

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN GREECE

Its Origin, Development and Future.

With special reference to Religious Education in England\*

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## P R E F A C E

*The purpose of this work is to delineate the origin and development of Religious Education (hereafter: R.E.) in Greece — within its Christian context — from the earliest times till today and suggest some directions for the future. Thus, in Part One we attempt to discuss the origin and development of R.E. and in the last Chapter to propose some suggestions for the improvement of Greek R.E.*

*To make some suggestions for the future of R.E. in Greece is, in our view, an urgent need in so far as the place and function of R.E. has been put into question very recently by some Greek educationists and politicians. We have to say, however, that in our attempt to find and suggest new ways based on educational grounds, for the future of Greek R.E., we have been helped a lot from what is going on in the current English educational theory. This is the reason why in Part Two we discuss at some length some aspects of recent tendencies within English educational theory and their effects on English R.E. Nevertheless, other factors such as existing differences between British and Greek society, the homogeneity of the dominant religion in Greece (i.e. Orthodox Christianity) and other relevant factors have been taken seriously into account in the suggestions which we attempt to give.*

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PART ONE  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN GREECE

CHAPTER I  
THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF R.E.

*1. Introduction.*

In this Chapter we try to sketch the historical process, place and function of R.E. in Greek education since the earliest times. Taking into account implicit factors such as theological, educational and social we try to show the long continuity and importance which R.E. had and still has for this country.

On the other hand we strive to indicate some essential reasons which caused a separation of R.E. from ecclesiastical life and people's daily experience.

*2. From the Earliest Times to the Fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453).*

As Christianity dominated the Greco-Roman territories many changes happened in the education of those times. It is well known that till the emergence of Christianity the dominant education was Greek. After, however, the establishment of the new religion and its recognition as a State religion during the fourth century, a new dimension was incorporated into education. That is, Christianity started to play an important role in the whole educational system of the Byzantine Empire.

Great Fathers of the Church like the Cappadocians and others tried to find and formulate a common ground of co-existence and co-operation between Greek education and Christian theology. Having been trained in Greek education, they «transmitted to later Byzantine Christianity the common preconceptions of the educated class from which they came and by so doing gave them an ecclesiastical authority»<sup>1</sup>. The basis on which they grounded their educational ideal was that of the

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1. In *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. IV: The Byzantine Empire, Part I: Byzantium and its Neighbours ed. by J. M. Hussey, CUP 1966, Chapter II: «The Christian Background» by G. Mathew (pp. 43-59), p. 46-47.

Incarnate God in Jesus Christ. This is well expressed in Athanasius' phrase according to which «The Word became Man so that we can become deified»<sup>2</sup>.

This purpose remained constant throughout Byzantine education and culture (i. e. 330-1453). But deification (theosis) and spiritual purification are believed to be achieved mainly by participating in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. Baptism has an essential meaning for the Byzantines. This is because baptism was believed to be «the sacrament in which man is buried with Christ unto death and by which he may walk with him in newness of life».<sup>3</sup>

If believers, moreover, wanted to be kept constantly walking under the light and guidance of Jesus Christ they had to participate in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Through the Eucharist Jesus Christ is alive and offers his real body and blood to his followers, through bread and wine respectively. This invisible and mystical act and simultaneously real sacrifice enables the participants - believers to be united with Christ and his mystical Body, which is the Church. The Eucharist, therefore, is regarded as one of the most important sacraments of the Church, because it recapitulates the whole history of salvation, as Jesus conceived of and taught it. This means, moreover, that the results of Christ's sacrifice on the cross and those of his Resurrection are imparted to the participants-believers through Holy Communion (Eucharist) in a mystical and unexplained by human mind way. The ethical dimension of this mystical participation is that believers achieve a unity with Christ which gives them a spiritual strength and security as well as salvation. It, however, hardly needs to be noted that salvation is far from an easy achievement. On the contrary, it demands a constant attempt on the part of believers. Thus, believers must be always spiritually and morally ready and capable to receive the Holy Spirit's gifts through Eucharist by obeying Jesus' teaching and the doctrine of his Church. It is not, therefore, an exaggeration to say that the Byzantines were brought up in such an ecclesiastical-Christian environment in which Baptism and Eucharist as well as the rest of the sacraments and other rites of the Church cultivated and shaped their personality and character.

Children, however, were encountering Christianity not only

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2. Athanasius, *Or. de Incarnatione Verbi*, 54 (MPG, XXV, 192), cited in Cambridge Medieval History, *Idem*, p. 48.

3. *Op. cit.*, Vol. IV, Part II: Government, Church and Civilisation, Chapter XXIII, «The Secular Church» by E. Harman (pp. 105-133), p. 131.

by experience but also by instruction. We know from several sources that children were taught the Bible from their earlier childhood. Teachers of religious instruction were priests of whom many were often in charge of secular schools. Monasteries, also, ran schools which were not intended only for prospective monks.<sup>4</sup> As S. Runciman points out:

Religious education was carried on side by side with the lay teaching, but was always separate, imparted by ecclesiastics. Children learnt the Bible thoroughly; next to Homer it is the chief source of allusions and quotations in Byzantine literature.<sup>5</sup>

Amongst the most popular books of Scriptures was primarily the Book of Psalms «probably because of their high personal and emotional religious content», followed by Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus, the Song of Songs and Genesis.<sup>6</sup>

R.E. with Theology, however, was not only a subject for primary and secondary schools but also for Universities.<sup>7</sup> It is not, therefore, an exaggeration to conclude that R.E. affected very much all the aspects of a Byzantine's life. On the other hand, R.E. as having a primarily ecclesiastical dimension was one of the most influential instruments of the Church in education. And in this respect we have to remember, as E. Harman rightly points out, that:

The Byzantine Church, for all its human shortcomings, ultimately had a profound significance for Byzantine Christians. Like the State with which it formed a single entity it incorporated the great past, the great tradition, the great task of East Rome. Unlike the State, it pinned its hope on the future, especially when political disintegration set in. To this day the Orthodox credit the Church with having given them that faith and piety which has enabled them to survive for centuries under the burden of alien rule without ever renouncing their allegiance to Christ.<sup>8</sup>

### 3. *From the Turkish Conquest till the Liberation of Greece (1821).*

During the Turkish occupation both religious and political power

4. *Ibid.*

5. Steven Runciman (1933), p. 224.

6. The Cambridge Medieval History, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

7. See S. Runciman, *op. cit.*, Chapter IX: «Education and Learning», pp. 223-239.

8. The Cambridge Medieval History, *op. cit.*, p. 133.



was held by the Orthodox Church and the Patriarch of Constantinople's religious and spiritual authority was identified with political authority. The Church, therefore, became a civil as well as a religious institution. In fact, two reasons favoured this new situation. Firstly, the Islamic attitude towards Christianity treated it as a religion which is not entirely false being established by the prophet Jesus Christ. Secondly, the notion prevailed in Islam that the State is an earthly manifestation of God's heavenly Kingdom and thus no distinction between politics and religion must be made. It is, therefore, understandable why Christianity was respected, to some extent, by the Turkish conquerors and Christians could be organized as an independent nation.<sup>9</sup>

Under those new conditions education was inevitably captured by the Church and was put under her control. From the beginning the Church showed her interest in educating her flock. This willingness is well expressed in the seventh article of the local Synod of Constantinople in 1593 according to which metropolitans are required to run schools in their cities.<sup>10</sup>

But the Church, despite her willingness, was prevented from providing a proper education for the mass of people. The reasons were mainly the unwillingness of the conquerors to give any help with regard to the needs of education of Greeks, secondly, the lack of money which the Church needed and thirdly the lack of educated people, especially at the earliest times of the occupation,<sup>11</sup> who could organize the whole educational system and teach pupils as well.

Thus priests and monks with remarkably low standards of education, or none at all, undertook to teach pupils on a voluntary basis. They used ecclesiastical and liturgical books from which pupils were taught to read and write. The most common books were the Gospels, the Horologion, the Octoëchon and the Psalter. Of course, there were a few higher academies such as the Patriarchal Academy in Constantinople or the Athonite Academy on Mount Athos, but they were for the rich and their curriculum was strictly theological. On the other hand, any attempts to innovate by the introduction of contemporary western philosophical thought to their curriculum were confronted with suspicion and fear from both monks and priests. Professor S. Runciman illustrates vividly the whole situation by saying:

9. See Timothy Ware (1964b), p. 2 and *Idem* (1964a), pp. 96ff.

10. See S. Runciman (1968), p. 216 and D. Moraitis (1935) pp. 31-32.

11. As S. Runciman points out: «There were distinguished Greeks alive at the time, but they were to be found in the West, mainly at Venice», *ibid.*, p. 209.

The average Greek provincial boy was not well served, particularly if he belonged to the poorer classes from which most of the monks and village priests were drawn. Many children remained uneducated and illiterate. A boy who wished to be a priest would go to the local monastery to learn to read and write and to memorize the religious works that he would need later on. But that was about the extent of his education.<sup>12</sup>

It is obvious, therefore, that no distinction can be made between secular and religious education. Rather it is right to say that education had an entirely Christian and ecclesiastical character.

From the seventeenth century, however, onwards, this kind of education began to be put into question. Rich people, the so-called Phanariots living in Constantinople who were financing the Patriarch there, obtained extra power by being appointed as administrators of the Patriarchal Court. As S. Runciman points out:

Their education made them unsympathetic with the older traditions of the Church. By the eighteenth century it was a matter of pride for them to be versed in Western philosophy and the rationalism fashionable at the time. The improvement in educational facilities provided by the schools and academies that they patronized meant a corresponding decline in religious education.<sup>13</sup>

Also during the eighteenth century some well educated Greeks who were trained in the West returned and were appointed as Professors in the academies of Constantinople and Athos. They tried to introduce their pupils, although not without any resistance, into the philosophical thought of Enlightenment by which they had been already affected. Thus, education gradually started aiming at bringing up people to be capable of thinking critically. But inevitably this aim shook the religious ground of education.<sup>14</sup> Although this task is not bad at all in itself, it raised a lot of problems and misunderstandings and it resulted in a disengagement of Orthodox tradition from people's life. Evidently educated people forgot that for most people Orthodoxy was very

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12. *Op. cit.*, p. 219.

13. *Op. cit.*, p. 387 and *ibid.*, pp. 223-224.

14. D. Mauroopoulos (1972), p. 7. See also S. Runciman (1968), pp. 220ff. and Chr. Giannaras (1972), pp. 57-67.

important for the national identity and survival of Greeks and that the links between Orthodoxy and the ancient heritage were very deep indeed. Nevertheless the strong element of Orthodox mysticism on the one hand and the illiteracy of the masses on the other raised a gap between educated people and the Church. This, of course, affected R.E. very much.

But the most influential figure whose ideas prevailed upon Greeks for a long time was that of Adamantios Korais.<sup>15</sup> He spent most of his life in Paris, becoming a pupil and admirer of French Encyclopédistes and their successors. As Philip Sherrard points out:

Korais envisaged the 'emancipation' of Greece in terms of the secular liberalism and humanist enlightenment of the contemporary West; and, in a way that might appear as a just reward, or vengeance, the academic day-dream of 'the classicism' of ancient Greece and all that that implies—to whose hold in Western Europe Greeks themselves, such as Plethon, his Byzantine predecessors, and contemporary and later disciples and coadjutors, had so decisively contributed—was now, in an extreme form, to be propagated to, and to take captive, the minds of their unprepared descendents.<sup>16</sup>

Korais' relation with regard to Orthodoxy and the Byzantine past of Greece was far from good. But, although he was unsympathetic to Byzantine Christianity he strove to improve the catechetical task of the Greek Orthodox Church. This is seen from what he says in the preface of his own translation (1772) of the 'Orthodox Catechesis' of Metropolitan Plato of Moscow. It must be noted, however, that this Catechesis had a great deal of influence from Roman-Catholic scholastic thought.<sup>17</sup>

These new tendencies inevitably caused a tension between religious education and education in general. The former gradually lost its ecclesiastical dimension and became an intellectual subject separate from pupils' daily experience. Its value was based rather on its moral aspect than on its importance in helping people to understand the meaning of life through religious experience.

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15. He was born at Smyrna in 1748 and went as a young boy to Paris where he lived till the end of his life.

16. P. Sherrard (1959), p. 180. See also S. Runciman, *op. cit.*, pp. 393ff.

17. P. Trembelas (1931), p. 146. D. Moraitis (1935), p. 35. D. Mauroopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 8 and Chr. Giannaras, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

In this environment a moralistic R.E. began to flourish within liberated Greece as we immediately turn to discuss.

#### 4. *From the Liberation of Greece till today.*

Immediately after the liberation in 1821 many attempts had been carried out in order to organize education. The first Governor of Greece, John Kapodistrias, worked very hard to set up a new educational system according to contemporary Western educational claims and standards. He started his endeavour primarily by organizing the first level of education, that is, primary education. In fact, his background was not very different from that of those educated Greeks whose ideas we mentioned in the previous section. As a result of it education was based, in effect, on western patterns. That is, 'Enlightenment' ideas as well as rationalism played an important part, if not the greatest, in the formation of the educational system.

Particularly, with regard to R.E., Kapodistrias showed a great interest which should be appreciated. He introduced R.E. as a subject into the primary schools' curriculum and gave it a priority among the other humanity subjects. He could not, however, avoid what was fashionable and so widespread about R.E. in his time. That is, he saw R.E. as an intellectual subject quite separate from people's lives and experience which could only enable them to become morally educated and loyal citizens.<sup>18</sup>

With the coming of the first King of Greece, the Bavarian Otto and his followers, education started to be organized more systematically and a serious responsibility was undertaken by the Government for designing courses for primary, secondary and higher education. In this task some educated Greeks were involved as well as German experts under the direction of the Bavarian regent Maurer. As a result of this,

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18. As Ch. Frazee (1969) points out: «Kapodistrias was well aware of the need for improved education of both people and clergy in their faith. Frequently, the Liturgy was rushed through by priests in a mechanical way. Only a very few clergy were educated, so that the faith of the people was overlaid with superstition. Religious instruction was non-existent. To remedy this situation, Kapodistrias sought to purchase books in Venice for the Liturgy as well as collections of sermons, catechisms and the works of the Fathers. He stated to a friend in Italy that 'the first and most essential of the needs of the Greek government is that of procuring the religious instruction of the nation'» pp. 74-75. See also *ibid.*, p. 73 and 81ff. Also, D. Moraitis, *op. cit.*, p. 36 and D. Mauropoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

education was designed more or less according to German educational patterns.

Meanwhile, after the liberation, the Church was limited to her ecclesiastical duties as her political power was transmitted to statesmen and politicians. Moreover, in 1833 the Church, under the pressure of the regent Maurer, supported by some Greeks who yet held Korais' ideas about an independent national Church, was detached from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and became autocephalous. As a consequence of this, the Church was subjected entirely to state control.<sup>19</sup>

These events, in effect, cost not only the loss of the Church's control upon education but also, to some extent, her contact with people. The closed relation which existed during Byzantine and Turkish times onwards between Church and people weakened considerably.

R.E. did not remain untouched by those rapid changes. Its place in the school curriculum was considered as having a great importance for education.<sup>20</sup> The aims and objectives of R.E. were set up by the State, and the Church kept only a supervision by checking whether the subject was taught according to the Orthodox teaching and dogma. The importance of R.E. was based on its contribution to enable people to be morally educated and capable of knowing the teachings of the Orthodox Church. The latter objective seems to show how important teaching methods should be in order to provoke pupils to acquire an enormous amount of knowledge about the subject.<sup>21</sup> There were two main factors which affected R.E. at this period. Firstly, religion was used mainly as a vehicle of moral education and secondly was placed on teaching techniques.<sup>22</sup>

Under these circumstances R.E. lost its ecclesiastical dimension and the only contact which remained with the Church was the compulsory worship of pupils every Sunday and big feasts in a fixed church. This kind of compulsory worship was introduced into all the schools in 1836 by a governmental decree. Nevertheless, this kind of worship started to be regarded by pupils as a school duty and no more than that. Moreover, many pupils began gradually to stop going to the local pa-

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19. See Ch. Frazee, *op. cit.*, pp. 105ff. Also Chr. Giannaras, *op. cit.*, p. 71 and B. Jioultsis (1975), p. 68.

20. By a decree of 1834 R.E. was introduced to primary education and in 1836 to secondary. See D. Moraitis, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

21. D. Moraitis, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

22. On this occasion see next Chapter.

rish's Sunday liturgy with the justification that they went to another church with their school during the week. Thus, the existing ties within the parish's life and family integration within Sunday Eucharist started to weaken considerably.<sup>23</sup>

It is also remarkable that R.E. till 1904 was taught by teachers of Greek literature who used such methods for teaching the Bible as those for classic texts.<sup>24</sup> Since 1904, however, graduates from the School of Theology of Athens University were appointed as R.E. teachers in secondary schools. They used better pedagogical methods for instruction but the general approach to R.E. did not change very much.<sup>25</sup>

Since the emergence of Sunday Schools in Greece (1870) based on Anglosaxon patterns as well as the establishment of religious Brotherhoods (1907), a tension was raised between R.E. in schools and Catechesis. This is because R.E. was regarded inadequate to enable pupils to live up to and practice Christian virtues. The pioneers of those movements believed that R.E. as an intellectual subject did not deal with issues related to daily life and was far away from encouraging pupils to practice what they learnt in schools about Christianity. Thus, Sunday Schools undertook the responsibility to complete, so to speak, R.E.'s work by emphasizing the importance of Christian ethics, grounded on a morality which was expressed through individual piety.<sup>26</sup>

A great number of theologians who were at the same time R.E. teachers grew up in this spirit of pietism. Consequently, they transmitted this spirit to classrooms. On the other hand, the same teachers following Brotherhoods' patterns tried to reconcile religion with science using the language of apologetics.

After the Second World War R.E. turned in new directions. The frustration from the results of the war had to be overcome, so that a return to national heritage and tradition was considered as very urgent. Also the increased interest in mystical Orthodox tradition showed in Europe and within Greece as well as the decline of Brotherhoods favoured such a climate in which R.E. was interested in its Orthodox resources.

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23. See D. Mauropoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

24. D. Moraitis, *op. cit.*, p. 39-40.

25. D. Mauropoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 12. See next Chapter in which different approaches to R.E. in Greece are discussed and reasons are given explaining the shift from one to another.

26. See more for Brotherhoods in B. Jioultis (1975) as well as Chr. Giannaras, *op. cit.*, pp. 95ff.

After seven years of stagnation of educational process during the dictatorship, R.E. very rapidly encountered, and still encounters, problems of adaptation to new conditions set up since the restoration of democracy in the country. To mention only a few, these problems are: the relation between Christianity and Marxism, the legitimacy of R.E. in public schools as far as it is concerned with the disputable issue of separation of Church from State, let alone pupils' increased interests in questing for and wondering about the origin of existence or «ultimate reality» and so forth.

## CHAPTER II

### THEOLOGY, EDUCATION AND R.E.

#### *1. Introduction.*

Beside implicit factors which we discussed in the previous Chapter also explicit ones have given to R.E. a specific form from time to time. Theological thought and development of any time as well as educational theory and pedagogical methods are so closely connected with the formation of R.E., that any attempt to discuss R.E. is in vain without taking into account both factors. There are people who argue that R.E. must concentrate more on the theological process and less on the educational one and others who support entirely the opposite idea. A third category argues that both theology and education are necessary for R.E.<sup>27</sup>

These arguments and the interaction between theology and education are reflected more or less in the discussions held on the principles of R.E. in Greece as well as about different approaches to the subject.

In the following sections of this Chapter we try to illustrate these reflections and approaches to R.E.

#### *2. Catechesis and R.E.*

Till the early 1930s the maintained approach to teaching R.E. in schools was as follows: emphasis was put on teachers' authority. Pupils were obliged to learn passively, sometimes by heart, the truths of the Orthodox faith. Syllabuses for primary schools contained: Catechesis, Biblical stories and Prayers. The two first books were written in the form of questions and answers. Particularly Catechesis contained the Commandments, the Creed and Sacraments. There is not much difference in the secondary schools curriculum which contained more or less the same didactic material but more extensively. Thus, history of Old and New Testaments, Ecclesiastical History, Catechesis and teaching about Liturgy were the basic subjects of the secondary R.E.

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27. See A. V. Murray (1953), Ch. 1; The dilemma of R.E.



curriculum. The methods of teaching were those used for primary schools.<sup>28</sup>

It is obvious from what we have said so far that the model of teaching for the period under consideration was «teaching *that*»<sup>29</sup> and the teachers', parents' and Church's expectation was that pupils should know the teaching of the Church as well as participate in the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. Therefore, the doctrinal as well as the moral dimension of the model of «teaching *that*» is obvious.

Since, however, 1931 when the first sufficient and systematic book on history and theory of Catechesis<sup>30</sup> appeared, a new approach was introduced into teaching Christian doctrine which was already quite widespread at this time in catechetical circles of both Roman-Catholics and Protestants. Although the author emphasizes that catechesis is quite different in scope from the secular education,<sup>31</sup> he holds that the former should take into account the methods provided by the latter for presenting religious material. He is, however, categorical in stressing the Christocentricity of Catechesis and thus its ecclesiastical dimension and connexion. In this respect it is worth noticing that Professor Trembelas conceives of catechesis as the oral teaching of the Church to those who wish to become Christians or those who have been already baptized.<sup>32</sup> It is obvious, then, that the author's book is concerned with teaching catechesis in the Sunday Schools rather than R.E. in the State schools.

The importance of children's psychology is underlined in this book in so far as syllabuses of Catechesis are designed. However, Herbart's techniques of teaching religion and his general educational ideas are maintained throughout the author's methodological suggestions on teaching Christianity. What we mean by Herbart's ideas is well illustrated in Herbart's own words:

Instruction will form the circle of thought, and education the character. The last is nothing without the first. Herein is contained the whole sum of my pedagogy.<sup>33</sup>

28. D. Moraitis, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-38.

29. See R. M. Rummery (1975), pp. 2 and 5-7.

30. By Professor P. Trembelas, *Catechesis or History and Theory of Catechesis*, Athens 1931 (in Greek).

31. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

33. Cited in William Boyd, *The History of Western Education*, 5th ed., Lon-

Although Professor Trembelas' book is concerned mainly with Catechesis it has to be said that its ideas affected R.E. because he was a well-known Professor at Athens University till the late 1950s and thus his pupils transmitted his ideas to schools. On the other hand, it was the first book on the subject which took seriously what education and psychology had to say with regard to teaching methods and children's psychological development respectively.

Based on the latter factor we would say that Trembelas' Catechesis reflects throughout its pages the so-called «pedagogical approach», although not without signs that the model of «teaching *that*» is entirely ignored. By pedagogical model of teaching we mean the following with R. Rummery:

Keynote of the approach: Application to teaching of increased knowledge of factors, psychological and sociological to teaching and learning. Relationship of participants: Teacher and pupils; role of catechist as guide. Model of teaching: Aiding pupils in 'learning that'. Motivation: Interest roused by good teaching methods to ensure learning of truths of the faith.<sup>34</sup>

### 3. *Religious and Moral Education.*

A more comprehensive work on R.E. regarded as an educational task autonomous from Church seems to be that of Professor Moraitis.<sup>35</sup> One of its parts is concerned with the examination of religious and moral development of children. Another part deals with the educational, theological and philosophical presuppositions for designing total R.E. curriculum and detailed syllabuses.

The author argues rightly that R.E. is a wider concept than that of Catechesis. R.E., he says, is a discipline which is based on strictly educational, psychological and theological ground and it aims at exploring children's spontaneous religiosity. Thus, family, Church and school are agents of R.E. On the contrary, Catechesis has an ecclesiastical dimension and it operates only within the Church.<sup>36</sup>

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don: Adam and Charles Black, 1950, p. 344. See also P. Trembelas, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-295.

34. R. Rummery (1975), p. 2 and pp. 7ff. For criticism of Trembelas' book see D. Moraitis, *op. cit.*, p. 48 and also K. Gregoriades (1971), pp. 53-56.

35. *Religious and Moral Education*, Athens 1935 (in Greek).

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3. See also criticism on Moraitis' work in K. Gregoriades, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-58.

With regard to Christian education in schools, the author believes that it is a part of religious and moral education. Christian education must be associated with the rest of human knowledge which is obtained throughout the other subjects of the school curriculum. This is because religion and morality penetrate the whole of human experience according to the author's assumption that all have a faith. Thus, pupils must be encouraged to learn and understand their faith (in this respect the Christian Orthodox) as well as to be motivated to live and practice their Christian duties.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, Professor Moraitis is deeply aware of the current teaching methods of his time and are suggested by him to be applied in teaching R.E. For example, beside Herbart's teaching methods he finds quite interesting the so-called «learning by doing» method, as helping the cultivation of pupils' will and feelings with regard to religious experience.<sup>38</sup> He, however, disregards the idea of teaching R.E. through units which include material from separate theological subjects such as Ecclesiastical History, Liturgical studies, Biblical studies and so on. Instead, he prefers teaching R.E. through separate theological subjects.<sup>39</sup>

As far as Professor Moraitis' work is concerned with R.E. we could summarize this section by saying that he views R.E. quite objectively and, to some extent, phenomenologically. Nevertheless his work is extensively concentrated on methodology rather than on content. But we have to bear in mind that his ideas reflect the climate of his time, although his research on R.E.<sup>40</sup> has to be considered and appreciated as pioneer, careful and scholarly as well as a great contribution to Greek R.E. Unfortunately little progress was made till then with regard to children's and adolescents' religious attitudes in Greece.<sup>41</sup>

#### 4. *The Liturgical basis of R.E.*

R.E. continued for a long time after 1935 to aim at enabling pupils to know better their faith («learning that») and practice Christian

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37. D. Moraitis, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-113, 152-153 and 117.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 189-191.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-167.

40. See also by the same author: *Research on Pupils' Religiosity*, Athens 1936 (in Greek).

41. See a recent work by P. Kiriakides. *Our Students. Their social and religious attitudes. A research*, Thessaloniki 1978 (in Greek), although it has rather sociological insight than a strictly religious one.

ethics in their individual and social life.<sup>42</sup> The same objectives are expressed by the 1961 decree for R.E. in secondary schools with the only difference that R.E. should cultivate and mould pupils' religious feelings. More ethical emphasis is discerned in the 1966 decree.<sup>43</sup> In 1969 a new objective was added to those of 1966, that of the cultivation and development of pupils' religious feelings through liturgy and worship according to the Orthodox tradition and style of life.<sup>44</sup> Thus, we could say that the objectives of the 1969 decree are more comprehensive than the previous ones in the sense that they pay attention to doctrinal, experiential, ritual and ethical dimensions of Christian Orthodox faith.<sup>45</sup>

It is not an exaggeration at all to attribute this change of R.E. objectives from an intellectualism and moralism to a sympathetic understanding and conscious participation in the Church's liturgical life, to the work of Professor Ev. Theodorou.<sup>46</sup> Professor Theodorou conceives of liturgy and worship as the core of Christian education. Liturgical education, he argues, should penetrate not only Sunday Schools' life and the rest of the Church's pastoral work, but also it must be introduced into public schools as well.<sup>47</sup> Pupils should understand that for a Christian Orthodox person, liturgy is the life and soul of the Church because through liturgy (Eucharist) Jesus offers himself for our salvation and redemption (as shown above). In effect, pupils by taking part in the liturgical life of the Church are able to live and feel the constant presence of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Thus, through liturgical symbolism and conscious participation pupil-believers could achieve a mystical identification with Jesus Christ and a capacity to view life through Jesus' guidance and light. Liturgical education, therefore, ends not only in enabling pupils to understand what is going on in the liturgy but also in their salvation and purification.<sup>48</sup>

42. See aims and objectives of R.E. in 1935's decree (and syllabus) for teaching the subject in schools, in Chr. Gotsis (1967), p. 37, notice 55.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

44. Decree No. 723 of 1969.

45. See N. Smart (1968), pp. 15-18.

46. E. Theodorou, *Liturgical Education. A Contribution to the Theory of Christian Education*, Athens 1958 (in Greek). The most important parts of this work were incorporated in the author's recent book: *Lectures on Catechesis or Christian Education*, Athens University Press, 1978, sec., ed., pp. 111-128 (in Greek).

47. E. Theodorou (1978), pp. 124-125.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 113ff. See also J. A. Jungmann, «Liturgy and the History of Salvation» in *Faith and Commitment*, ed. by M. G. Link, Loyola University Press, Chicago, 1965, pp. 43-50.

With regard to school curriculum Professor Theodorou suggests that it should be inspired by the aim and objectives of a liturgical education which means that R.E. primarily should be interested at all its levels in initiating pupils into the liturgical life of the Orthodox Church. One of the most important tools for achieving this objective is, according to the author, schools' liturgy.<sup>49</sup>

The liturgical approach might be considered as having a lot of advantages for R.E. To mention only a few: Firstly, it includes a strong wish for a return to the Christian Orthodox resources and tradition of the early and Byzantine times when liturgy was indeed the soul and focus of Christian nourishment. Secondly, it stresses the importance of symbolism for children's religious education. Thirdly, it evokes feelings and experiences through the underlying reality of Jesus Christ's life, Passion and Resurrection.

It might, however, be said that the liturgical approach has its limits with regard to R.E. as well. So that, firstly, it could be considered as inadequate for public schools because their aims are quite different from those of Sunday Schools (as will be argued later). Secondly, by organizing school liturgies there is a danger that liturgy becomes paraliturgy and therefore separate and remote from children's parochial life and experience.<sup>50</sup> Thirdly, a serious problem is raised for those pupils who have not enough background, or none at all, from their home or are entirely indifferent towards liturgy. Then, R.E. is in danger of being regarded by them as unrealistic and irrelevant as not paying enough attention to their own interests and experiences.

It hardly needs to be pointed out once again, that Professor Theodorou's suggested approach was welcomed with great enthusiasm by experts in R.E. and R.E. teachers and undoubtedly it opened a new horizon and direction for R.E. in Greece, as we are now going to discuss.<sup>51</sup>

##### *5. The Kerygmatic approach to R.E.*

An implication of Professor Theodorou's suggested approach for schools' curriculum is a work which appeared in 1967.<sup>52</sup> The author

49. E. Theodorou, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

50. See R. M. Rummery (1975), p. 15. Also H. Loukes (1965), chapter 10 and J. Hull (1975).

51. See K. Gregoriades' analysis of Prof. Theodorou's approach in K. Gregoriades, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-64.

52. Chr. Gotsis, *The Biblical and Liturgical dimension of R.E.*, Athens 1967 (in Greek).

seems to be well aware of Jungmann's kerygmatic approach which he tries to exemplify and adapt to Greek Orthodox reality.<sup>53</sup> By the kerygmatic approach we mean with R. Rummery the following:

Keynote of the approach: 'Christo-centric' in emphasis; content stressed rather than method; theme of 'salvation history' — Relationship of participants: The 'apostle' and his followers; the 'herald' or witness and his listeners. — Model of teaching: Proclaiming what God has done for us. — Starting point: Encountering the good *News* in Bible/Liturgy/Doctrine/Witness.— Content: Salvation history often in a chronological sequence via the Bible; reflection on Bible leading to 'predetermined' applications to life; key role of word of God: liturgy and paraliturgy. Motivation: Joyful message of the Good News brought by Christ; duty of Christians to witness to this and spread it.— Dimensions of religion emphasized: Morality as Christian response; Doctrine as traditional means of expressing faith: liturgy in its social aspect of an encounter with God's word. — View of Revelation of the Church: Christ as the centre of God's plan for our salvation through the life of the church and its guidance.<sup>54</sup>

A more comprehensive work which is based on the kerygmatic approach adapted to the Orthodox reality is that of K. Gregoriades.<sup>55</sup> The author points out that he aims at amplifying the liturgical basis of R.E. as far as it is concerned with its didactic implications. Moreover he claims to consider the Christian theological and ecclesiastical presuppositions which are necessary for teaching R.E.<sup>56</sup>

Dr. Gregoriades conceives of R.E. as having an entirely ecclesiastical dimension. From this starting point he goes on underlining the importance of Jesus' teaching, Passion and Resurrection as well as some experiences within Church life such as iconography and so forth. R.E. then, he argues, is a knowledge which derives from a personal encounter

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 22ff.

54. R. M. Rummery, *op. cit.*, pp. 3 and 10-17. For more on the kerygmatic approach see in Joseph A. Jungmann, *Announcing the Word of God*, London: Burns and Oates, 1967.

55. K. Gregoriades, *The Theological Presuppositions of teaching R.E. Contribution to the Orthodox Catechesis*, Athens 1971 (in Greek).

56. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

of the pupil-believer with the Incarnate Jesus Christ through the Church. In this case God reveals himself through Jesus and pupils listen to his teachings. Pupils, however, should be helped and encouraged to respond to God's call through Jesus and within his Church.

In schools, therefore, Jesus' teaching should be offered to pupils in such a way as to grasp the inter-relationship that exists between pupil-believers and the person of Jesus Christ and his Church.

The need of didactic methods, for such a task is underlined by the author but they should be transformed to serve ecclesiastical purposes.<sup>57</sup>

Although this approach is fascinating in itself as encouraging believers to achieve a personal community with Christ which in effect leads to their salvation through the Church and the Holy Spirit, it has also its limits with regard to its implications in schools. Thus, we would say that, firstly, this approach ignores again the different role of the school. Secondly, it does not reckon enough with children's experiences and their psychological development because it starts not from concrete life situations but from abstract teaching which is unsuited and unfamiliar to pupils.<sup>58</sup> Thirdly, because everything is offered through teaching by a teacher (teacher-centred) there is a fear that if the latter is not inspired by a true enthusiasm and right knowledge then the former might fail.<sup>59</sup>

#### 6. *The present situation.*

The approach which we discussed in the previous section dominates the current R.E. syllabuses. The general aim of R.E. as it is put in the 1977 decree is to disclose God's plan and actions for the world and man as they have been articulated by Jesus Christ. On the other hand the initiation of pupils into the truths of the Christian Orthodox life and belief is required. Also pupils ought to become aware of the history and teachings of the Church as well as to practice their Christian Orthodox faith in their daily life.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

58. *Ibid.*, pp. 78ff and 98ff. See also H. Loukes (1964) and R. Goldman (1964). It is remarkable that Chr. Gotsis underlines the importance of pupils' experience as the starting point of R.E., but this thesis is hardly discerned in the syllabuses which have been done since then. Chr. Gotsis, *op. cit.*, p. 47. See also next section of this Chapter.

59. See P. Kyriakides (1978), pp. 119ff.

Thus, this aim contains five dimensions such as: doctrinal, ritual, experiential, social and ethical. We could, however, point out that the liturgical approach seems to be not so strong as it occurs in the 1969 decree (liturgical basis of R.E.).<sup>60</sup> On the other hand the doctrinal and ethical dimensions prevail in the present aim of R.E. What might be regarded as an innovation in this aim is the emphasis which is put on the history of the Church and its influence within this world (social dimension). What, however, seems to be a weakness of the new aim is that little place is given for pupils to express their own interests and experiences (experiential dimension). Nevertheless this lack is not a new one, but it must be said that it is the constant deficiency of all the aims of R.E. which have been carried out till now.

Since 1977, therefore, new syllabuses have been set up based on the above aim.<sup>61</sup> In this respect it is worthwhile to say that their content could be characterized as innovatory. This is because the old method according to which religious materials used to be classified separately in different subjects (for example Old and New Testaments, Ecclesiastical History, Catechesis and so forth) was abandoned.

As far as the new method for designing syllabuses is concerned materials are classified in big units for every school level and children's age, each of which includes materials from every subject (Old and New Testaments, Ecclesiastical History and so on). Every unit underlines a different aspect of the history of salvation, for example one unit underlines the liturgical life of the Church, another her history, her doctrine and so forth. Thus, the Christian message is transmitted as a whole through each unit and not separately as the old method used to do.

Although this new method seems to be considerably better than the old one it raises some difficulties in so far as it ignores to a great extent the psychological needs of the children. This is because, on the one hand it imposes a lot of theological and historical material to the children which is doubtful if they can grasp their meaning if they are under the age of twelve or thirteen. On the other hand this method gives little or no place for the children to express their own experiences and to relate them to the past, present and future activities of the Christian community, that is the Church.<sup>62</sup> *(To be continued)*

60. No. 723 of 1969. See also section 4 of this Chapter.

61. Decree no. 373 and 845 of 1978.

62. See Chr. Gotsis (1978), pp. 184-185. Also R. Goldman (1964) and G. Moran (1966b), p. 53.