subjects and to introduce new subjects into the already crowded general curriculum for 11-14 year olds. An example of this is already evident as the plans for a National Curriculum develop.

A clear reason for integration emanates from the desire to provide some continuity between junior and secondary schools and so ease the transition from one to the other. This could certainly be used as a way of toning down what has been described as the "change of lessons nightmare" (Williams, 1984, p8)

Integration could serve as an answer to the problem of falling rolls in schools. Schools with an inadequate supply of specialist teachers may turn to integrated courses in an attempt to solve these problems.

### **some educational considerations**

Gerald Haigh suggests that an integrated approach may offset the aridity of the traditional subject based curriculum, the stock-in-trade of the Grammar School approach to education which derives from the Regulations for Grammar Schools of 1904. (Haigh, 1975, p23). Integration may be the answer to the demand for greater breadth insofar as integration claims to offer an overview of education, an attempt to view education horizontally rather than vertically. Within such a view the system of strict subject boundaries is seen as an anachronism in modern education.

From here it may be claimed that integration offers a "child-centred" approach to education. Within such a context the content of the curriculum is subservient to the child's needs and must be modified to suit him. Haigh's understanding of a child-centred approach may be seen as the ability to awaken the genuine interest of the child. This may mean operating outside the normal parameters of the traditional approach or, as Haigh suggests, "doing non-historical things in history":

"...the stimulation of the child's interest is of far more importance than any subject's integrity... integrity only exists in the mind of the traditional academics who preserve the walls around their subjects for no reason other than that they have always done so and that it serves their purpose very well to perpetuate the situation".

(Haigh, 1975, p25)

Richard Pring suggests an argument for integration from the point of view of popular philosophy of education. (Pring, 1970, p4). The theories of Hirst and Phenix, for example, imply that school subjects

represent what it is to think, to know and to enquire. The supporters of integration must argue that this theory is either incorrect or incomplete requiring in the case of the latter some form of integration as a supplement. It may therefore be added to the claims made above that integration provides fullness to a curriculum that is otherwise lacking. This will be examined in due course.

Rather than following a series of seemingly unconnected items in multifarious random directions, as seem to be the case with approaches based on the "forms of knowledge" or "realms of meaning", the aim is to bring cohesion to a curriculum which appears divisive and without pattern. Thus it may be said that integration:

"strives to develop whole personalities by restoring some of the wholeness to knowledge."

(Warwick, 1973, p10)

The suggestion is that the eventual result of integration may be less than desired but the end result will be less fragmented, and presumably less incomplete, than the traditional syllabuses are perhaps considered to be.

In the heyday of integration, insofar as integration ever had one, the jargon of the period included the "seamless cloak of knowledge" the "unity of learning", a "single view of the world and of life" all of which could only be truly reflected in an integrated curriculum.

Such a view stands opposed to what J. W. Tibble describes as the "hermetically sealed compartments" in a curriculum where no-one seems concerned about the whole story of human development. (Tibble, 1970)

It has been shown above that education is understood by many as the preparation for life in society. It might be argued that too great a division of the curriculum will prevent the school from fulfilling this function. The desire for a process in education which emphasises learning as a fundamental skill gathers momentum within the context of a technological age. Such rapid change in society may require of people the learning of new skills or change of jobs at least three times during the adult life. It may be argued that integration is justified since, as indicated above, it claims to engender such qualities as enquiry, research, a critical mind and sound judgment, all of which may be regarded as vital tools in the process of learning.

Warwick is concerned that the traditional approach to learning may not keep up with rapid sociological change:

"the curriculum of the school tends to be out of sequence with actual changes taking place in society... an attempt is being made to prepare for the world of tomorrow through the inculcation of thought forms of yesterday."

(Warwick, 1973, p8)

### **parochial concerns**

The form which integration may take, however is subject to a variety of parochial concerns. Parochial concerns may consist of such basic things as school buildings, the availability of schools resources, attitudes of staff and of pupils and the curricular tradition of the school.

Warwick isolates three main factors which have to be considered by anyone wishing to establish an integrated approach in the classroom.

- 1) The subject teachers' desire for retention of identity.
- 2) The structuring of the material that is introduced.
- 3) The relationship between the teacher and pupil. Is the teacher's role to be directive or advisory, authoritative or tutorial?

On this first point Frank Musgrove has made clear the defensive nature of the school subject master. (Musgrove, 1968). In Musgrove's view the school subject has all the facets of a social institution with its sense of identity and loyalty exacted from its members. Integration is understood as a threat, in that power is removed from the subject head of department and placed in the hands of the headteacher, or scheme co-ordinator. It is unlikely that whoever is responsible for the running of an integrated course will be identified in terms of a subject. It may then be felt that the integrated scheme will be given bias to that one subject over the others and so the problems develop.

Whatever the reasons for adopting an integrated approach there can be no sense of it being simply a whim; there is a fine line between a highly organised and perhaps heavily teacher directed approach and a vague "mish-mash" of undifferentiated knowledge. The other side of the coin makes it clear that completely non-educational forces have a part to play.:

"...it is easy to be cynical of those schemes for integration where pedagogical principles are superimposed upon administrative structures."

(Williams, 1984, p8)

### **entering the educational debate**

It is therefore, necessary to understand clearly why one should adopt an integrated approach in the classroom. It is not enough that a

method has gone well or has been shown to be popular in some areas. This does not automatically indicate that the approach is morally or educationally sound. The case for integration revolves around the arguments that seek to justify such an approach in the first place. Some of these have been presented above but it still remains to examine the educational validity of these arguments:

Warwick asks:

"What is the point of integration if its ultimate justification is far more tenuous than the autonomous subject divisions it replaced?"

(Warwick, 1973, p4)

It is Warwick's view that an integrated approach may provide not only a viable alternative if handled properly, but a superior form of education to that provided by conventional secondary schooling.

(Warwick, 1973, p6)

Conventional schooling is generally understood in terms of the single subject curriculum which, for the majority of people, constitutes the content of education. The popular view of education is probably that proposed by Hirst and Phenix in terms of Forms of Knowledge and Realms of Meaning. It has shown that each subject is understood in terms of its own set of education objectives. The whole enterprise of education is thus made more manageable by being broken down into a number of smaller enterprises.

It is doubtful that the advocates of integration are disputing the validity of this understanding but question whether the ensuing break down into subjects is necessarily the logical result.

There is a danger, however, in confusing the different forms of knowledge with the traditional subjects or disciplines. It is Hirst's concern that the advocates of the integrated curriculum who attack the so called traditional curriculum may well be attacking the wrong thing:

"It is nonsense to attack the logical structure of existing knowledge, for that is to attack the nature of what, presumably, most of us still want to teach. It is the means that need reconsideration not the necessary character of the ends."

(Hirst, 1974, p137)

The divisions between the traditional subjects may well be broken down but this should not be understood as bridging the logical distinctions in terms of the different forms of knowledge.

It is Hirst's belief that integrating the curriculum serves no further advantage over other understandings of curriculum form. Hirst regards the methods used in an integrated approach simply as tools which may be deployed as a further means for enabling the pupils to learn what has already been intended. (Hirst, 1974, p132)

Hirst agrees that the subjects on the curriculum have historical origins whilst others have been added to it to meet new social demands. This view, however, must not be so rigid as to preclude that the traditional subjects have remained unchanged. Niblett wrote of the label on the bottle in regard to subjects (Niblett, 1954, p103). Hirst, similarly indicates that the content of some subjects has changed so much that whatever the label signifies is far from clear. (Hirst, 1974, p135)

The crux of Hirst's argument is that there is no fundamental reason why the curriculum must be divided into subjects that mirror distinctions between the forms of knowledge. The opponents of this approach must have themselves assumed that any logical coherent curriculum must consist of subjects devoted to these distinct categories and have therefore attacked the basis rather than the assumption.

It is possible, therefore, to suggest that there is no problem with a subject taking account of objectives of different logical kinds in order to serve its purpose. There can, however, be no question of breaking down the categories of knowledge themselves.

The desire for an overview of the educational panorama is essentially a psychological quest for unity of mind and thinking. The subject curriculum is understood as raising artificial barriers amidst the processes of thought and feeling and serves as an inhibiting force upon the psychological development of the person. Hirst objects:

"In talking of concepts, truth criteria and knowledge, as educational objectives, one is talking about the very elements of consciousness one wants pupils to acquire."

(Hirst, 1974, p145)

These elements possess a unity by their structure and organisation. Hirst sees any attempt to derive a psychological structure separate to the "logical" structure as folly:

"There is no formal structure to consciousness of a psychological kind that is not a matter of the logical relations between the elements."

(Hirst, 1974, p146)

This is not to deny that the subject approach may fail to deal with the psychological issues but this is not a fault of the subject approach rather it is down to the failure to teach adequately the logical relations between objectives that are part of their logical structure.

It was shown above that an integrated approach may offer a better preparation for life in society, whilst the traditional approach may prove inadequate in the face of rapid change. Hirst suggests, however, that any inadequacy in the learning process is not necessarily a weakness in the subject curriculum, but could well be a problem created by the tendency to organise subjects around university departments rather than on the fundamental premiss of the understanding of knowledge:

"...there is no obvious reason why a form of knowledge based school subject should not deal with many practical applications of the knowledge falling under that form"

(Hirst, 1974, p143)

Hirst's argument against the integration of the curriculum is very convincing if one adopts a content base for integration. It has been suggested, however, that an approach which is based upon concepts offers more scope and may stand up to the criticisms suggested here by Hirst.

An examination of the key schemes of integration will provide an opportunity to examine the form of integration deployed and from this position discern the role and scope for Religious Education within such schemes.

## APPROACHES TO INTEGRATION

### integration through the humanities

The following section examines the key schemes of integration which emerged in the seventies and made use of the areas understood as the Humanities. It needs to be understood what is meant by the Humanities in order to obtain a clear a grasp of what is being integrated and the nature of the integration used by the scheme. Eventually the question as to the role of Religious Education within such a scheme will have to be addressed. An attempt has been made to identify what is meant by Religious Education. On the basis of this it seems reasonable to expect to find those elements which are deemed necessary to the concept of an educated person and currently understood as the unique contribution of Religious Education, within existing Integrated Humanities schemes.

The Schools Council, established in 1965, defined Humanities as including English languages ancient and modern, History, Divinity, Geography, Art and Craft, Music, Drama, Movement and Physical Education. Humanities is the bringing together, or integration, of those aspects concerned with humanness. There is no attempt to define integration, as such although there is concern for strategic and "academic dimensions" such as the organisation of teaching and the regrouping of ideas and knowledge. It would appear that the Humanities provide the context for integration to take place and so is often understood as synonymous with it.

"Humanities could be thought of as all subjects except pure and applied science and mathematics, which contributes to the rational or imaginative understanding of the human situation."

(Bolam, 1970, p159)

The Integrated Studies Project was developed largely under the direction of David Bolam. The project was an integrated scheme involving those areas of the curriculum deemed as the Humanities and fall within the understanding of integration given above.

The Integrated Studies Project approach with its concern for themes, issues and problems related to the human situation represents a desire to establish a central and centralising humanistic study based on man himself.

Through his work with the Integrated Studies Project Bolam recognises a fruitful approach which aims to identify knowledge in four distinct forms.

The Arts may be seen to represent man's inner exploration, in an attempt to communicate his personal experience, or private knowledge. This form may include such disciplines as the study of Language and Literature, Music, Dance and the Fine Arts.

The Natural Sciences collectively deal with man's attempt to explain his environment and so utilize such disciplines as Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Bolam suggests that within a Humanities course certain elements are particularly appropriate such as the concept of "life" and some facets of technology.

The ordering of Man's society may be understood through the study of the Social Sciences. Such study may make use of History and Geography and may well draw upon the disciplines of economics and psychology.

Morals, Religion and Philosophy represent the fourth and most general form of knowledge which Bolam suggests are best studied as dimensions of the other three. This fourth area concerns man's quest for significance and meaning of life. It deals with the domain of personal and social values and commitments.

Bolam views the grouping of knowledge in this way as offering "an overall check for balance" (Bolam, 1971, p163) in the curriculum. There is the potential here for the natural grouping of disciplines which may provide the basis for organising interdisciplinary work.

#### **Man : a course of study - Bruner**

This scheme of work is most closely associated with the work of Jerome Bruner. It embodies many of the ideas put forward by Bruner in his book, "The Process of Education" (1961). Bruner was concerned that the pace of education was not keeping up man's development particularly in terms of Science and Engineering. Although there is much concern for the improvement of science teaching it is a feature of MACOS that such improvement is inextricably linked with other elements of the curriculum.

"...the MACOS curriculum is designed to lead pupils to an understanding of the nature of man through their own exploration and enquiry and to develop techniques of thinking in doing so."

(Adams, 1976, p70)

Adams observes a stress on the Life Sciences and the Arts aimed at nurturing an understanding of the nature of man. In view of this it is possible to describe the MACOS scheme as a true Humanities programme insofar as man is the centre of study.

The content of MACOS derives mainly from three questions which Bruner has raised:

- 1) What is human about human beings?
- 2) How did they get that way?
- 3) How can they be made more so?

"The content of the course is man: his nature as a species, the forces that shaped and continue to shape his humanity... we seek exercises and material through which our pupils can learn wherein man is distinctive in his adaptation to the world and wherein there is a discernible continuity between him and his animal forbears."

(Bruner, 1966, p74)

#### **mode of integration**

These questions, particularly the first, are pursued within the framework of five organising ideas or "humanizing forces":

- 1) Language
- 2) Tool making
- 3) Social Organisation
- 4) The management of man's prolonged childhood
- 5) Man's urge to explain his world.

Bruner follows the methodologies and concepts of the behavioural sciences, for example, life cycle, adaptation, innate and learned behaviour, structure and function, natural selection, dominance, socialization, roles, division of labour, social organisation, culture. the mode of integration is therefore a thematic one.

The programme is designed to lead pupils to an understanding of these concepts through their own concrete experience and through a comparison of man with other animals. The programme makes particular use of the

life cycle of the salmon. There is also an attempt to compare modern Man with his more remote ancestors through a study (albeit contrived) of the Netsilik Eskimo.

The course is based upon seven pedagogical aims:

- 1) To initiate and develop in youngsters a process of question-posing (the enquiry method).
- 2) To teach a research methodology where children can look for information to answer questions they have raised.
- 3) To help youngsters develop the ability to use a variety of sources, first, second and third hand as evidence from which to develop hypotheses and draw conclusions.
- 4) To conduct classroom discussions as well as to express their own ideas.
- 5) To legitimate the search; that is, to give sanction and support to open-ended discussions where definitive answers to many questions are not found.
- 6) To encourage children to reflect on their own experiences.
- 7) To create a new role for the teacher, in which he/she becomes a resource rather than an authority.

The aims of the project are summarized in Book One of "Talks to Teachers". (Dow, 1970)

Firstly there is the desire to stimulate children about the nature of Man, to come to some understanding of the depth of the structure of human experience. From this children may learn how Man copes with the complexities of life and also develop some awareness of the relationship between Man and other living creatures.

Secondly its stress on process integration also operates at the level of teacher-teacher and teacher-pupil relation. Anthony Adams says of the project:

"One of the most valuable aspects of the curriculum is the insight it provides into pedagogical methods."

(Adams, 1976, p73)

For example, teachers have the opportunity to work together and discuss the materials that they will use in the classroom. There is considerable emphasis on team teaching which is a key element in the integrated approach.

The methodology employed in the MACOS scheme stems from Bruner's commitment to process based learning:

"As a follower largely of Piaget, Bruner's concern for the the will to learn, his belief in the educability and his emphasis upon enactive ways of learning for children of this age still largely at the stage of concrete operations, are all of the first importance. Game, role play, construction exercises, simulated hunts and observation projects are amongst the techniques he uses for gathering enthusiasm amongst all students."

(Adams, 1976, p87)

Adams, however, is left wondering whether Bruner's work in MAN a course of study is really about MAN or about education. Adams suggests that the work is an experiment in "process", a practical outworking of Bruner's own theories on education. This criticism is supported by Fred Hughes who suggests that MACOS contains an:

"over emphasis on cognitive and curricular materials and an under emphasis on developing emotional skills."

(Hughes, 1981, p15)

This is also the criticism raised by Adams who suggests that MACOS presents:

"a view of Man that leaves no place for tenderness"

(Adams, 1976, p82)

There is an element of irony here in that the great claim of integration is the restoration of wholeness to the person. This is coupled with an apparent lack of moral comment which Hughes views dimly given the explicit nature of some of the material and the virtually captive and highly vulnerable young audience.

### **religious education in MACOS**

Hughes expresses some concern about the lack of suitable material for Religious Education:

"One gets the impression that MACOS may not have been designed to be regarded as a humanities course including Religious Education"

(Hughes, 1981, p18)

Further, certain basic principles are assumed irrespective of their status from a religious viewpoint such as the process of evolution leading to modern America. This is coupled with an affirmation of the belief in the survival of the fittest as almost a social norm. Hughes observes that on this issue alone the scheme met Christian objection in Australia and parts of America:

"In Queensland, Australia, the government ruled in 1978 that MACOS should not be used in government schools... on the grounds that the materials did not have sufficient regard for traditional places."

(Hughes, 1981, p18)

Further comment on Religious Education and MACOS is given below in connection with a particular school.

### **the humanities curriculum project**

This came together under the direction of Lawrence Stenhouse in 1967 and was based largely on those ideas and concerns raised by the Schools Council Working Paper (No2), Raising the School Leaving Age.

The programme is a curriculum project concerned primarily with the "content" of education. There are two clear aims to this project:

"...to give every man access to a complex cultural inheritance, some hold on his personal life and on his relationship with the various communities to which he belongs, some extension of his understanding of, and sensitivity towards, other human beings... to forward understanding, discrimination and judgement in the human field."

(Schools Council, 1965, p14, para 60)

It was clearly intended that this project be understood in terms of integration and the second clear aim may be understood as:

"To offer schools such stimulus, support and materials as may be appropriate to the mounting, as an element in general education, of enquiry based courses, which cross the subject boundaries between English, History, Geography, Religious Studies and Social Studies. The project is expected to concentrate upon such support as will in particular meet the needs of adolescent pupils of average and below average ability."

(Stenhouse, 1968)

In accordance with the definitions given above, Humanities is understood as the study of human behaviour and experience and was best expressed through the fields of Social Science and the Arts.

The Stenhouse team suggested nine possible areas of enquiry:

- 1) Education
- 2) War and Society
- 3) The Family
- 4) Poverty
- 5) People and Work
- 6) Relations between the Sexes
- 7) Law and Order
- 8) Living in Cities
- 9) Race

(The unit on race was dropped on the grounds that there was danger that it would only serve to harden prejudice.)

Once again the areas of the course represent complex issues of value requiring informed input and decision making by everyone concerned.

### **mode of integration**

Integration operates at the level of content and as with MACOS, at the level of pedagogical method. Teacher and pupil are integrated through an enquiry based approach which in Stenhouse's view understands the role of the teacher as enabler rather than instructor. The teacher operates as a kind of adviser. A good deal of the work is based around the discussion method in which the teacher appears as the neutral chairman. The teacher is responsible for the quality of the discussion but his own views and bias are to be kept apart. The project team argue that the teacher's own personality will lead inevitably to the acceptance or rejection of his views by the pupils because of his

function as a teacher rather than because they have thought out the issues by themselves.

Stenhouse summarizes the thinking upon which the project was based through five premises:

- "1) That controversial issues should be handled in the classroom with adolescents;
- 2) That the teacher accepts the need to submit his teaching in controversial areas to the criterion of neutrality at this stage of education, i.e., that he regards it as part of his responsibility not to promote his own view;
- 3) That the mode of enquiry in controversial areas should have discussion, rather than instruction at its core;
- 4) That the discussion should protect divergence of view among participants, rather than an attempt to achieve consensus;
- 5) That the teacher as chairman of the discussion should have responsibility for the quality and standards in learning."

(Stenhouse, 1970, p1)

The curriculum materials were developed along these lines. Discussion arises from the material at hand, not the teacher. In this way it is argued that education may be based upon cooperation not coercion. The approach indicates a new climate of relationships with adolescents which is not authoritarian. The notion of integration is expressed through the integration of pupils and teachers in the learning situation. For the project team it is a means of freeing the teacher and pupil from the traditional roles.

The authority of the teacher is as dispensable as the authority of the subject discipline. Both give way to what Stenhouse describes as a commitment to rationality and the application of impartial criteria. Thus it may be seen that the Humanities Curriculum Project understands integration in a broad sense. It seems to represent more than an

exercise in integration as an educational experiment as was suggested of the MACOS scheme [above]:

"Rather it was seeking to discover if a new area of enquiry could be marked out which would be genuinely distinctive from the traditional subject areas, though drawing upon them when necessary."

(Adams, 1976, p104)

Stenhouse's work represents a genuine concern for the average and below average pupil for whom, as well as for teachers, the raising of the school leaving age created particular problems. His work may be seen to follow that of Dewey insofar as it reflects a fundamental belief in the student. This fundamental belief stands against what Stenhouse sees as entrenched attitudes, a "brake" on educational development. Stenhouse's plea is to make new knowledge and techniques available. Stenhouse writes in his introduction:

"The aim of this project is to develop an understanding of the social situation and human acts and the controversial value-issues which they raise."

(Stenhouse, 1970, p1)

### **the possibility for Religious Education?**

The pedant might rightly argue, however that in this case teacher and pupil have not been integrated. A central part of the thinking of Whitehead, Dewey and more recently White was that the contribution of the teacher represented a vital part of the learning process. There seems to be no clear educational justification for the wholly neutral teacher and with regard for Religious Education it has already been shown that the context for handling religious questions cannot be anything but value laden. (Grimmitt, 1987, p163)

A neutral environment is more likely to prevent the emergence of key religious questions for open discussion, whilst an approach that is geared entirely to a process model may or may not raise these issues in the first place.

## **TWO SCHOOLS**

### **Meopham School**

Meopham School is a secondary school of some 1200 pupils who enter at aged 11 but sit selective examinations at 13+. The school is situated in a leafy suburban environment in North Kent.

The Humanities department is a thriving and successful unit within the school although there are now only four staff. This represents a reduction of fifty per cent since its establishment in the early seventies. Humanities at Meopham is based on "Man : a course of study".

MACOS has been the content and approach of Humanities at Meopham since the establishment of the department and is the basis of the Humanities course today, some twenty-three years since its emergence. Certain aspects of the course now seem somewhat contrived. The study of the Netsilik Eskimo was already subject to considerable film-makers license in that many of the scenes showing traditional Eskimo life were artificially constructed such skills having died out. In terms of the 1990's this artistic license has to be understood as total, the Netsilik being all but extinct.

The MACOS project relies heavily on the use of resource material in terms of publications and films. The films which required specialist projection equipment have been successfully transferred to video-tape and so the project to some extent has been able to keep up with technological change. With the advent of the National Curriculum the scheme will come to an end as the National Curriculum allows little scope, at this stage in its development, for the level of interdisciplinary work which the MACOS course requires.

#### **mode of integration**

The Humanities Department at Meopham is made up from the following departments:- History, Geography and Religious Education. The members of the Humanities team do not see the department as being made up of three separate and distinct subjects. In accordance with the aims of MACOS Humanities is understood as a course on Man which aims to look at Man's nature as a species and the forces that shaped and continue to shape his humanity.

The department stresses that objectives are not to be understood in terms of "behavioural objectives" or of "measurable learner behaviour". It is understood that this is more likely to be the case within a traditionally content based framework. It is the view of the department that such an approach assumes that curriculum change is achieved by clarifying objectives, classifying them in some hierarchical order and choosing the best means of reaching them.

The view of this department upholds that the content for a curriculum unit may be selected without any kind of reference to precise student

behaviour or to ends of any kind, other than that of representing fields of knowledge in the curriculum. Content is selected to imply the most important procedures, key concepts, areas and situations. In this sense content is understood as a resource amongst others rather than an objective in itself.

The Humanities curriculum is understood therefore not in terms of behavioural objectives but in terms of "principles of procedure". These principles are not pre-specified targets at which the teaching is aimed but criteria of judgement which helps to get the process of learning right. The process is subject to a series of questions which the department has outlined:

- 1) In what form are the themes best raised for enquiry?
- 2) How are the materials best presented?
- 3) In what ways can teaching stimulate questioning?
- 4) Is there a correct answer or can we only explore a variety of answers?

Through the course there is an attempt to foster in pupils a sense of critical thinking, autonomy and empathy - all of these are very difficult to achieve in a curriculum, not least empathy. The application of such aims requires the use of a variety of procedures, the department suggests intellectual and social skills, values, attitudes and interests.

The practical outworking of these principles is reflected in the extent to which children are permitted to make informed choices and to reflect on the consequences of those choices. It is expected that their children have an active role in the learning situation rather than a passive one. As such, children will be engaged in enquiry; this may be of intellectual processes, or current problems whether general or social. There is likely to be considerable stress on an issues based

approach to content. Genuine inquiry will involve children with real objects, materials and artefacts and it will involve children of different levels of ability who may approach and successfully complete the activity according to their own level. An important part of the process is to apply the mode of inquiry to different settings and situations and to test whether the student has learned how to learn as such.

A broad approach to learning will enable the student to encounter and consider the issues that are not normally dealt with by the majority of citizens and tend to be ignored by the nations' media. The department also regards "risk" as a key element not in terms of life or limb but in terms of success or failure. The need for standards is emphasised through the necessity of rewriting, rehearsing and polishing initial efforts. Through this children may learn mastery of values, standards and discipline whilst giving them an opportunity to share in the planning, the carrying out of a plan or the result of an activity with others.

Such principles have little to do with the content of subjects. Subjects are regarded as resources in interrelation and not as ends in themselves. The department bases its work on the seven instrumental or pedagogical aims outlined in "Man : a course of study". [Given above].

These goals concentrate on a process of learning rather than around the product (content). The approach is to do with the community of education, exploration and question posing. The approach stands in contrast to factual specifics or information per se as is often associated with the single subject curriculum. The aim of humanities

at Meopham is directed at enlarging human capacities by exploring the central question: "What makes man human?"

Adams expresses some concern about the nature of some of the film material which aims to present life as it is. The films which examine the life at the Sea Ice Camp contain gory hunting scenes which Adams feels may be distressing for some children. (Adams, 1976. p72). The experience at Meopham indicates that Adam's fears are unfounded. In keeping with good educational practice the children are always prepared thoroughly. Potentially distressing scenes are met with variety of positive responses whilst some of the children find the scenes peculiarly enjoyable!

It would appear that the groups at Meopham are able to make the links between animal observations which centre on the Life Cycle of the Salmon, the Herring Gull and a troop of Baboons and the work of Man observed through a study of the Netsilik Eskimo. This is again dependant upon good preparation techniques and basically making it clear that this is what the children are expected to do. At some levels the department staff have admitted that the children see Humanities as "doing baboons" but this is the exception and the degree to which the work is misunderstood varies from year to year.

The school does not attempt to integrate beyond the confines of the Humanities department due to constraints of time and to some extent suspicion from other subject teachers. The course is now quite old and is something that has never been adopted as part of the ethos of the school as will be seen to be the case with Biddick School in the North East.

Within the Humanities department itself there has been no problem with subject identity crises. The style of integration follows team teaching lines and whilst other subjects outside of the Humanities department are not necessarily involved, the disciplines of other subjects are drawn upon. This is most obviously the case with the use of English, Drama, Art and Music. The department vaguely tinkers with technology insofar as the the pupils might be given the task of constructing a Netsilik sledge.

All first and second years (years seven and eight), follow the MACOS course but study the areas which the course represents as separate subjects in the third year (year nine). This is to prepare the pupils for single subject examinations.

#### **religious education at Meopham**

Religious Education is not taught as separate subject until after the MACOS course and although it might be objected that in terms of the requirements by law for Religious Education the school maintain that there are clearly discernible religious elements.

The school argue that through the MACOS work it is possible to initiate some interesting work in terms of belief and faith systems.

This is achieved through the study of the Netsilik stories and songs of belief. It is maintained that the religious element is conveyed throughout the course insofar as the Netsilik people attach religious belief to all that they do. There is a particular emphasis on naming ceremonies which is extended to the naming of all animals and things. Weapons for example are believed to have souls which becomes

significant when that weapon is used against something else with a soul. The Religious Education is therefore largely a study of animistic cult practices not unlike modern cults of today. (Including renewed interest Hinduism, Buddhism, New Age and so forth).

Where the course fails in terms of Religious Education is that it does not meet the requirement of the 1944 and 1988 Governments Acts for Religious Education which state that Religious Education should reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian. However, schools are to take account also of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. This does create a small problem for the Netsilik Eskimo as extinction seems to have occurred well before naturalisation!

Conventional Religious Education is taught from the third year (year nine) whilst the compulsory school worship follows the traditional dose of Bible-Hymnbook Theism. An attempt is made to develop the third year Religious Education course from the MACOS scheme and this is achieved by carrying forward the Signs and Symbols unit introduced in MACOS.

The unit is supported by a visit to Rochester Cathedral and a local church which then forms the basis of the study of Christianity from its founding to its practical outworkings in this country.

What is clear is from the study of the Integrated Humanities at Meopham is that there is no clear understanding of Religious Education as outlined in the previous chapter. The nature of the MACOS course reduces the study of Religious Education to the most basic form of phenomenology suggested above.

**Biddick School**

Biddick School is a modern style school in the new town of Washington near Sunderland in the North East of England. The construction of Washington has been described by some as futuristic. The whole area is divided up into districts around part of the original town. Residential areas are interdispersed by busy industrial estates. The arrival of Nissan, the Japanese car manufacturing company did much to revitalise the economy in this part of the North East.

**mode of integration**

The curriculum at Biddick befits the modern surroundings in which it finds itself. The Headteacher at the time of this study was John Philpott who understood the curriculum in its fullest sense as reflecting the whole life of the school. In terms of integration and the humanities, integration is almost total not only through subject matter but in relationships between staff and pupils and also staff and the hierarchy within the school. The school has an appealing sense of community about it although there is varying reaction from parents. Inevitably there those parents who see education in terms of the traditional curriculum and respond by reschooling their children.

Proposals for a sixth form at Biddick, further added to the pressure for the traditionally based subject teaching. This perhaps reflects the nature of the A Level syllabus which has frequently been criticized as preparation for university rather than the pursuit of subjects for their educational merit. Subsequent reorganisation in the borough has focused sixth form work through four colleges which removed the problem.

The school is currently re-thinking its approach with the advent of the National Curriculum but aims to continue its interdisciplinary, cross curricular practices.

The Biddick School does not follow one of the big well known schemes such as MACOS or HCP but has developed its own humanities programme leading up to examination courses at GCSE level. (NEA)

The understanding of Humanities at Biddick is clear and complies with those outlined above:

"an exploration of the human condition with particular reference to moral and social attitudes in conjunction with developing self awareness of the student"

(Philpott, 1988, p1)

The aim is to generate an understanding of the society in which the pupils live and to develop an appreciation of its complexity and changing nature. Humanities is presented in terms of people whether as individual, groups, communities, societies or as a species sharing common characteristics.

Humanities at Biddick is an attempt to give students the opportunity to feel personally involved in the rational pursuit of social change. This is attempted by developing confidence in the pupil's own role as potential agents for change at whatever level is appropriate for them.

The approach at Biddick lays emphasis on the process of education rather than the content with the view to engendering conceptual understanding in all Biddick's students. The argument here is that conceptual understanding is engendered as one learns how to learn rather than learning a body of pre-set facts.

It is understood that the adopted approach is affected by:

- (i) the traditional division of learning into separate school subjects and
- (ii) the existence of an external examination system.

The Humanities department as Biddick recognises the value of the methodologies of such older disciplines as History, Geography, and Religious Education as well as newer areas of study and so draws upon these as appropriate.

It is the belief at Biddick that the Humanities can integrate all perspectives of life.

With regard to examination syllabuses the emergence of Humanities at GCSE level (following on from earlier GCE and CSE course) permits the continuation of the Humanities course beyond fourteen. Although Biddick School enjoys examination success (in 1989 some 98% were entered for final assessment in the 100% coursework examination of which 33% achieved success in the first three grades) there is still the need to compete with the attitudes engendered by the low status of the subject.

The methodology of Humanities at Biddick lays great stress on the learning process, active engagement of the student is paramount. Skills and concepts rather than content are central to the approach. The approach therefore is experiential, the aim is to develop the intellectual and empathic skills necessary for an understanding of the human condition as it affect the learner personally.

The department at Biddick identifies three fundamental principles at the heart of the humanities course:-

openness, engagement, variety.

These are regarded as necessary conditions which in turn produce the required consequences. Under such conditions the teacher is understood as a facilitator and guide rather than an instructor. Such a role will facilitate the natural enquiry of the student and the tending to independent research in conjunction with direct experience outside of the school or invite visitors to come in. Use of such drama techniques as simulation and role are given particular value. The approach is understood as stemming from the nature of study itself.

The object of study is "people" and it is argued that such study in terms of factual data is not possible. Feelings therefore have a key role to play and this may find expression through enactment or imaginative projection.

The approach is stressed from year one at the school (11-12yrs), children learning from one another is established as common practice. Talking is therefore an essential element of the learning process, class discussion is used to draw out ideas, pool information and pose different points of view; this is seen to be particularly effective in small group work.. The reasoning behind the approach is that children learn from listening to and talking to others to develop their powers of reasoning and argument.

The department deploys a wide range of material but attempts to use material which is open ended and accessible to the whole ability range. The aim is that students may respond at their own particular level.

The department has laid aside contingency material which may form as extension work for the most able.

The development of the Humanities programme at Biddick was initiated with the upper school and has gradually filtered down to the lower school. The first year and second year scheme was eventually introduced in September 1987. It is tempting to suggest that if universities and colleges altered their teaching methods to facilitate a more open ended approach there would be an immediate response in the schools particularly in the area of A level teaching.

There are eight concepts upon which the Humanities department at Biddick are formed:

**Communication** : this implies the search for truth, manipulation, influence and language.

**Beliefs** : this involves the search for meanings.

**Equality** : this may be used as a framework in which to consider race, gender and class.

**Power & Conflict** : the important notions of competition and co-operation are raised within this context.

**Community, Relationship & the self** : may be used to examine oneself in relation to others

#### **religious education at Biddick**

Unlike Meopham the integrated scheme is operated throughout the schools from years one to five (seven to eleven). There is no formal Religious

Education outside the Humanities scheme but the head of department, Maggie Crow, is confident that over the period of five years the greater part of the local agreed syllabus will be covered except in the case of specific Bible stories. Other aspects that the Humanities course does not cover are claimed to be covered under Personal and Social Education. The Humanities department is confident that it is fulfilling the requirements of the Government Acts as they apply to Religious Education.

There is, however, very little to support this claim. There is no easily discernible teaching which reflects the fact that Great Britain is largely Christian, an issue reinforced by the 1988 Reform Act. As with Meopham, and indeed with Humanities courses in general, there is a tendency to confuse phenomenology with content insofar as the notions of belief and religious practice may be considered but not necessarily in terms of Christianity. Furthermore, as the course is based on an open ended method of enquiry it is of course conceivable that these aspects may not actually arise anyway.

#### **SUMMARY**

It has been the aim of this chapter to identify what is meant by the term integration. It has been shown that integration may take many forms but that the key area of concern is the integration of subjects.

The integration of subjects may range from the less popular notion of the super-subject to a completely new concept of subject which may signal a new process in education.

It is clear that integration is subject to a variety of concerns which may or may not have an educational bearing. In some cases it may be discerned that an integrated approach is only adopted to satisfy economic or administrative demands with little relation to educational aims and objectives.

A study of the key Integrated Humanities schemes (Keele, MACOS, HCP) show an attempt to explain Man and the forces that shaped and continue to shape his humanity. On the whole it is the theme of 'Man' which provides the integrating factor but in the case of the Humanities Curriculum Project there is a clear attempt to extend the notion of integration from simply the content of the course to the process of education itself. Whilst this may be evident in the MACOS course it has been suggested that it remains rather at the level of an experiment in education.

The main aim of this thesis is to establish the role of Religious Education in the Integrated Humanities Curriculum. It has been shown in the above study that Religious Education does not fare too well in existing integrated schemes. For the most part the religious element, as identified in chapter three, is hard to discern whilst what is apparent does not meet up to the requirements of the Education Acts for Religious Education.

It is the proposal of this thesis that a purely content based approach to Religious Education is inadequate and therefore any integrated course which is strictly content based is equally inadequate. It may be possible however to suggest that an integrated course which is based on concepts rather than content may offer more scope as the final chapter will seek to examine.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**IN THE INTEGRATED HUMANITIES CURRICULUM**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Warwick observes that the general assumption seems to be that Religious Education should link up with Humanities but suggests that there is no reason why Religious Education should not link up with the Aesthetics (ie Art, Music, Drama, Music and English) or perhaps the Sciences. (Warwick, 1973, p5; since the time of Warwick writing the latter has happened within the context of courses for sixth form students). As there are no examples of other such liaison this study will confine itself to Religious Education within the Humanities.

It is not wholly clear that any scheme for integrating Religious Education into a humanities programme can actually be achieved in a way which satisfies the demands of Religious Education. It is possible, however to map out certain practical considerations.

## **SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS : PROS & CONS**

### **pros**

- 1) The great religions of the world see life as being integrated; it makes sense therefore that this understanding be reflected in education. Religion is to be understood as part of the unity of knowledge and therefore part of the whole view of education. One may call upon a religious perspective on such curriculum issues as abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia and so forth.
- 2) Integration requires being part of a team which demands co-operation and organisation and this may lead to a rise in the overall standard in the school and of the quality of learning. Religious

Education is offered a share in these benefits in which unnecessary duplication is avoided and greater use is made of resources.

- 3) Integration claims to provide more pupil contact time. The teachers of a minority subject may encounter four hundred and fifty more pupils a week and thus most children are vaguely perceived while a few are classified as either goodies or baddies. Through increased contact time improved working relationships are established which has the added benefit of reducing stress.
- 4) Perhaps the most useful advantage is that integration will end resentment against compulsory Religious Education insofar as integration will **end** compulsory Religious Education!
- 5) Integration will give Religious Education an element of respectability amongst other subjects.
- 6) The most promising advantage through an attitude of integration is the opportunity for overall influence on curriculum development. Dialogue with colleagues from other curriculum areas can only be of benefit to the teacher, stimulating his or her thinking and skills.
- 7) The notion of a "religious search" is given credence within the context of the overall curriculum.
- 8) As with all subjects the most basic advantage is derived through the continuity of primary school practice.

Whilst these apparent advantages seem clear enough it is not clear that there is any advantage to what is understood about the nature of Religious Education. The fifth point, above, seems to be something of a contradiction if integration is really about breaking down all subjects.

The above list seems to be more of an attempt to make the Religious Education Teacher feel secure of educationally "one of the gang"! It would be more appropriate to argue that through integration Religious Education can be shown to be clearly part of the core curriculum and not a Cinderella depending on the crutches, or fairy godmothers, in the form of Education Reform Acts. There is nothing in the above list that seems to do justice to the claim that Religious Education has something unique to offer. This then may be deemed as an educational disadvantage.

#### **cons**

- 1) If you believe that RE has "unique" concepts and skills, then the integrating themes may handicap the systematic building of them.
- 2) RE may be submerged or forgotten
- 3) Much RE will be taught by non-specialists who may not understand RE's distinctive contribution to learning.
- 4) Integration demands a lot more from teachers, e.g., team teaching, mixed ability, devising own materials etc.
- 5) The pupils find it difficult to exercise rights of withdrawal.
- 6) The role of an agreed syllabus is lost.
- 7) Unless you have the "correct" staff it can be a great source of aggravation - clash of personalities/views within the team.

(The above lists are based upon Lansley, 1974, pp14-16)

Point five raises an interesting question. The implication of losing the right to withdrawal may well be balanced by removing those elements of Religious Education which deemed it necessary to provide the conscience clauses in the first place. It has been suggested above that these elements are to be understood as the essence of Religious Education. The net result is a bland dose of religious phenomenology freed of its value laden content. The attempt to get inside a religion is likely to give way to simply illuminating the topic at hand with further possible erosion at the hands of non-specialist teachers who may hold no commitment to the religious quest.

#### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE INTEGRATED HUMANITIES CURRICULUM**

##### **an approach through skills and concepts**

Following a survey carried out by the Culham Institute in 1989, it was recorded that a great many respondents regarded Religious Education as:

"a separate discipline in its own right seeking to develop unique skills and understanding"

(Culham Institute, 1990, p9)

Whilst it was accepted that many of the skills employed in Religious Education might be found in other curriculum areas there were still a great many concepts and capabilities more associated with Religious Education and nurtured by introduction to the spiritual areas of learning and experience in which Religious Education has a major presence.

If these elements are to be preserved the only satisfactory way forward seems to be development of an approach which seeks to integrate the skills and concepts which are understood as part of the whole process of education. It may be argued that this was the aim of Bruner's work, although, as has been seen, this appears too much like an educational experiment.

A practical example is evident, however, in a short article by Marian Carter which gives the would be integrationist an insight into an early example of Religious Education and integration. Writing in *Learning for Living* in 1974 Marian Carter asks the question "Was I Right to Integrate?"

Carter describes a form of integration which was adopted at Eastwood High School for Girls in Essex to soften the blow for those pupils entering into the first year of secondary education. Initially a method was formulated which revolved around a theme which each subject teacher was asked to develop in their own discipline. This proved unsatisfactory and a new approach was attempted in terms of the Humanities. Under this heading pupils would look at Man in time, space and eternity and would account for the subject areas of History, Geography and Religious Education although it would not be an amalgam of these subjects. Rather the subject would make use of the unique skills, facts and concepts of these disciplines.

Marian Carter indicates that there was some reluctance from other subject departments to include Religious Education but argues:

"...how could you examine the development of Man without recognising the the fundamental belief in Man as a spiritual being?"

(Carter, 1974, p25)

Through the integrated approach Marian Carter's assessment shows that the children had been invited to think about religion in a particular way:

"They had learnt that men throughout time have questioned their existence and sought by myth and story to explain their own origin and that of their world. They have learnt that men have sought communion with the "power beyond themselves", in, a common meal; dance; prayer; sacrifice and worship".

(Carter, 1974, p26)

There is the opportunity here of bringing Religious Education out of the rut of 'Life in New Testament Times' and 'the Clothes that Jesus wore'. There is genuine concern here with the spiritual well-being of Man - or indeed the attending pupils. Given that the understanding of Man is set in the context of the pupils own environment there is the possibility of relating the study to the pupils' own experience of society as they find it. In this lies the opportunity for adopting the outline proposed by Michael Grimmitt in which religion is approached by applying four organizing concepts: Family, Faith, Community; Plural Society and World-Wide Community:

"The effect of using these four organising categories... is to create a matrix which enables not only key concepts and selected givens, core values, substantive religious categories, recurrent themes of human experience and central questions of belief and values to be revisited in the curriculum, but the four contexts within which interaction between self and others takes place also to be revisited"

(Grimmitt, 1987, p238/239)

### **an approach through confessionalism?**

In addition to an approach through concepts there is a clear role for Religious Education in an integrated scheme based along confessional lines.

In 1973 St. Wilfred's Catholic comprehensive school in Crawley, Sussex, adopted a Mode 3 CSE Integrated Studies course for average and less average pupils. The course was designed to replace (for these pupils) Geography, History and Religious Education and occupied twelve periods of a forty period week.

Over the two year course the students examined:

4th Year

The Individual & Family  
Local Environment  
Government & Law  
Going to Work

5th Year

World Problems  
Religious Studies  
Religious Studies  
Christian Ethics

The course enabled the wide use of resource material such as visiting speakers, field trips, film and audio visual, discussion and role play. Whilst it may be argued that an integrated studies course is not necessary to justify the use of such resources it seems that such courses lend themselves more easily to the use of these materials than the more cerebral subjects at O Level and CSE Modes One and Two. There are also the economic considerations in that in an integrated approach to the whole year group may benefit from one equipment hire.

The background of this school is important, particularly for the Religious Education Teacher. Despite the ideal of the integrated approach a constant problem has been seen to centre on that of identity, or dominance. St. Wilfred's, as a Catholic School, have no problem with accepting what is clearly dominance by Religious Education. Religious Education is comfortably in the driving seat of this course as is evident from the course aims:

- 1) To help the students prepare themselves for their future roles as workers, citizens, voters, husbands, wives, parents and Christians.

- 2) To widen their horizons beyond the immediate confines of family and culture.
- 3) To help them (by discussion in small groups) to communicate better.
- 4) To help them think about their own feelings, problems relationships and religious faith, and to examine controversial topics in a thoughtful way - and not merely an emotional way.

(Brown, 1973, pp44-52)

With Christian Education as the basis of the school's ethos Brown accepts that most studies at a social level will invite comparison with the equivalent aspects in Catholicism. This ties in well with the scheme proposed by Grimmitt (Grimmitt, 1987, p238) insofar as a study on Families will necessarily involve the idea of the Holy Family. A town survey will take particular note of the local church, not just as a piece of architecture but as part of the community life of the town. In fact given the background, Brown maintains, that religion forms an integral part of the discussion in most if not all of the topics or themes. In addition to this input the standard topics of Religious Education feature at key times like Christmas and Easter.

Arguably the integrated course revolves naturally around the Religious Education unit which in a school such as this holds all things in balance and provides the integrating factor. The pupils are invited to view the world in all its aspect from the point of view of the faith in which they are brought up. Such a view may not win the majority of public support but it is a view that does not stand alone. Take for example the view of Professor Syed Ali Ashraf, Director General of the Islamic Academy, Cambridge:

"...the secularist state schools are creating non-believers in spite of religious education... children are invited to be critical of their own traditions and even of faith... it is

desirable for a Muslim child to be open minded and be ready to admit the truth of other religions and ideologies, but it would be wrong to be critical of one's own religion without any norm to judge which is true and which is false... We want Muslim children to acquire that norm of judgement from Islam"

(Grimmitt, 1987, p41)

Brown accepts the criticism that was laid against Goldman which was seen as an attempt to cast a "religious glow over everything" (angels might be studied under the topic of flight and aerodynamics!). Brown maintains that in this department there is no attempt to "drag God into everything", there are obviously things that are not religious issues. (cp also Grimmitt, 1987, p259)

Brown is more concerned that over-sensitivity will cause religious issues to be left out, normally as a result of teachers who have themselves not come to terms with their own faith or attitudes to the faith commitments of others.

Brown identifies a further criticism which was also laid against the Goldman approach. In an integrated scheme it may be argued that proper Religious Education is not being taught. In some cases this is probably an accurate criticism, as has been suggested above integration may well be regarded as an opportunity to avoid legislated Religious Education and therefore dependency upon a specialist in that subject area.

Within the context of Ken Brown's school, however, there are clear advantages. For Brown the most important issue is that:

"...integration puts religions firmly in the place where is should always be - as part of real life."

(Brown, 1973, p46)

Integration provides the opportunity to present religion as part of the whole and to break away from the compartmentalism of religion and life. Brown extends his views to the celebration of the Mass which he argues must be celebrated in a way which relates to everyday life. This contrasts with the view which holds the Mass as a "private pious act on Sunday" from those who happen to be particularly religious and breaks from the purely objective study to which such an event is normally reduced.

Brown further argues that the integrated approach also allows for religious issues to be handled less emotionally. Religion slips into the teaching incidentally as part of the overall teaching and as such there is no sense of force feeding religion to the pupils.

Brown summarizes his argument as follows:

"It [integration] encourages the grasp of religious insight by discussion and enquiry. It facilitates religious experience. By emphasising the integration of religion and every day life, it helps our young people to interiorise those teachings of the Faith that all Christian educators believe."

(Brown, 1974, p48)

It is from this premiss that I now introduce the final section entitled "study of an English Cathedral through the whole curriculum". Taking the lead set by Brown it is possible to offer an overview of the curriculum from the point of view of Religious Education. It is also

possible to argue that the various approaches to Religious Education, outlined in chapter 3, may also be integrated

#### **STUDY OF AN ENGLISH CATHEDRAL THROUGH THE WHOLE CURRICULUM**

This section is offered as a way of presenting a successful form of integration and is based upon the visitors programme at Rochester Cathedral. The main thrust of the Cathedral's work amongst visitors is understood by the Dean and Chapter in educational terms. For school children in particular the aims are as follows:

##### **aims**

The overall purpose is to help children understand the contribution of religion to human culture, particularly through the Christian heritage of this country.

- 1) To help children to understand the nature of religious practices. The Cathedral can demonstrate this with symbols, retreats, religious orders, the structure and intention of different services and personal devotions.
- 2) To enable the Cathedral to demonstrate its history by its contribution to architecture, furnishing, sculpture; by its contribution to language, music, art; by its contribution to civic and legal affairs.
- 3) To show children the practical consequences of religious belief. The Cathedral can demonstrate the social action taken by the church and undertaken by individual Christians; the service which is offered by individuals in and through the Church; the Church nationally and

internationally as a serving community; the local Church as part of the world Church.

4) To help children show a real concern for human issues, both close to them and within the world. Examples of this are human relationships (friendships, sex, marriage, families), contemporary issues (drugs, AIDS, racial discrimination, housing, politics) moral questions and their consequences (conflict, war, law and order). The Cathedral can be the setting in which people from different view points can be drawn together and the attitudes of the past related to the issues of the present.

With schools and colleges in mind the work lays great store by the educational processes of activity and discovery based learning and is attempting to build up a series of "Cathedral through...." packs. The title is inspired by the work of Dr. John Hull, editor of the British Journal of Religious Education and, of late, the thinking, behind the project "Cathedrals through touch and hearing."

The approach attempts to integrate disabled and handicapped people to ensure that this part of the community is catered for to the same extent as the rest and that their experiences are not limited by the Cathedral's own outlook and presentation of itself. In this respect the work satisfies many of the different definitions of the word "integration". Furthermore, education at Rochester Cathedral is aimed at all levels, from 0-99! The aim is to meet the needs and interests of all visitors and yet present to the same, something of the spirituality which lies at the heart of a place such as this.

The notion of subject integration is satisfied in that all subjects on the curriculum may be met in some way and provide challenges not only for those who visit but also for those behind the project.

The obvious areas concern the Humanities in terms of Geography, History and of course Religious Education. In the context of the Cathedral the classroom divisions of the subjects fade into insignificance. Literature and the Arts converge in places such as these. (Rochester Cathedral was a source of inspiration for Charles Dickens who described it in his works, *Great Expectations* and *Edwin Drood*. The tombstone of "Dorritt" may still be seen in the Cathedral graveyard). Cathedrals are to be understood as great centres of humanity where all human aspirations converge in an expression that makes up a whole, not a series of divided units.

The Cathedral represents a wealth of mathematical skill and ingenuity which continues to challenge physicists and engineers of today. The 'Cathedral through Chemistry' raises important issues relating to the problems created by acid rain and the break down of limestone into magnesium sulphates. Musically Cathedrals cannot be understood as anything less than centres of excellence.

The challenge is to preserve a sense of wholeness. For many people the Cathedral is just a place of history, a museum; a place with fine architecture that warrants a look. The museum image is so often reinforced by the nature of presentation which in most places is still at the level of the historical tour, often through printed fact sheets, which have the effect of reducing these spiritual houses to little more than monuments to man's ingenuity.

Wordsworth's maxim applies here more so than perhaps to anything else. If any item which forms part of the Cathedral's whole is taken in isolation then the life of the Cathedral is lost or missed. The challenge is to find a way to present the Cathedral as a whole and the most successful way of achieving this is through some form of integration.

### **an encounter through activity and discovery**

Discovering Cathedrals has to be met at a personal level. The Cathedral serves as an expression of humanity and of humanity's desire for God. An activity based approach applies and aims and objectives may be drawn up accordingly but the line of enquiry must be open-ended if the discovery of the Cathedral is to be a genuine experience.

Such an approach recognises the autonomy of the visitor. As with the school pupil, the visitor is regarded as a responsible agent, moving at his own pace and following his own bent. The Cathedral itself serves as a stimulus to that pace although as with the work of Interdisciplinary Enquiry Method it is at times appropriate to present the visitor with stimulus material. This may be sound or light or simple snippets of information. School children may follow introductory worksheets which aim to introduce the children to the rooms of the Cathedral but such sheets are not intended as ends in themselves. The aim is to stimulate useful dialogue between adult and child through an approach which is designed and intended to follow lines of enquiry which are open-ended.

It is perhaps significant that one of the annual visitors to Rochester Cathedral for some ten to fifteen years is Meopham School. As has been noted this school has successfully used the MACOS scheme for Humanities

since the project's emergence in the late sixties. The Cathedral forms a vital part of this school's work because it represents a place where so many of the aspirations of man converge. There is a human story to tell which embraces all aspects of life and living.

The Cathedral may be viewed as a whole representing all dimensions of life and providing the integrating factor in which all dimensions of human experience may be examined in relation to each other.

Whilst many school visits tend to look purely at historical or religious aspects some schools such as Meopham may use the Cathedral visit across the curriculum. The following charts have the danger of appearing to dissect the Cathedral into inanimate parts but here serve to illustrate the variety of disciplines which coalesce in "this work of human hands" created and sustained as an expression of humanity in the devotion of worship of God:

1) A content based approach to Rochester Cathedral

Stained Glass windows	Architecture	Flora, Herbs, Garden
Wall Paintings (Story-RE)	(Art/Technology/Physics)	(Biology, Chemistry, HE)
	Illuminated Manuscripts	
The Nave (Rites of Passage)	(Art/Mathematics)	
Services (RE)	<b>A CATHEDRAL VISIT</b>	Monastery (RE/History)
	Stone Decay	
Library/Archives (Literature/History)	(Chemistry/environment)	Tower & Bells (Maths & Music)
	Height & Structure (Maths/Technology)	

Many schools which are unable to operate integrated courses in the classroom find it viable to combine subject interest in a visit to the Cathedral. It might well be argued that the only justification for such drawing together of disciplines is purely economic in terms of time and expense. The level of integration in this approach has already been shown to be weak, whilst attempting to maintain the religious element may appear to be contrived. As has been suggested above that it is possible that an approach which seeks to integrate through concepts may prove to be more desirable. The following chart aims to show some of the concepts that might be included:

2) A concept based approach to Rochester Cathedral:

Belief	Worship	Water
	Light & Darkness	
Height		Language & Symbol
Stillness	<b>A CATHEDRAL VISIT</b>	Silence
Right & Wrong		Shape & Patterns
	Sound	Fear
	Safety & Security	
Belonging	Community	Commitment
	Sacrifice & Sacrament	Restoration
	Power	

The approach through concepts requires a clear understanding of the use of metaphor and symbol. Hay writes:

"Understanding symbolism often requires more than rational thought (which can itself be more a hindrance than an aid to understanding). It has the power to evoke an affective or emotive response and arouse the intuition. Symbols are best left to speak for themselves since efforts to explain them deprive the experience of their meaning. Without some degree of personal encounter there is a risk that the symbolism will be dismissed as mere superstition"

(Hay, 1990, p139)

Holding these key concepts in mind it is now possible to construct the areas of enquiry through the various "Cathedral Through.... " projects suggested above. Obviously there is still the danger of appearing trite as one seeks to pay regard to the notion of a religious dimension. The aim here is similar to that shown at St. Wilfred's, in which it is clear that religion underpins the whole enterprise.

### **the Cathedral through Mathematics**

The Cathedral provides the opportunity for a study of the following:  
Measuring, Counting, Tessalations, the construction principles behind Illuminated Manuscripts, Trigonometry, Arches, Scale Drawing, Angles of Elevation, Ratio and Series.

The Mathematical content may be shown to be a direct expression of mediaeval thinking about God. There is a fine example of this in the construction of the crypt at Rochester Cathedral. The increase in width of the aisles outwards from the centre in a ratio of 2:3:4 destroys the normal effect of perspective. Instead of the columns appearing to get closer together they seem to remain the same distance apart. The former Dean of Rochester wrote of this:

"This produces an extraordinary sense of peace and harmony. It witnesses to the great love which the men of twelfth and thirteenth centuries had for mathematics, especially for arithmetic and geometry, which they understood as the language of God"

(Arnold, 1988, p17)

A similar mathematical idea emerges from what is understood as the Golden Rule for the World's Architecture. This produces a ratio expressed as 1:1.618 and has intrigued experts for centuries because of

its connection with aesthetics. It may be argued that religious understanding is reached as the mathematical ideas are unpacked. The exploration of such concepts as shape and pattern, height, language and symbol will draw upon particular skills and ideas associated with Mathematics.

### **the Cathedral through Chemistry**

An exploration of Water might examine the effects of acid rain, and pollution. An exploration through the notion of community might involve a study of the Monastic Community and particularly such areas as food production, medicines, the creation of inks and dyes and of course Brewing! All of these find a particularly religious application in the context of the Cathedral. This would obviously overlap with aspects of Home-Economics, Art and Craft. A study of transubstantiation may provide an interesting, if perhaps unhelpful topic of debate amongst chemists!

### **the Cathedral through Physics**

The notions of height, sound and light may be examined in terms of the affective domain insofar as the sense of space, acoustics and illumination all contribute to an experience of the Cathedral which may be understood in religious terms. At a phenomenological level the physicist may explore such notions as stress and dynamics, volume and mass, suspension, pumps and pulleys, the travel of sound and the refraction of light.

### **the Cathedral through Geography**

This may involve a study of the Cathedral as a strategic site, both historically as well as in the present day. The notion of pilgrimage may also be included extending from its historical roots to the tourism of today. The study of Tourism forms a useful part of social geography and in its modern sense may provides a useful insight into human nature in relation to the spiritual dimension.

### **the Cathedral through History**

The story at Rochester begins with the Romans and primary source material is available from this period to the present day. The Christian story starts in the seventh century and illustrates a continuous process of prayer and pilgrimage over fourteen centuries.

There is an increasing demand for authentic experiences often in terms of living history, as for example the Jorvic Centre or the White Cliffs Experience under John Sunderland. In a sense, the study of history may be seen to be moving into the existentialist branch of phenomenology.

This rather artificial breakdown offers a suggestion of some of the things that may be encountered through the study of an English Cathedral. The danger of such a breakdown may limit the study to the observable content and so the use of concepts is encouraged in attempt to transcend the level of content. As with the situation described at St. Wilfred's [above], the religious dimension, in this case the nature and purpose of the Cathedral, is at the centre as the

integrating factor. The other subjects on the curriculum are used to service this central notion forming the constituent parts of the abilities and aspirations of Man which come together in the worship of God. In this way theology may truly be understood in its mediaeval sense as the Queen of Sciences!

**so, what is the role of religious education?**

In the final analysis the role of Religious Education in the Integrated Humanities is conditional on certain factors.

In the first instance much depends on what is understood as Religious Education. The three popular strands of confessional, implicit and phenomenological seem less appropriate to an integrated scheme as it would seem that whatever is understood as the essence of Religious Education is lost. There seems to be no room for the notion of quest or search in an approach which seeks only to integrate the content matter of subjects. It has been shown that a curriculum approach which does not pay attention to the affective domain of human nature is inadequate.

A fourth strand, however, was identified in terms of concepts. Through a concept based approach it is possible to argue that the essence of religious education is maintained in that the spiritual dimensions are explored and experienced. If an integrated approach may be constructed on the basis of concepts then a role for Religious Education may be discerned.

**CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The role for Religious Education may be summed up with Hay's words:

"...it must honestly present religion for what it claims to be - the response of human beings to what they experience as sacred... [it must] help pupils to open their personal awareness to those aspects of ordinary human experience which religious people take seriously."

(Hay, 1990, p11)

It is the view of this thesis that any move to an integrated curriculum must contain this dimension. Such a dimension is understood largely in existentialist terms rather than in terms of content. It may be seen therefore that the role of Religious Education in the Integrated Humanities Curriculum is to provide what has been described as an overall check for balance in the development of the whole person. Wholeness depends upon the building up of the cognitive and the affective domains of the person.

The section on Rochester Cathedral is offered as a way of expressing this wholeness which any educational approach must address. The Cathedral stands a place where one confronts humanity and where humanity confronts God. To conclude, the following lines were written by a six year old visitor to Rochester Cathedral and are presented here in the form in which they were received:

"when i got in the cathedral it was all write but i wouldnt live in there. It is very clean inside but is is very cold. I think it would be lonely. I thought that i was in heaven talking to god. In a cathedral you must not shout or run because in is God's home. God is there where ever we go and do. God tries not to give you accidents"

(John, 1989, Age 6)

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